Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford

To Be Proposed:
June 5, 2024

Resolved, That, pursuant to Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State Board of Education adopts and approves the Turnaround Plan for Great Oaks Charter School in Bridgeport, subject to the conditions noted in the Commissioner of Education's June 5, 2024, Executive Summary to the State Board of Education, and directs the Commissioner to take the necessary action, including, but not limited to, expending such funds as may be necessary to execute and implement the foregoing.

Approved by a vote of _____, this fifth day of June, Two Thousand Twenty-Four.

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

To: State Board of Education

From: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

Date: June 5, 2024

Subject: Approval of Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan: Great Oaks Charter
School, Bridgeport

Executive Summary

Introduction

Pursuant to Section(§)10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), the Commissioner's
Network provides new resources, increased flexibilities, and greater accountability to improve
student achievement in some of the state's lowest performing schools. The Commissioner's
Network represents a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State
Department of Education (CSDE) to empower teachers and leaders to implement research-based
strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner of Education. Schools are accepted into the
Commissioner's Network for a minimum of three years. C.G.S. §10-223h establishes that the
State Board of Education (SBE) may allow schools to continue in the Commissioner's Network
for up to two additional years if necessary. Commissioner's Network schools remain part of their
local school districts; the districts and the CSDE secure school-level autonomy for the schools in
exchange for heightened accountability.

Successful school turnaround requires flexible policy conditions and targeted investments in
high-yield reform strategies. There is a demonstrated need for support, financial and otherwise,
to fully implement the Turnaround Plan for Great Oaks Charter School (Great Oaks) located in
Bridgeport, Connecticut. This will require efforts at the state and local levels to secure conditions
that are conducive to scalable and sustainable reform.

Background

On April 17, 2023, the CSDE received an *Expression of Interest Form* from Great Oaks Charter
School volunteering Great Oaks for participation in the Commissioner's Network. On May 25,
2023, the Commissioner of Education initially selected Great Oaks for possible participation in
the Commissioner's Network based on the following factors: (a) the district's expression of
interest; and (b) the academic and developmental needs of the school's students and the capacity
of the district to address those needs. The school was approved for one year of planning to
develop a Turnaround Plan. Following initial selection, Great Oaks and the Great Oaks Charter
School Board of Education appointed members to serve on the school's Turnaround Committee,
and the CSDE conducted an Operations and Instructional Audit on October 18, 2023. The
school's Turnaround Committee developed the Turnaround Plan for Great Oaks in accordance
with C.G.S. §10-223h(d).

Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan for Great Oaks Charter School

Great Oaks, identified as a Turnaround School based on the Next Generation Accountability System's Accountability Index, serves 643 students in Grades 6-12. Of those 643 students, approximately 47 percent are eligible for free or reduced-price meals; approximately 21 percent are identified as needing special education services; and 13 percent are English learners/ Multilingual learners (ELs/MLs). Fifty-one percent of the students are Hispanic/Latino, 43 percent are Black, and 3 percent are White.

Great Oaks aims to improve teaching and learning by utilizing strategies, methods, and best practices that have proven to be effective in improving student academic performance. High-quality professional learning, rigorous curricula, and assessments aligned with the Connecticut Core Standards, along with the establishment and maintenance of meaningful productive relationships between students and staff, are some of the proven, high-leverage strategies that will be implemented. Participation in the Commissioner's Network will support the professional development of Great Oaks teaching staff, coaching opportunities in literacy and numeracy, expansion of the data-driven decision-making process, additional learning opportunities for students, and the communication of the school's vision to the Great Oaks community.

The following strategic components in the domains of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations address the transformative potential of the Great Oaks Turnaround Plan. Specifically, the school will:

Talent:

- Develop and execute a professional learning program tailored to meet the requirements of administrators, coaches, educators, and students, aimed at enhancing performance in various critical domains, such as Tier 1 instruction; integrating prerequisite skills into lesson design; fostering engagement; providing actionable feedback; monitoring progress; and optimizing data team procedures.
- Implement tactics for recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. For instance, leveraging branding and marketing initiatives to highlight the benefits and growth prospects associated with being a "Great Oaks Teacher" while also emphasizing the school's commitment to nurturing teacher leadership opportunities.
- Design and execute initiatives to recognize and appreciate teachers and staff.

Academics:

- Enhance Tier 1 instructional quality by identifying and integrating prerequisite skills and prior knowledge relevant to grade-level standards, and consistently applying the Great Oaks Instructional Framework.
- Differentiate Tier 1 instruction by utilizing subject-specific resources to scaffold teaching, implementing small-group flexible grouping, and universal high-dosage tutoring.
- Update and align the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for academics to incorporate new Tier 1 practices; compare curriculum and assessment with classroom instructional methods and standards; and refine the data collection process.

Culture and Climate:

- Decrease chronic absenteeism by enhancing monitoring and communication of attendance systems, organizing student recognition events for attendance achievements, and establishing a MTSS for attendance.
- Decrease suspensions and minimize disruptions to the learning time of students in the classroom by strengthening teacher training and support in fostering student relationships to enhance engagement; establishing uniform schoolwide behavior expectations and responses; implementing clear communication expectations with families; refining the generation and utilization of student behavior data, and establishing measures to address the impact of social media interactions through digital literacy workshops, anonymous reporting channels for students, and family engagement forums.

Operations:

- Maximize instructional time by implementing master schedule changes and transitioning from a trimester to a semester-based schedule.
- Establish structured collaboration time for faculty to facilitate vertical team planning, execute data-driven decision-making processes, and identify suitable interventions at critical points during the academic year.

The CSDE shall make a final determination regarding the allocation of funds, following the Turnaround Plan's approval by the SBE. The CSDE Turnaround Office will collaborate with district leadership and the school's Turnaround Committee to prioritize expenditures identified through the planning process.

Great Oaks will work to evaluate and repurpose existing funding streams (e.g., local, state, federal, and grants) to support the Commissioner's Network reform efforts and foster long-term sustainability. Funding for Great Oaks is contingent upon the availability of funds, the transformative potential of the Turnaround Plan, and the size of the school.

Great Oaks will benefit from increased flexibility and additional resources in exchange for heightened accountability. Over the course of the school's participation in the Commissioner's Network, the Commissioner of Education and/or the CSDE Turnaround Office will review: (a) school progress relative to the implementation of the Turnaround Plan and annual plan amendments; and (b) school performance relative to identified goals and leading and lagging performance metrics. Great Oaks will participate in periodic monitoring sessions, including school and classroom walkthroughs, progress monitoring, the CSDE Turnaround Office NetStat Professional Learning Series, and annual school audits. In addition, the CSDE will provide ongoing support and technical assistance to support Great Oaks through site visits and targeted support based on the Turnaround Plan.

Recommendation with Conditions

I recommend that the SBE approve the Commissioner's Network Plan for Great Oaks Charter School, which would be subject to the successful completion of the following items:

1. By September 30, 2024, Great Oaks shall commit to specific transformation expectations outlined here in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations as part of participation in the Commissioner's Network.

2. The Executive Director, on behalf of Great Oaks' Turnaround Committee, shall submit plan amendments to the CSDE Turnaround Office on an annual basis, no later than May, following school audits, detailing proposed strategies, budget requests, and implementation timelines for the following school year. The Commissioner of Education or designee may reconvene Great Oaks' Turnaround Committee to consider annual plan amendments, as appropriate and necessary. If Great Oaks' Turnaround Committee does not enact plan amendments or if the amendments are unlikely to result in sufficient progress or adequately address implementation concerns, the Commissioner of Education may take appropriate actions to ensure sufficient progress at Great Oaks, including, but not limited to, developing a revised Turnaround Plan and/or exercising any and all powers and authorizations prescribed in C.G.S. §10-223h.

Great Oaks shall comply with all fiscal and programmatic reviews, provide any information requested by the CSDE in a timely manner, and report progress against goals and metrics in the format and frequency established by the CSDE.

Materials Enclosed

1. Great Oaks Charter School Audit Report resulting from the Operations and Instructional Audit conducted on October 18, 2023.
2. Commissioner's Network Turnaround Plan developed and agreed to by Great Oaks Charter School's Turnaround Committee.

              Prepared by: Margaret Hughes, Associate Education Consultant
                                Turnaround Office

              Reviewed by: Jennifer Webb, Bureau Chief, Turnaround Office

              Approved by: Irene E. Parisi, Chief Academic Officer

Commissioner's Network Operations and Instructional Audit

**Great Oaks Charter School
Great Oaks Charter School District
October 18, 2023**

CSDE
CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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On May 25, 2023, the Commissioner initially selected Great Oaks Charter School (Great Oaks) to participate in the Commissioner's Network. Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b), the Great Oaks Charter School Board of Education established the Turnaround Committee. On October 18, 2023, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) conducted, in consultation with the board of education, the Great Oaks Governance Council, and the Turnaround Committee, an operations and instructional audit of the school in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(c). The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the audit.

The audit team would like to express its sincere appreciation to the Great Oaks community for its hospitality on the day of the school visit. We appreciate the openness and transparency demonstrated by members of the school community. There is a willingness and desire on the part of the staff, parents, students, and community partners to improve the school.

Commissioner's Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network is a commitment between local stakeholders and the CSDE to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 schools. To that end, the Commissioner's Network offers new resources and authorities to empower teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Commissioner's Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools are accepted into the Commissioner's Network for a minimum of three years. Subsection (h) of C.G.S. 10-223h establishes that the Connecticut State Board of Education may allow schools to continue in the Commissioner's Network for an additional year, not to exceed two additional years, if necessary. At present, 15 Cohort (VIII, IX, X, XI, and XII) schools are participating in the Commissioner's Network.

The Commissioner's Network schools make targeted investments in the following areas:

- **Talent:** Employ systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.

- **Academics:** Design and implement a rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels.

- **Culture and Climate:** Foster a positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.

- **Operations:** Create systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.

As part of the operations and instructional audit, auditors identify school strengths and weaknesses in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Audits are conducted by impartial and experienced educators who produce unbiased and objective reports supporting school planning and transformation efforts.

Operations and Instructional Audit Overview

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(c), the operations and instructional audit shall determine the extent to which the school:

(1) has established a strong family and community connection to the school;

(2) has a positive school environment, as evidenced by a culture of high expectations and a safe and orderly workplace, and has addressed other non-academic factors that impact student achievement, such as students' social, emotional, arts, cultural, recreational, and health needs;

(3) has effective leadership, as evidenced by the school principal's performance appraisals, track record in improving student achievement, ability to lead turnaround efforts, and managerial skills and authority in the areas of scheduling, staff management, curriculum implementation, and budgeting;

(4) has effective teachers and support staff, as evidenced by performance evaluations, policies to retain staff determined to be effective and who have the ability to be successful in the turnaround effort, policies to prevent ineffective teachers from transferring to the schools, and job-embedded, ongoing professional development informed by the teacher evaluation and support programs that are tied to teacher and student needs;

(5) uses time effectively, as evidenced by the redesign of the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration;

(6) has a curriculum and instructional program that is based on student needs, is research-based, rigorous, and aligned with state academic content standards, and serves all children, including students at every achievement level; and

(7) uses data to inform decision-making and for continuous improvement, including providing time for collaboration on the use of data.

Audit Process and Methodology

The operations and instructional audit involves three phases of data collection and review:

(1) The CSDE obtains and auditors review school artifacts, data, and documentation to gain a better understanding of the school's history and context. The CSDE collaborates with school and district leaders to administer a teacher survey.

(2) The auditors conduct a school site visit to observe school systems and classrooms and meet with members of the school community. During the site visit, auditors conduct interviews and focus groups with a representative set of school and community stakeholders, including school and district administrators, staff, students, family members, community partners, and members of the School Governance Council and Turnaround Committee.

(3) The auditors synthesize and use all available data to generate the operations and instructional audit report and identify strengths and growth areas around talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

Please note that while this Audit Report identifies areas for improvement, it does not prescribe interventions or offer recommendations. The Turnaround Committee is responsible for developing a Turnaround Plan that addresses the deficiencies identified in the audit.

Part II: School Information

Great Oaks Charter School (Great Oaks) in Great Oaks Charter School District serves 664 students in Grades 6-12. Approximately 43 percent of the students are Black and 51 percent of the students are Hispanic/Latino. Twenty-one percent of the students are identified as needing special education services, and 13 percent are English Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELs/MLs). Approximately 47 percent of the students in the school are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Student achievement at Great Oaks is below state averages in all content areas. The current Chief Executive Officer is in his sixth year at Great Oaks, previously serving as both principal and Chief Executive Director for five years. Prior to Great Oaks, he served as the Director of Student Development for Milford Public Schools Central Office and as a principal for 8 years between New York City Public Schools, Shelton Public Schools, and Columbus School in Bridgeport. Great Oaks also has two principals. The high school principal is currently in his sixth year as principal at Great Oaks. He previously worked for the Great Oaks Foundation overseeing the AmeriCorps Fellows program. The middle school principal is currently in her third year as the principal at Great Oaks. Before becoming principal, she was a teacher at Great Oaks for two years and a charter school principal in Bronx, New York for two years.

School Data Profile

The following chart provides a summary of Great Oaks' current and historical data, including information about student enrollment and demographics, personnel, school climate, school performance, and student academic achievement.

Enrollment Data (Current Year):			
Grades:	6-12	5-Yr Enrollment Trend:	601
Student Enrollment:	664	Mobility Rate:	32%
Personnel Data (Current Year):			
# of Administrators:	5	# of Psychologists:	0
# of Teachers:	44	# of Social Workers:	3
# of Support Staff:	13	3-yr Teacher Retention Rate:	85%
School Day Per Year (Current Year):			
Total # of Student Days Per Year:	181	Instructional Minutes/Day:	300
Total # of Teacher Days Per Year:	191	Extended Day Program?	Yes
Student Demographic Breakdown (Current Year):			
% Black:	43.4%	% Male:	50.3%
% Hispanic/Latino:	51.2%	% Female:	49.7%
White:	3.3%	% EL/ML	12.8%
% Other:	2.1%	% Special Education:	20.8%
% Eligible for F/R Meals:	47.4%		

School Climate Data:	2018-19	2020-21*	2021-22	2022-23
Student Attendance Rate:	92%	96.8%	90.1%	89.1%

% Students Chronically Absent:	23.4%	6.4%	30.4 %	36.8%
Suspension/Expulsion Rate:	15.1%	*	17.4%	11.6%
Avg FTE Days Absent:	6.3	5.1	1.9	0.6
Next Generation Accountability System	**2018-19**	**2020-21***	**2021-22**	**2022-23**
Accountability Index	48.2	NA	48.8	NA
Smarter Balanced Assessment Level 3 and 4 Data:	**2018-19**	**2020-21***	**2021-22**	**2022-23**
Grade 6 – ELA	15.2%	NA	21.3%	27.5%
Grade 7 – ELA	18.1%	NA	*	26.5 %
Grade 8 – ELA	27.3%	NA	276 %	33.7%
Grade 11– ELA	NA	NA	9.0%	*
Grade 6 – Math	7.6%	NA	10.5%	16.%
Grade 7 – Math	11.4%	NA	11.2%	13.1%
Grade 8 – Math	17.0%	NA	12.4%	10.9%
Grade 11– Math	NA	NA	*	*
Grade 8 – Science	26.1%	NA	19.4%	19.8%
Grade 11– Science	NA	NA	9.2%	10.5%

Part III of the Audit Report provides a summative analysis of audit findings in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Rating categories are determined by the preponderance of evidence as highlighted in the Turnaround Rubric.

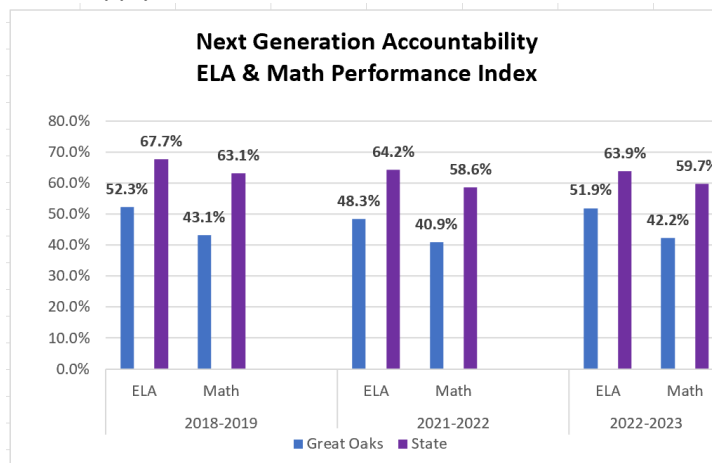| Talent				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
1.1. Turnaround Leadership		✓		
1.2. Talent Management		✓		
1.3. Professional Learning Systems		✓		

<u>Summary of Growth Areas:</u>

Turnaround Leadership

School leadership at Great Oaks includes five administrators. It consists of the Chief Executive Director, two principals, and two assistant principals. The current Chief Executive Officer is in his sixth year at Great Oaks, previously serving as both principal and Chief Executive Director for five years. Prior to Great Oaks, he served as the Director of Student Development for Milford Public Schools Central Office and as a principal for 8 years between New York City Public Schools, Shelton Public Schools, and Columbus School in Bridgeport. Great Oaks also has two principals. The high school principal is currently in his sixth year as principal at Great Oaks. He previously worked for the Great Oaks Foundation overseeing the AmeriCorps Fellows Program. The middle school principal is currently in her third year as the principal at Great Oaks. Before becoming principal, she was a teacher at Great Oaks for two years and a charter school principal in Bronx, New York for two years. There is a Leadership Team that includes the Chief Executive Director; high school principal; middle school principal; Directors of Curriculum for Humanities and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM); and Special Services Coordinator. There are three coaches, and the high school has grade-level team heads for attendance, behavior, and academic performance. The leadership team meets bi-weekly.

There is a Great Oaks Charter School Central Office mission and vision statement. Although Great Oaks is one school, they are organized by grade level into a middle and high school. The high school and middle school also have their own individual mission and vision statements. There is a cohesive alignment between the high school and middle school mission and vision statements. Both teams involved teachers in the development and are working on aligning to the Great Oaks Portrait of the Graduate. The school leadership noted that they did share the mission and vision statements with families and staff. Ninety-six percent (n=46) of the staff survey respondents and 91 percent (n=23) of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, "School leadership effectively communicates a mission, vision, and a clear set of schoolwide priorities."

Although the Great Oaks' English language arts (ELA) and Math Performance Indices have not rebounded to the pre-pandemic levels, they have increased from 2021-22 levels. The ELA Performance Index increased by 3.6 percent and the Math Performance Index increased by 1.2 percent from 2021-22. In 2022-23, Great Oaks ELA performance level is 10 percent below ESSA Milestones and math

performance level is 18 percent below ESSA Milestones. Note that this is a district of one school, so a district comparison does not apply.

Next Generation Accountability
ELA & Math Performance Index

	2018-2019		2021-2022		2022-2023	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
Great Oaks	52.3%	43.1%	48.3%	40.9%	51.9%	42.2%
State	67.7%	63.1%	64.2%	58.6%	63.9%	59.7%

The 2022-23 Great Oaks' Accountability Index (AI) of 54.5 exceeded 2021-22 and pre-pandemic levels of 2018-19 by 5.7 percentage points and 6.3 percentage points, respectively. The 2022-23 AI is still below the state level of 69.3 and the ESSA Milestone of 66.2. The increase in AI was fueled by the ELA and math performance indices, academic growth, and Track to High School Graduation rate.

Talent Management

The three-year teacher retention rate is 85 percent. Currently, there are four teacher vacancies: one high school special education teacher and three middle school math teachers. Leadership noted that "The biggest challenge in a charter school is talent acquisition. There is a lot of misunderstanding that charter school teachers do not need to be certified." The total number of teachers in classrooms, including coaches, is 44. Thirty are certified teachers while 14 are pending certification applications that are currently under review by the CSDE. Leadership stated that while "our primary objective is to recruit certified teachers, like many school districts, we are currently facing challenges in hiring educators, especially in critical shortage areas like math, special education, and bilingual teachers."

In addition to Great Oaks staff, the charter school has a partnership with AmeriCorps Fellows. Through this grant, AmeriCorps volunteers are onsite and provide support in ELA and math classrooms. Additionally, they provide small group instruction and after-school tutoring. Leadership noted, "Approximately 25 percent of their staff are former fellows." There are currently 22 fellows supervised by the Chief Executive Director.

The principals share in the teacher evaluation process. The principals reported that they must do at least five informal and two formal observations for each teacher. Eighty percent (n=46) of teachers agreed with the statement, "Administrators provide regular and actionable feedback to staff." In response to the question regarding the school's greatest strengths, teacher survey respondents wrote that it is the "supportive and responsive administration."

Seventy-eight percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "I am professionally respected and supported by the school leadership team." Several teacher survey respondents noted, "Teachers are well supported by all school leaders both instructionally and culturally" and "Great Oaks' greatest strength is our strong administrative leadership."

The principals reported they provide new teacher support through their early release Tuesdays for professional learning, curriculum, and department meetings, instructional coaches, and bi-weekly walkthroughs. They also noted that they communicate teacher expectations on "what we are looking for in the classroom." Teachers have weekly coaching meetings around lesson planning and walkthrough feedback. They also participate in the Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) program and they "try to lead with coaching first." The Chief Executive Director noted Great Oaks' challenge in retaining teachers is the "competitive imbalance with our surrounding districts." Teacher survey respondents report that the "greatest strength of Great Oaks is the commitment to provide the support required for teachers to thrive and be confident in their delivery of content so students can maximize their full potential."

Professional Learning Systems

Seventy-four percent (n=46) of teacher respondents agreed with the statement, "The professional development I receive has improved my professional practice and allowed me to better meet the needs of my students." As previously noted, there is an early release day every week. School leadership shared they do professional learning internally and with partners. For instance, this year, Fairfield University is providing professional learning around trauma-informed teaching. They have a professional learning calendar for the year that lists who will provide professional learning and the topic. The Chief Executive Director noted that they differentiate professional learning based on teacher feedback. He noted that every six weeks "there is a 'choose your own adventure' where teachers choose where they want to go." They also have two instructional and curriculum days, STEM and humanities, and data analysis facilitated by the Curriculum Directors.

There are no systems in place to implement and monitor the impact of professional learning at Great Oaks. The principals reported that this is an area of growth. They stated teachers were not aware of the implementation expectations and were overwhelmed with professional learning. This year, they reported shifting their approach to be more focused and to clearly communicate their expectations. The principals also stated teachers were given a voice to identify their priority areas.

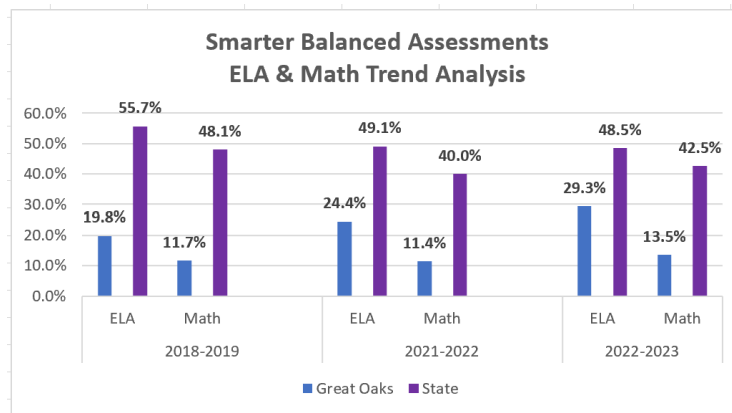| Academics				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
2.1. Instructional Leadership		✓		
2.2. Challenging Instruction	✓			
2.3. Engaging Instruction	✓			
2.4. Standards Aligned Curricula and Instruction		✓		
2.5. Differentiation and Supports for Diverse Learners	✓			
2.6. Assessment Practices and Data Use		✓		

<u>Summary of Growth Areas:</u>

Instructional Leadership

The Smarter Balance Assessment (SBA) Trend Analysis evidences an increase in post-pandemic ELA and math student achievement of 9.5 percent and 1.8 percent, respectively, from 2018-19 levels. Grade

levels six through eight have exceeded 2018-19 pre-pandemic performance by 6 percent in grade six, 8 percent in grade seven, and 6 percent in grade eight.

Additionally, the Smarter Balanced Growth trend data indicates that growth rates at Great Oaks have increased from 2018-19 levels by 7 percent in ELA and 10 percent in math. In comparison, the state trend data indicates a decrease of 3 percent in ELA and 1 percent in math from pre-pandemic 2018-19 growth rates.

Smarter Balanced Assessments ELA & Math Trend Analysis

	2018-2019		2021-2022		2022-2023	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
Great Oaks	19.8%	11.7%	24.4%	11.4%	29.3%	13.5%
State	55.7%	48.1%	49.1%	40.0%	48.5%	42.5%

Conversely, the Connecticut School Day SAT trend analysis evidences a decline in ELA in 2022-23 from 2021-22. The results for 2022-23 were suppressed for both ELA and math. It should be noted that the first high school ninth-grade class was in 2017-18. The first reported year of SAT scores was in 2021-22.

Eighty-seven percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed that there is a common vision of what effective instruction looks like at Great Oaks. There are instructional frameworks for humanities, math, and science. In the humanities, there is a seventy-minute instructional framework for high school and ninety-minute instructional frameworks for the middle school grade levels. They both have recommended times for each component: Do Now, Direct Instruction including vocabulary instruction, Guided Practice, Independent Practice including small group instruction (middle school level only), and Assessment/Closure. There is a narrative describing the framework components and specific expectations for teacher, fellow, and student actions. The STEM instructional frameworks include launch, explore, summarize, apply, and reflect. There are recommendations for student grouping and collaborative work; however, there are no time recommendations. There are detailed expectations in each section for teacher, fellow, and student action. There are lesson plan templates that align with the instructional frameworks; however, there is no place on the lesson plans for small group instruction. Teachers in the focus groups reported that they use instructional frameworks for both humanities and STEM. Audit day observations evidenced that 20 percent (n=10) of classrooms engaged in vocabulary instruction and 70 percent (n=10) engaged in whole group instruction.

The principals reported that the high school teachers meet bi-weekly to look at attendance, behavior, and grades while the middle school teachers meet weekly for data teams to "discuss what they are seeing in classes."

There is no formal continuous improvement cycle that uses progress monitoring of multiple forms of data, student work samples, action plans, and monitoring. There is a calendar of benchmark and unit assessment due dates. Although the principals reported that progress monitoring is done by grade-level teams through assessments and exit tickets at grade-level data team meetings, this is at the grade-level team's discretion.

While there are some systems in place for instructional leadership, implementation with fidelity and accountability are areas of growth within Great Oaks.

Challenging Instruction

Audit day classroom observations evidenced that 90 percent (n=10) of instructional activities were teacher-centered. Students in the focus group reported, "There are teachers who do a lot of teacher talk," and "some of them keep going on and on about a subject." The audit team found limited evidence of challenging instruction where students engaged in instructional activities that applied their knowledge or activities that allowed them to construct new meaning. Contrary to these observations, teacher survey results indicated that 83 percent (n=46) of teachers agreed that "teachers at this school engage students in higher order thinking and push them toward content mastery." Only 70 percent (n=46) of teacher respondents to the survey agreed with the statement that "instructional quality and academic rigor are consistently high at this school." Teacher survey respondents wrote academic rigor was an area of growth, specifically, "We need more consistent respect for standards-based instruction and academic rigor." Eighty-seven percent (n=23) of parents agreed with the statement, "My child is appropriately challenged." Student participants in the focus group when asked if the work was challenging, responded, "Compared to other schools, we think the school pushes us to do our work and we work harder than before" and "The work is more difficult, and we have to think and try."

While 50 percent (n=10) of observed classrooms had students sitting in collaborative groupings, discourse was limited to teachers calling on students to recall facts, terms, definitions, and concepts. There were no opportunities, except in the Flex Period, for students to respond to content through inquiry, interpretation, and group discourse. Observed questioning was not scaffolded to move students to higher levels of thinking. In one classroom the teacher did ask students to explain and justify their thinking. Eighty-nine percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "I plan for student discourse during my lessons." When asked how the implementation of curricular resources and instructional framework was going, the leadership team reported, "Everyone is in a different place. First-time teachers are willing to try new things while more experienced teachers push back."

Additionally, 96 percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "I have high expectations for my students and believe they can achieve grade-level standards." Eighty-seven percent (n=23) of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, "There are high expectations for my child." Meanwhile, teacher participants in the focus groups noted that "The greatest challenge instructionally is the students' levels. You don't want any student to feel like they are being left behind." Other teachers noted, "In math, we transitioned to a new curricular resource. The concepts can get a little abstract for the students."

Engaging Instruction

During classroom observations (n=10), the audit team found that most students were compliant in their engagement or off task evidenced by waiting for teacher direction or sitting quietly staring at their worksheets. In 30 percent of classrooms (n=10), students were preparing to work or working in small groups. However, there was little student discourse about the content. Ninety percent (n=10) of classroom observations evidenced that discussion was primarily driven by the teacher in lecture format and students were passive participants or distracted by cell phone use. Teachers in the focus group disclosed that, "In direct instruction it's me doing a lot of the talking." In the teacher survey, 72 percent (n=46) of teachers agreed with the statement, "Students are engaged in their classes." In the parent

survey, 91 percent (n=23) of parents agreed with the statement, "My child is interested and engaged in their classes." Student focus group participants revealed that "sometimes they are bored in class" and "try to pay attention and doodle to keep focused." The leadership team noted that in math, "the new curriculum requires productive struggle, and our kids aren't there yet. Right now, engagement is really compliance, and we are trying to move it to the next level."

Standards Aligned Curricula and Instruction

The Chief Executive Director reported that there are standards-based curricula for all content areas aligned with Connecticut Core Standards (CCS), and scope and sequence guides. As reported in the teacher survey, 93 percent (n=46) of the respondents agreed, "The school has curricula for all grade levels and content areas aligned to the current CCS." The school has invested in curricular resources for math meeting the rigor, focus, and coherence of the CCS. Both *MidSchoolMath* in the middle school and *Illustrative Math* in the high school meet expectations for all grade levels as reported by *EdReports*. The middle school ELA curricular resource is *Fishtank ELA Plus 6-8.* This resource meets grade level expectations as reported by *EdReports*. The high school ELA curricular resources include units from *Fishtank ELA Plus 9-12, EngageNY,* and *Louisiana Believes.* While *EngageNY* and *Louisiana Believes* meet grade level expectations, there has been no outside independent review of *Fishtank ELA Plus 9-12.*

During classroom observations, many rooms were print-rich with learning objectives, anchor charts, posters, student work with feedback, and word walls. Five of the ten observed classrooms had learning targets and success criteria posted that aligned to grade-level standards although most of the other classrooms (ELA and social studies) had learning objectives aligned with the instructional tasks which were not aligned to grade-level standards. The auditors did not see evidence that the learning objectives were introduced or referenced throughout the lessons to support student learning.

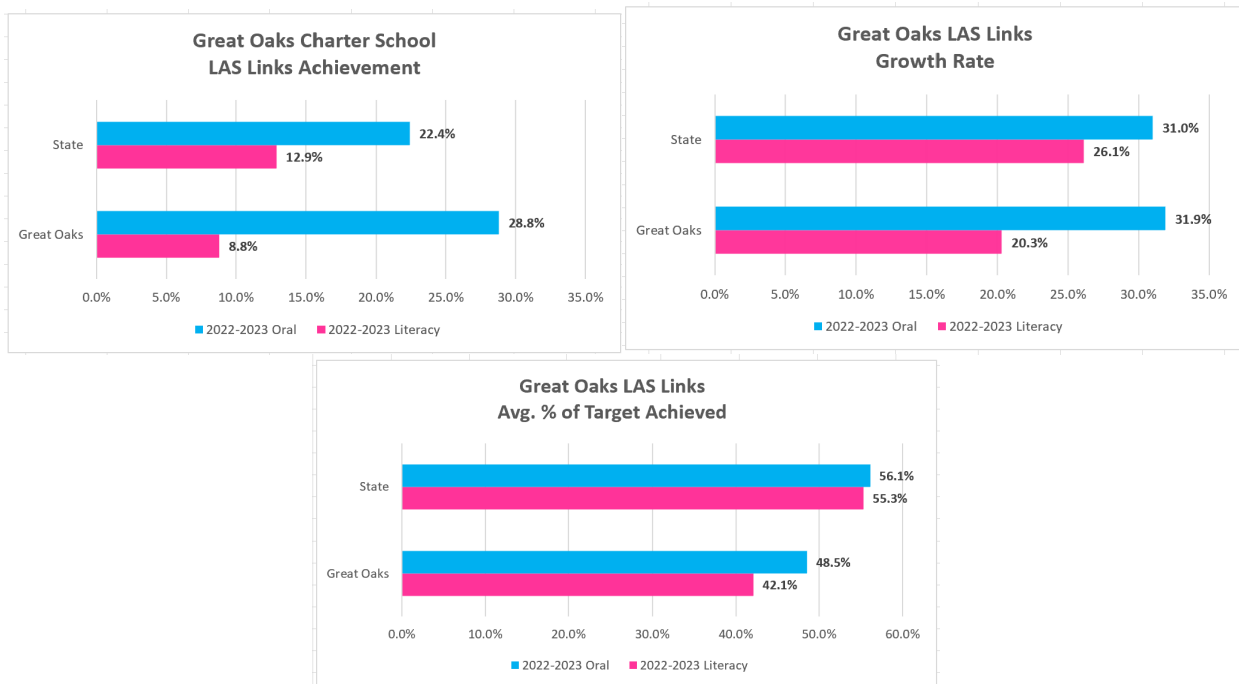**Differentiation and Supports for Diverse Learners**

Twenty-one percent (n=664) of Great Oaks students are identified as students with disabilities. There are four special education teachers and one site-based Special Services Coordinator. The caseload average is thirty-five students per special education teacher. Leadership noted there is an additional special education position for the high school grade levels that is currently vacant. ELA growth rate of 44.2 percent and average percentage of target achieved (APTA) of 71.0 percent exceeded the state's ELA growth rate of 26.7 percent and 49.3 percent. Additionally, within Great Oaks, the students with disabilities' ELA growth rate and APTA exceeded non-special education students' ELA growth rate of 43.8 percent and APTA of 69.6 percent.

Approximately 13 percent of Great Oaks students are identified as ELs /MLs. Great Oaks does not have a bilingual education program. Students enter the school and are placed in general education classes. There are four EL /ML teachers at Great Oaks, two for each school. Two EL/ML staff are certified in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Leadership noted that the remaining two have submitted applications, which are pending review by the CSDE. Leadership also noted, "We require non-certified teachers to enroll in a TESOL certification program before joining our team. Additionally, candidates are required to meet the foreign language credit requirements specified by the CSDE for a temporary TESOL license. By establishing these standards, we aim to ensure that our students benefit from the expertise and dedication of qualified TESOL teachers." The caseload average for EL/ML teachers is 22 students per teacher. Eighty-three percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "The school/district supports my ability to provide linguistic and academic support

for my multilingual learners." School leadership stated that many are Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (SLIFE) and may not be familiar with technology.
The principals noted EL/ML support is an area of growth for Great Oaks.

Both special education teachers and EL/ML teachers provide push-in and pull-out instruction and participate in grade-level lesson planning. The Special Services Coordinator has done professional learning about "What diverse learners need and works with teachers to "incorporate word banks, re-direction, songs, and visuals." During classroom observations, the audit team did find evidence of differentiation for ELs/MLs and special education students in small group instruction by EL/ML teachers and fellows. Only 61 percent (n=46) of teachers agreed with the statement, "The school adequately meets the needs of its special education and multilingual students." Teacher focus group participants reported instructional support for EL/ML students was a growth area, especially in math and science. Currently, there are no systems in place to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of EL/ML and special education small group instruction.

As illustrated below, Great Oaks students' LAS Links oral achievement and growth rates for 2022-23 exceeded state results. While LAS Links literacy achievement, growth rates, and average percentage of target achieved for literacy and oral were less than the state results, leadership stated they have a concrete plan for push-in and pull-out support that "allows students to practice speaking in both their native language and English with a teacher they trust." They also noted that literacy did not increase as much as oral language "because our student population shifted slightly last year to students with less experience in English instruction."

Great Oaks Charter School LAS Links Achievement

State — 22.4% (2022-2023 Oral), 12.9% (2022-2023 Literacy)
Great Oaks — 28.8% (2022-2023 Oral), 8.8% (2022-2023 Literacy)

Great Oaks LAS Links Growth Rate

State — 31.0% (2022-2023 Oral), 26.1% (2022-2023 Literacy)
Great Oaks — 31.9% (2022-2023 Oral), 20.3% (2022-2023 Literacy)

Great Oaks LAS Links Avg. % of Target Achieved

State — 56.1% (2022-2023 Oral), 55.3% (2022-2023 Literacy)
Great Oaks — 48.5% (2022-2023 Oral), 42.1% (2022-2023 Literacy)

In the middle school, there is time allotted to Tier 1 small group instruction although this was not observed during audit observations. Eighty-seven percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "I use small group instruction within my instructional block." Some teachers in the focus groups noted that they differentiate based on "the number of questions asked."

There is an intervention block called Flex Period in middle school. Classroom fellows meet with the teacher to review the data and make small groups. These groupings are re-evaluated every two weeks. Students who are not in small groups are working on Lumos Learning Path. Based on benchmarks, this platform assigns students lessons that they need to accelerate learning. Teachers and fellows progress monitor the results. There is a Multi-Tiered Support System documented and in place. Teachers provide tiered interventions during the Flex Period and fellows provide intervention after school. Ninety-one percent (n=23) of parent respondents agreed with the statement, "There are additional supports and academic interventions provided if my child is struggling."

At the high school level, there is no Tier 1 small group instruction or designated intervention/extension time during the scheduled day. Great Oaks obtains parent permission for students to stay after school for tiered interventions. School leadership reported that many students participate in these sessions.

Assessment Practices and Data Use

Seventy-eight percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed, "This school has a comprehensive assessment system to measure student progress, identify necessary interventions, and provide teachers with data to inform instruction." Lumos benchmark assessments are administered three times per year. Focus groups report that progress monitoring of Tier 1 instruction is done through monthly district assessments in ELA and math. School leadership reported teachers look at these during grade-level content meetings and some use them in data cycles. They also noted students are identified as needing intervention based on their Lumos, unit assessments, and Smarter Balanced Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) scores. Once a week, teachers meet for grade-level data team and intervention reviews. Data teams at the grade level are focused on student work and review of data.

Eighty-nine percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "Teachers at this school use student assessment data and checks for understanding to differentiate instruction." Teacher focus groups reported that they use exit tickets to monitor student understanding. Audit day observations evidenced teachers provide whole group feedback during instruction.

Culture and Climate				
Indicator:	1	2	3	4
3.1. Culture and Climate Leadership			✓	
3.2. School Environment			✓	
3.3. Student Attendance	✓			
3.4. Social-Emotional Behavioral Well-Being		✓		
3.5. Interpersonal Interactions			✓	
3.6. Equitable Partnerships with Families			✓	
3.7. Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy			✓	

<u>**Summary of Strengths**</u>

Culture and Climate Leadership

Eighty-seven percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "The school promotes culturally responsive relationships within my school." The principal reported, "Each school has

culture committees, and we have fellows who are dedicated to culture work." Teacher focus group participants reported, "Our culture is one of respect for each other, for our students, and for this place." Seventy percent (n=39) of teacher respondents wrote in comments regarding the strength of Great Oaks culture, community, and leadership, "Our greatest strengths are the strong sense of community among staff, students, and families." The student focus group reported, "We have a mission, there are posters everywhere, teachers are in the hallways and they greet you at the door," and "They ask us our opinions on different things."

A safe school culture and climate plan is in place for the high school and middle school students and families. While it is not posted on the school website, it establishes a system for supporting a positive school culture. All audit day focus groups agreed that the school provides, maintains, and implements an equitable, caring, and inclusive school climate. The leadership team develops a positive school culture by establishing schedules for focused collaborative work.

School Environment

Great Oaks provides a welcoming and intellectually stimulating learning environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. The school is clean and in good repair. The hallways display student work, murals with core values such as EPIC (Excellence, Perseverance, Integrity, and Compassion), and the school's branding ("Acorns Grow into Great Oaks" and the school mascot, the grizzly bear). While only sixty-five percent (n=46) of the teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "The school environment is conducive to high-quality teaching and learning," only 15 percent disagreed with this statement and 19 percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Eighty-three percent (n=23) of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, "The culture and climate at this school is welcoming to all learners and their families."

Interpersonal Interactions

There is a good overall sense of community. Observed interactions and communications between staff and students were positive and respectful. Eighty-seven percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "Interactions between students and staff are positive and respectful." Ninety-one percent (n=23)) of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, "Interactions between staff, students, and families are positive and respectful."

There is a strong sense of community between teachers. Teacher focus groups reported, "Student and teacher relationships were good. Students will hang around to talk to us." Most of the teachers in the focus group noted they felt that students respected teachers. Student focus group participants also noted, "Most teachers treat us well and push their students to do their best." All students in the focus group felt they could reach out to at least one adult in the building. Eighty-seven percent (n=23) of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, "My child feels connected with school staff."

Equitable Partnerships with Families

Fifty-four percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "Families are engaged in this school." While 91 percent (n=23) of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, "The school provides multiple opportunities for family involvement." Seventy-eight percent (n=23) of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, "I receive regular updates from teachers on my child's progress." The principals shared that Great Oaks uses two-way communication methods beginning with *Remind*. They also noted that teachers communicate through phone calls,

SchoolMessenger, email, and social media. They did acknowledge that most communication is done electronically. There are conferences, parent meetings, monthly newsletters, and activities for parents, teachers, and students.

Eighty-three percent (n=23) of parent respondents agreed with the statement, "I feel comfortable reaching out to administration, teachers, or staff members with a question or concern." Students in the focus group reported, "Teachers call with positive messages all of the time." Parent survey respondents wrote that they "would like more interactions between staff and parents." Others wrote that they would like to see "interpersonal communication between the school and families and teachers and families improve."

Community Partners and Wraparound

Great Oaks' primary community partners are Sawubona, Post University, and the Greater Bridgeport Area Prevention Program (GBAPP). Sawubona provides an art-based therapy program that is embedded in an enrichment class. Eighth-grade students work with local artists and writers as part of their social-emotional learning program. Post University provides early college opportunities for students; the Chief Executive Director stated they have approximately twenty-five students enrolled. GBAPP provides substance abuse programs. School leadership reported that they have a system for monitoring and evaluating these services. In addition to these programs, Great Oaks has partnerships with Housatonic Community College which enrolls students for early college opportunities and Sacred Heart University and Fairfield University provide teacher residencies. The Southwest Community Health Center provides health and counseling services for families and students. There are an additional eight community partners also involved at Great Oaks. Eighty-seven percent (n=23) of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement: "I feel the school supports students' and families' health, wellness, and/or social-emotional needs."

<u>**Summary of Growth Areas:**</u>

Attendance

In 2022-23, Great Oaks' chronic absenteeism continued to surpass the 2018-2019 pre-pandemic rate of 23.4 percent. The chronic absenteeism rate in 2022-23 was 36.8 percent, which was higher than the state average of 20.0 percent. Chronic absenteeism at Great Oaks increased 6.4 percent from 2021-22 levels.

School leadership agreed that attendance is still a challenge for them. "Transportation is a challenge; our students get bus passes as there is no high school transportation." They also noted that when "there is an increase in violence in the community, students don't feel safe walking to school." They reported that there is an attendance team for the high school and middle school grade levels. Teacher focus groups reported that there is a tiered system in which if there are "three (absences) in a row, we contact home; next one, we contact the office; and the principal does a home visit." The leadership team focus group noted that this is a focus area for improvement and reported they "meet every week now and discuss the interventions we have in place. We also communicate with our EL/ML families in their languages."

Seventy-four percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "Attendance data is communicated to staff." Ninety-six percent (n=23) of respondents to the parent survey agreed

with the statement, "Student attendance is a priority." The student focus group unanimously agreed that attendance is important.

Social-Emotional Behavioral (SEB) Well-Being

Great Oaks' suspension rates in 2018-19, the pre-pandemic baseline, was 15.1 percent. In 2021-22, it increased to 17.4 percent, significantly above the state level of 6.5 percent. In 2022-23, the suspension rate decreased to 11.6 percent which is above the state rate of 7.0 percent. Ninety-six percent (n=23) of parent survey respondents agreed with the statement, "There are clear expectations of student behavior." Only 65 percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "The school implements an effective schoolwide behavior management system." Teachers in the focus group reported, "Cell phones are an issue" although other teachers noted, "We do text teachers during the class which might not be the best model for our students." School leadership reported there is a cell phone policy – when the red sign is up in classrooms it signifies no cell phones and when the sign is green it signifies cell phones can be used for "appropriate academic usage." Teacher survey respondents shared that new teachers need classroom management support. Teacher focus group participants also noted that policies and procedures are implemented inconsistently across classrooms. The principals noted that there is a culture manual on major and minor violations that serves as a guide for teachers as to whether they should handle the behavior themselves or refer to an assistant principal. There are two assistant principals and several fellows who support behavior.

When the student focus group was asked, "How would you describe behavior in your school?" They replied, "The student environment here is good;" "Any big issues between students will be addressed." "Students feel like they can get their work done." "Students support each other."

Operations				
Indicator:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
4.1. Operational Leadership				
4.2. Scheduling Structures		✓		
4.3. Classroom Structures and Use of Time	✓			
4.4. School Site Security and Safety			✓	

Summary of Growth Areas:

School Site Security and Safety

The school environment is calm and orderly. Adults were present in the hallways to support norms. Transitions were also orderly. Middle school grade-level teachers escort students between classes and lunch while high school grade-level students transfer between classes and lunch independently. Seventy-six percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "The school has clear routines and procedures in place that are consistently followed by students and staff to help create a smooth and orderly environment." A school site safety plan is filed with the State of Connecticut.

Summary of Growth Areas:

Scheduling Structures

The school uses a trimester schedule, where science and social studies are included on a rotating half-year schedule. The school's daily schedule provides approximately a five-day average of 5.0 hours per day of instructional time for students to achieve academic and behavioral goals. This includes intervention and enrichment time of 45 minutes per day at the middle school level that rotates between math and ELA. High school students receive 70 minutes of ELA and math while middle school students receive 90 minutes of ELA and math every day, plus intervention time. Seventy-six percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "The school structure and calendar maximize instructional time."

Classroom Structures and Use of Time

Forty percent (n=10) of observed classrooms evidenced effective use of time. In the other classrooms, staff and students used time ineffectively. There were missed opportunities to maximize time on tasks. Many students required redirection to transition between activities. Eighty-three percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "Teachers are adept at managing and maximizing instructional time within the classroom." There are detailed activity-specific instructional frameworks in place that align with lesson plans; however, implementation was inconsistent.

All grade-level teams have common planning periods that are scheduled for interventions, content, grade level, and data teams; however, they do not have time scheduled for vertical teacher conversations. Only 54 percent (n=46) of teacher survey respondents agreed with the statement, "Teachers have enough time to work with each other to develop instructional materials, review student data, and improve instruction." Teachers in the focus groups reported, "We have weekly data team meetings and coaching meetings. We also have curriculum, intervention, and behavior meetings."

Appendix A: Operations and Instructional Audit Rubric

TALENT				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary** — All characteristics of Proficient plus one or more of the following:
1.1 Turnaround Leadership	Does not set the strategic and logistical direction for school improvement. Short- and long-term goals identified in a school improvement plan do not exist.	Sets the strategic and logistical direction for school improvement but does not establish and communicate clear systems (policies, structures, and expectations) to work towards improvement goals.	Sets the strategic and logistical direction for the school's improvement by establishing and communicating clear systems (policies, structures, and expectations) to work towards improvement goals.	Promotes and provides opportunities for families and members of the community to provide feedback and hear updates on short- and long-term goals.
	Leadership teams are not established.	Develops leadership teams but does not build leadership capacity or distribute leadership.	Develops leadership teams by distributing leadership; however, does not build staff leadership capacity for school improvement.	Develops effective leadership teams and builds staff leadership capacity for school improvement by distributing leadership.
	Does not engage and communicate school vision, mission, and improvement priorities with stakeholders (students, faculty, and school community).	Engages and communicates school vision, mission, and improvement priorities with faculty but not with students and the school community.	Engages and communicates school vision, mission, and improvement priorities with stakeholders (students, faculty, and school community).	Promotes and provides opportunities for families and members of the community to be actively engaged in decision-making that supports school improvement.
1.2 Talent Management	Does not develop or implement a coherent equitable recruitment, selection, or retention strategy.	Develops and implements coherent equitable recruitment, selection, and retention strategies but does not provide support for retention and early career teachers that is in alignment with the school's vision, mission, and school improvement goals.	Develops and implements coherent equitable recruitment, selection, and retention strategies and provides support for retention and early career teachers that is in alignment with the school's vision, mission, and school improvement goals.	Builds the capacity of staff through high-quality differentiated support.
1.3 Professional Learning Systems	Does not establish, implement, or monitor the impact of high-quality professional learning systems.	Establishes a professional learning system; however, does not implement or monitor the impact of high-quality professional learning systems.	Establishes, implements, and monitors the impact of high-quality professional learning systems designed to build the capacity needed for school improvement.	Promotes collaborative practices and fosters leadership opportunities for a professional learning system that promotes continuous improvement.

ACADEMICS				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary All characteristics of Proficient plus one or more of the following:
2.1 Instructional Leadership	Does not set high academic standards and instructional practices, does not communicate to staff, and does not ensure access to rigorous standards-based curricula.	Sets high academic standards and instructional practices, but does not effectively communicate to staff and does not ensure access to rigorous standards-based curricula.	Sets a common vision of what effective instruction looks like, including high academic standards and instructional practices that are communicated to staff, monitored, and ensured access to rigorous standards-based curricula.	Builds the capacity of staff to identify and address barriers to implementing the school's instructional vision and core instructional practices.
	Does not create a continuous improvement cycle.	Does not implement with fidelity a continuous improvement cycle.	Implements a continuous improvement cycle that uses progress monitoring of multiple forms of data and student work samples about current practices and outcomes but does not use this information to guide ongoing decision-making that addresses student and/or adult learning needs and progress toward the school improvement plan or the school's vision, mission, and goals.	Implements a continuous improvement cycle that uses progress monitoring of multiple forms of data and student work samples about current practices and outcomes to guide ongoing decision-making that addresses student and/or adult learning needs and progress towards the school improvement plan or the school's vision, mission, and goals.
2.2 Challenging Instruction	Instructional activities are teacher-centered. There is no evidence of student-centered instructional activities.	Instructional tasks/activities provide opportunities for students to recall facts, terms, or concepts and demonstrate their understanding thereof.	Instructional tasks/activities provide opportunities for students to apply, differentiate, synthesize, hypothesize, and construct new meanings.	Instructional tasks/activities include the opportunity for students to reflect and assess their own learning and metacognition.
	Tasks do not include the opportunity for students to respond to content through inquiry, interpretation, and discourse.	Tasks include the opportunity for students to respond to content through discourse.	Tasks include the opportunity for students to respond to content through inquiry, interpretation, and discourse.	Instruction is culturally relevant. Instructional tasks/activities that include opportunities to evaluate/critique the instructional content (e.g., artifacts, texts, media, others' work).

	Lessons do not include questions that are scaffolded to move students to higher levels of thinking and do not require students to explain and justify their thinking.	Lessons include questions that are scaffolded to move students to higher levels of thinking; however, they do not require students to explain and justify their thinking.	Lessons include questions that are scaffolded to move students to higher levels of thinking and require students to explain and justify their thinking.	Lessons include questions to provide students the opportunity to reflect and assess their own learning and metacognition.
2.3 Engaging Instruction	Students are not cognitively or behaviorally engaged in active learning strategies individually or in small groups.	Students are behaviorally engaged in active learning strategies individually or in small groups.	Students are cognitively and behaviorally engaged in active learning strategies individually or in small groups. Students have opportunities to work collaboratively to explore, reflect, and problem-solve with opportunities to share their own ideas.	Discussion is primarily student-driven, and the student's voice is dominant.
2.4 Standards Aligned Curricula and Instruction	Rigorous, standards-based curricula do not exist, or teachers are not aware of the curricula for English language arts, math, and science content areas for all grade levels.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula are lacking in one core content area. Curricula are being implemented with fidelity across classrooms; however, teachers are not consistent in their pacing.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula exist for all content areas for all grade levels. Curricula are being implemented with fidelity across classrooms with teachers demonstrating consistent pacing.	Rigorous, standards-based curricula and/or scope and sequence exist for all grade levels and content areas rostered (advisory, intervention, electives). Curricula are being implemented with fidelity across classrooms with teachers demonstrating consistent pacing.
	There are limited classroom visuals.	Classroom visuals (e.g., learning targets and success criteria, anchor charts, word walls) support content or skill goals from the curriculum and are aligned to grade-level standards or prerequisite standards; however, they are not introduced and/or referenced throughout the lesson to support student learning.	Classroom visuals (e.g., learning targets and success criteria, anchor charts, word walls) support content or skill goals from the curriculum and are aligned to grade-level standards or prerequisite standards. The supports are introduced and/or referenced throughout the lesson to support student learning.	Classroom visuals are student-created, or students are led through the process of unpacking the content or skills goals from the curriculum that are aligned to grade-level standards.

2.5 Differentiation and Supports for Diverse Learners	All students receive the same lesson, process, and product with no evidence of differentiation.	There is some evidence of differentiation based on adjusting content, process, or product. There are no real-time adjustments based on student responses.	Lesson content/process, and/or product are differentiated to support student needs and adjusted in real-time based on student responses.	Students have a choice in content, process or product.
	Lessons are structured for one learning modality or style and/or using below grade-level concepts or skills.	Lessons are structured to include a limited number of learning modalities and styles using grade-level concepts and skills.	Lessons are structured to include multiple learning modalities and styles using grade-level concepts and skills.	Lessons provide opportunities for extension activities to provide enrichment.
	There is little to no evidence of support for multilingual learners in the instruction or classroom environment.	While there is some evidence of linguistic and academic support for multilingual learners in the classroom environment, these are not leveraged during instruction.	There are linguistic and academic supports in the classroom environment, and the teacher implements scaffolds in the instruction to support the development of multilingual learners' language and content.	Linguistic and academic supports are visible in the classroom environment and are utilized to scaffold instruction for ELs/MLs in order to make content comprehensible.
2.6 Assessment Practices and Data Use	Teachers do not check for student understanding.	Teachers monitor student understanding through whole group check-ins or questioning.	Teachers monitor student understanding through whole group check-ins, review of student work, exit tickets, one-to-one conferencing, or questioning and adjust instruction as needed.	Teachers immediately adjust instruction in response to monitoring student understanding.
	Teachers do not provide feedback.	Based on evidence (e.g., students' verbal or written responses, small group discussions) teachers provide students with whole group general feedback.	Based on evidence (e.g., students' verbal or written responses, small group discussions) teachers provide students with individualized feedback so that students know what to work on next.	Students utilize teacher feedback to independently extend their learning.

	Data teams do not exist or infrequently meet.	Data teams are scheduled to meet regularly, but they are occasionally interrupted, cut short, or canceled. Leadership support for data teams is inconsistent.	Data teams are a priority in the schedule and are rarely displaced by other events. Collaboratively, the grade-level team examines the data to identify and agree upon instructional strategies to implement before the next meeting, and the team develops a plan to measure success.	There are vertical and school-wide data teams. Collaboratively, these teams chart the data, analyze, and interpret the data, and use the data to identify grade-level band and schoolwide trends that impact school improvement. The schoolwide trends are communicated to teachers.

CULTURE AND CLIMATE				
Indicator	**Below Standard**	**Developing**	**Proficient**	**Exemplary** **All characteristics of Proficient plus one or more of the following:**
3.1 Culture & Climate Leadership	A safe school climate plan is not available.	A safe school climate plan has been created but is not posted to the district or school website. It establishes a system for supporting a positive school culture.	A safe school climate plan has been created that focuses on inclusion and cultural responsiveness as part of the school climate efforts. The plan is posted on the district or school website.	A safe school climate plan has been created and updated. It is aligned with the school improvement goals and includes input from staff, students, families, and community partners.
	Does not promote an equitable, caring, and inclusive school climate.	Developing an equitable, caring, and inclusive school climate.	Maintains and implements an equitable, caring, and inclusive school climate.	Intentionally build students' personal competencies to pursue goals and appraise their progress.
	Does not promote a positive school culture.	Developing a positive school culture by establishing systems for focused collaborative work, recognizing student effort, and academic mastery, and recognizing staff work and improvements.	Maintains/creates and promotes a positive school culture by establishing systems for focused collaborative work, recognizing student effort, and academic mastery, and recognizing staff work and improvements.	Capitalizes on the cultural competence and diversity of the community as an asset to strengthen education.
3.2 School Environment	The school fails to create a welcoming and intellectually stimulating learning environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Common spaces and classrooms may be unclean, dark, or unsafe. Many classrooms are neither warm nor inviting and lack intellectual stimulation. Little to	The school struggles to provide a welcoming and intellectually stimulating learning environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. Large sections of the school are not clean, bright, welcoming, or reflective of current student work. Some classrooms and common spaces are bright but may not display current data and student work.	The school provides a welcoming and intellectually stimulating learning environment conducive to high-quality teaching and learning. The school is clean and in good repair. Most classrooms and common spaces are bright and display current data and student work.	There is clear and consistent messaging throughout the school, promoting school identity, mission/vision, and pride. Bulletin boards, displays, hall decorations, and offices show diverse students of varied racial, ethnic, gender, and people with disabilities in a variety of roles.

	no student work or data is displayed.			
3.3 Student Attendance	Average daily attendance is ≤ 88 percent and/or chronic absenteeism is > 20 percent.	Average daily attendance is > 88 percent and <93 percent and/or chronic absenteeism is > 15 percent and ≤ 20 percent.	Average daily attendance is > 93 percent and ≤ 97 percent and/or chronic absenteeism is > 10 percent and ≤ 15 percent.	Average daily attendance is > 97 percent and chronic absenteeism is ≤ 10 percent.
	A small group of staff meets regarding students who are already chronically absent or extremely chronically absent. However, most of the responsibility falls on one person, e.g., the school counselor or social worker.	The attendance team meets periodically, is made up of mostly student support staff, and the school administrator or their designer does not lead the group.	The school attendance team meets biweekly and is led by the school administrator or their designee and is made up of various roles in the school, e.g., student supports, special education, school nurse, attendance clerk, and teacher.	The school attendance team meets weekly. Roles are clearly defined.
	The school does not incorporate attendance improvement strategies into a Multi-Tiered System of Support. The focus for improvement is on referrals for truancy and education neglect.	The school has a supportive/restorative data-informed Multi-Tiered System of Support with a focus primarily on Tier 3. There are no measures for monitoring the strategy implementation.	The school has a supportive, data-informed Multi-Tiered System of Support for students with a plan for all three tiers. Implementation is monitored for quality and effectiveness.	The school has a supportive/restorative data-informed Multi-Tiered System of Support with a focus on strong Tier 1 strategies and monitoring of the effectiveness of Tier 2 and 3 strategies. Community providers are engaged as partners to help meet the needs of families and students.
3.4 Social-Emotional Behavioral (SEB) Well-Being	Structured social-emotional well-being goals, behavior plan, and interventions may be in place, and interventions are not implemented effectively for all students within a tiered structure.	Structured social-emotional well-being goals, behavior plan, and interventions are in place, and interventions are implemented inconsistently for all students within a tiered structure.	Structured social-emotional and behavioral well-being goals, behavior plan, and interventions are in place, and interventions are implemented effectively for some students within a tiered structure.	Structured social-emotional and behavioral well-being goals, behavior plan, and interventions are in place, and interventions are implemented effectively for all students within a tiered structure.
	The suspension rate is ≥ than 12 percent.	The suspension rate is between ≥10 percent and <12 percent.	The suspension rate is between ≥ 8 percent and <10 percent.	The suspension rate is <8 percent.

3.5 Interpersonal Interactions	There is a weak sense of community. Interactions between staff and students are negative or disrespectful and/or the staff does not promote positive social interactions among students or each other.	There is a moderate sense of community. Interactions between staff and students are generally positive and respectful and/or the staff inconsistently makes attempts to promote positive social interactions among students and each other.	There is a good overall sense of community. Interactions and communications between staff and students are consistently positive and respectful and the staff regularly promotes positive social interactions among students and each other.	The school fosters an environment where students proactively demonstrate positive social interactions and conflict-resolution skills and involves learners in promoting a respectful learning environment.
3.6 Equitable Partnerships with Families	The school does not use any communication methods and does little to adapt communication strategies to meet the needs of individual families.	The school primarily uses one-way communication methods and does little to adapt communication strategies to meet the needs of individual families.	School uses a wide range of two-way communication methods that serve the needs of families to provide frequent, proactive, and personalized communication with families about student performance and learning.	Teachers utilize a wide variety of strategies, such as home visits, to build awareness of families' cultures and use this knowledge to reach out to most families in culturally respectful ways. Teachers and families co-construct strategies to engage students in learning inside and outside of the classroom.
3.7 Community Partners and Wraparound Strategy	The school does not ask families what additional programs or services they need to support their student's achievement.\n\nThe school offers inadequate support to address students' nonacademic needs. There are limited wraparound services. The school makes little effort to engage community partners to expand services offered through the school.	The school determines families' needs and preferences for additional programs or services to support their student's achievement from conversations with a few families or general demographic data.	The school determines wraparound services and preferences for programs or services families need to support their students' social and emotional well-being and achievement from data collected through surveys, focus groups, and home visits. Families play a role in developing and delivering programs and services.	The school has opportunities to regularly listen to the voices of families (e.g., listening tours, coffee hours, and online social media) to engage families in proactive problem-solving around barriers to accessing community organizations and services.
	The school does not have a system for monitoring and/or evaluating the services provided by the community partner.	The school has a limited system for monitoring and/or evaluating the services provided by the community partner.	The school has a system for monitoring and/or evaluating the services provided by the community partner.	School has a comprehensive system for monitoring and evaluating the services provided by the community partner.

OPERATIONS				
Indicator	Below Standard	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary All characteristics of Proficient plus one or more of the following:
4.1 Operational Leadership / Financial Management * This indicator is not measured during the Initial audit.	Decisions about the establishment, implementation, budgeting, and monitoring of organizational systems do not support the school improvement plan and orderly operation of the school.	Decisions about the establishment, implementation, budgeting, and monitoring of organizational systems generally support the school improvement plan and orderly operation of the school most of the time.	Decisions about the establishment, implementation, budgeting, and monitoring of organizational systems consistently support the school improvement plan and orderly operation of the school.	There is a clear sustainability plan for all major expenditures.
	Unable to accurately access and or leverage school and district resources; does not effectively manage budget.	Allocates resources but is not knowledgeable about possibilities for accessing alternate physical and human resources. Does not ensure educational equity for diverse student, family, and staff needs.	Allocates and maximizes resources in alignment with the mission and student learning goals and assesses external resources to fill gaps; effectively plans and manages a fiscally responsible budget that supports the school's goals; and ensures the school is financially secure in the long-term.	Continually assesses and reassesses resources and creatively utilizes and leverages existing school and district resources and is relentless in actively accessing human and fiscal resources that align with strategic priorities to support the achievement of school improvement plan targets.
4.2 Scheduling Structures	There is not enough time in the school schedule to appropriately meet students' academic needs. Time is underutilized in the school calendar and daily schedule. Does not include scheduled or defined blocks for instruction, intervention, or enrichment. Transition times do not maximize the use of student or staff time.	The school calendar and daily schedule could be improved to increase time on task. The schedule includes >5 and $\leq$ 5.5 hours of instruction per day. ELA instruction >60 and $\leq$ 90 minutes each day.[1] Intervention is scheduled but happens infrequently due to scheduling changes and/or staffing issues.	Provides adequate instructional time for students to reach academic and behavioral goals. The schedule includes >5.5 hours and $\leq$ 6.0 hours of instruction per day. ELA instruction includes > 90 minutes and < 120 minutes and math instruction is at least 60 minutes for elementary schools. There is a designated time for intervention and enrichment that is protected within the schedule.	Includes > 6 hours of instruction per day, and $\geq$ 120 minutes of ELA time and > 60 minutes for math. Includes designated time and evidence of coordination for staff collaboration for vertical and school-wide data teams.

4.3	Classroom Structures & Use of Time	Staff and students use time ineffectively. Instructional time is not maximized. There are missed opportunities to maximize time on tasks.	Staff and student use of time is somewhat effective. Some students are off task and there are missed opportunities to maximize instructional time.	Staff and student use of time is effective. Most students require little to no redirection to transition. Instructional time is maximized.	Staff and students maximize their use of time. There is no downtime. Teachers purposely use every moment of class time to prioritize instructional time on tasks.
		Common planning time is unstructured and may lack expectations for teacher collaboration (e.g., actionable next steps, development of instructional materials, analysis of student work, lesson planning).	Most academic teams have common planning periods. Collaborative planning time is used at a basic level (e.g., organization of resources or topics not directly related to classroom instruction).	Common planning periods are protected and only interrupted by emergencies. The school has established protocols to ensure that common planning time is used effectively.	All educators have weekly common planning time for vertical and horizontal planning.
4.4	School Site Security & Safety	The school is chaotic and disorderly. The safety of students and staff is a concern. Adults are not present during transitions; therefore, there is very little redirection.	The school is somewhat chaotic and/or disorderly, particularly in certain locations and during certain times of the day. Staff presence is minimal, and redirection of behavior is lacking.	The school environment is calm and orderly. Adults are present to support norms.	Adults are consistently present to reinforce norms.
		The school lacks critical operation systems (e.g., arrival, departure, lockdowns, lunch, fire drills, hallway transitions).	The school has some operational systems in place, but procedures are inconsistently implemented.	Rules and operational procedures are clear, consistent, and evident.	All stakeholders are aware of operational procedures and consistently implement them.

The Commissioner's Network
Turnaround Plan Application | Cohort XIII

Form Number: ED 708
Section 10-223h of the Connecticut General Statutes

June 21, 2023

Charlene M. Russell-Tucker
Commissioner of Education
Connecticut State Department of Education
450 Columbus Boulevard | Hartford, CT 06103
www.portal.ct.gov/sde

CSDE
CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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A. Commissioner's Network Overview

The Commissioner's Network (the Network) is a commitment between local stakeholders and the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to dramatically improve student achievement in up to 25 low-performing schools. The Network offers new resources and empowers teachers and school leaders to implement research-based strategies in schools selected by the Commissioner. Network schools remain part of their local school districts, but the districts and the CSDE secure school-level flexibility and autonomy for the schools in exchange for heightened accountability. Schools participate in the Network for a period of three to five years.

Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) § 10-223h(a), the Commissioner may select a school that has been classified as a category four or five school, as described in C.G.S. § 10-223e, to participate in the Network. The Commissioner gives preference for selection to schools: (1) that volunteer to participate in the Network, provided the local board of education and the representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for certified employees mutually agree to participate in the Network; (2) in which an existing collective bargaining agreement between the local board of education and the representatives of the exclusive bargaining unit for certified employees will have expired for the school year in which a Turnaround Plan will be implemented; or (3) that are located in school districts that (A) have experience in school turnaround reform, or (B) previously received a school improvement grant pursuant to Section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 6301, et seq.

C.G.S. § 10-223h

- authorizes the Commissioner to establish, within available appropriations, a Commissioner's Network of schools to improve student academic achievement in low-performing schools;
- authorizes the Commissioner to select not more than 25 schools in any single school year that have been classified as a category four school or a category five school pursuant to Section 10-223e to participate in the Network; and
- provides that the Commissioner may select not more than five schools in any single school year from a single school district to participate in the Network.

After the Commissioner initially selects a school to participate in the Commissioner's Network, the local board of education shall establish a Turnaround Committee pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b). Following the establishment of the Turnaround Committee, the CSDE shall conduct, in consultation with the local board of education, the School Governance Council, and the Turnaround Committee, an operations and instructional audit of the school in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(c). Once the audit is performed, the Turnaround Committee shall develop a Turnaround Plan for the school by completing this application. As stated in C.G.S. § 10-223h(d), if the Turnaround Committee does not develop a Turnaround Plan, or if the Commissioner determines that a Turnaround Plan developed by the Turnaround Committee is deficient, the Commissioner may develop a Turnaround Plan for the school. If the Commissioner deems it necessary, the Commissioner may appoint a district improvement officer for a school to implement the provisions of a turnaround plan developed by the Commissioner.

B. Turnaround Plan and Framework

The Turnaround Committee, in consultation with the School Governance Council, shall develop the Turnaround Plan in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(d) and the guidelines issued by the Commissioner. Accordingly, the Turnaround Plan must:

- provide a rigorous needs analysis informed by the operations and instructional audit;
- identify an evidence-based turnaround model, aligned to school needs and growth areas;
- provide robust strategies to secure, support, develop, evaluate, and retain top talent;
- summarize the school's academic model, including curricula, assessments, and data-driven instruction;
- outline a comprehensive approach to build a positive school culture and climate; and
- develop operational structures to effectively utilize time and resources.

Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(d), the Turnaround Plan may include proposals changing the hours and schedules of teachers and administrators at the school, the length and schedule of the school day, the length and calendar of the school year, the amount of time teachers shall be present in the school beyond the regular school day, and the hiring or reassignment of teachers or administrators at the school. If provisions of the Turnaround Plan alter the collective bargaining agreements applicable to the administrators and teachers employed by the local board of education, the local board of education and the exclusive bargaining unit for the affected certified employees shall negotiate concerning such provisions in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-153s. See C.G.S. § 10-223h(g).

The Board of Education must approve the Turnaround Plan before the school may implement it. Once the Turnaround Plan is approved, Network school leaders will work with the CSDE Turnaround Office, and other partners, to operationalize the Turnaround Plan by planning and designing tools, systems, and/or policies including, but not limited to:

- school bell schedule;
- school calendar;
- annual assessment calendar;
- staff evaluation schedule;
- professional learning calendar;
- Scientific Research-Based Interventions processes and protocols;
- school organizational chart;
- curricular materials (e.g., lesson plan template, unit plans, pacing guides);
- school budget;
- school climate; and
- calendar of family and community engagement opportunities.

PART II: TURNAROUND PLAN APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Instructions

Review and follow all directions carefully when completing this application. Complete all of the required sections. The application will be deemed incomplete and/or deficient if required sections are not submitted. The specific timeline for this application will be determined by the CSDE. District leadership must participate in, at minimum, two benchmark meetings with the Turnaround Office to provide updates on elements of the draft Turnaround Plan as it evolves and receive formative feedback. Be prepared to share draft Turnaround Plan components prior to these meetings.

B. Timeline Summary

Consistent with C.G.S. § 10-223h, the Commissioner's Network process is outlined below. As noted, the extension and expansion of the Commissioner's Network requires new legislative authorization; therefore, initial planning activities for an eleventh prospective cohort of Network schools are underway, pending legislative authorization.

1. Commissioner initially selects the school for the Network.
2. Local board of education forms the Turnaround Committee.
3. CSDE conducts the operations and instructional audit of the school.
4. Turnaround Committee, in consultation with the school governance council, develops the Turnaround Plan and budget proposal.
5. Turnaround Committee reaches consensus, or the Commissioner may develop a plan.
6. SBE votes to approve or reject the Turnaround Plan.
7. Local board of education negotiates Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with collective bargaining units for certified staff, if necessary, to establish the working conditions for the school during its turnaround period.
8. Certified staff identified and/or selected to work at the school ratify MOUs on working conditions, if necessary.
9. CSDE awards resources to the school depending on available funds.
10. Network school begins implementation of the Turnaround Plan with support from the CSDE.

C. Freedom of Information Act

All of the information contained in a proposal submitted in response to this application is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), C.G.S. Section 1-200 et seq. The FOIA declares that, except as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in statute) are public records and every person has a right to inspect such records and receive a copy of such records.

All questions regarding the Commissioner's Network should be directed to:

Irene Parisi
Chief Academic Officer
Connecticut State Department of Education
E-mail: irene.parisi@ct.gov

Section 1: Cover Page

Name of School District:	Great Oaks Charter District		
Name of School:	Great Oaks Charter School	Grade Levels:	6-12
Name of School Principal:	Chris Pellegrino, HS Principal Denise Linares, MS Principal	# of Years Serving as Principal at this School:	Chris Pellegrino, 6 years – Denise Linares, 3 years
		# of Years in Total as Administrator:	Chris Pellegrino, 6 years – Denise Linares, 5 years
Turnaround Committee Chairperson:[1]	John Scalice	Phone Number of Chairperson:	203-306-7942
		E-mail of Chairperson:	jscalice@gobpt.org
Address of Chairperson:	Street Address:	375 Howard Ave	
	City:	Bridgeport	Zip Code: 06605
Name of School Board Chairperson:	Robert Carlson		
Signature of School Board Chairperson:[2]		Date:	2/29/2024
Name of Superintendent:	John Scalice		
Signature of Superintendent:		Date:	2/29/2024

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[1] Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b)(1), the superintendent, or his or her designee, shall serve as the chairperson of the Turnaround Committee.
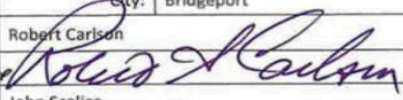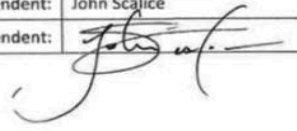
[2] By signing this cover page, the chairperson of the local board of education affirms that the board has established the Turnaround Committee in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(b), and that the superintendent has informed the board of the content of the Turnaround Plan.

PART III: COMMISSIONER'S NETWORK TURNAROUND PLAN

Section 1: Cover Page		

Name of School District:	Great Oaks Charter District		
Name of School:	Great Oaks Charter School	Grade Levels:	6-12
Name of School Principal:	Chris Pellegrino, HS Principal Denise Linares, MS Principal	# of Years Serving as Principal at this School:	Chris Pellegrino, 6 years – Denise Linares, 3 years
		# of Years in Total as Administrator:	Chris Pellegrino, 6 years – Denise Linares, 5 years
Turnaround Committee Chairperson:[1]	John Scalice	Phone Number of Chairperson:	203-306-7942
		E-mail of Chairperson:	jscalice@gobpt.org
Address of Chairperson:	Street Address:	375 Howard Ave	
	City: Bridgeport	Zip Code:	06605
Name of School Board Chairperson:	Robert Carlson		
Signature of School Board Chairperson:[2]	*Robert A. Carlson*	Date:	2/29/2024
Name of Superintendent:	John Scalice		
Signature of Superintendent:	*[signature]*	Date:	2/29/2024

[1] Pursuant to C.G.S. § 10-223h(b)(1), the superintendent, or his or her designee, shall serve as the chairperson of the Turnaround Committee.
[2] By signing this cover page, the chairperson of the local board of education affirms that the board has established the Turnaround Committee in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(b), and that the superintendent has informed the board of the content of the Turnaround Plan.

Commissioner's Network Application | 8

Section 2: Setting the Direction

An organization needs to know where it is and where it wants to be in order to improve. Effective organizations have a clear direction that informs the work of all employees. An organization's direction is used as a filter for all work. As noted in *Turnaround Leadership Domain* (Center on School Turnaround, 2017), turnaround leaders set the direction and expectations, and articulate the commitment to school turnaround. The leadership team also engages all employees and stakeholders in the process of sharing and gathering feedback and making needed revisions to finalize and communicate the direction to others. Each person needs to own the direction and understand how his or her role supports the mission. Setting a direction is important for any organization and it is particularly critical for those seeking to make rapid improvement—as is the case for the lowest-performing schools. To improve rapidly, the school needs to be willing to identify and address the root causes of its successes and failures to transform its systems and practices.

Instructions: Using the space provided, identify the district's and school's vision and theory of action. (Please note for this section there is a limit of 200 words per response box.)

A **vision statement** serves as a common direction of growth for your organization and its stakeholders. This statement describes the organization's clear and inspirational long-term desired change resulting from its work.

Theory of Action uses the "If we do X, then we can achieve Y" construct for transformative outcomes. For example, if the state education agency (SEA), local education agency (LEA) or school focuses on implementing effective instructional practice, then the organizational goal of improved student performance is supported. Thinking through a theory of action allows organizations to more clearly see the chain of changes that will have to happen for the intervention to be successful. This can help in the planning stage to be sure the solutions that are chosen truly to align with the impact that would like to be seen.

District Vision Statement (limit 200 words)

> Great Oaks Charter School, Bridgeport will become a beacon of innovation and support, continually breaking down barriers to educational success and serving as a catalyst for equity. Through our relentless pursuit of excellence in strategic planning, engaging student centered instruction, the consistent application of data leading to informed decisions, and vigilant school wide support, we aspire to create an environment where every student, volunteer, partner, staff member, and administrator can realize their full potential.
>
> Our Vision is one of progress, unity, and boundless possibilities, where Great Oaks Charter School, Bridgeport, stands as a model of educational empowerment and collaborative achievement. Together, we will shape a tomorrow where the potential of every individual is unlocked, and our community thrives as a result. Our students will change the world, not be defined by it.

District Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

> If we strategically refine engaging Tier 1 instruction while implementing targeted interventions, align these initiatives to professional development and recruitment efforts, while providing accessible and multifaceted data sources, while clearly articulating positive behavior frameworks and actively engaging the community and various stakeholders, then we can expect to see improved reading and math scores, teacher development, certified teacher retention, reduced student suspensions,

increased attendance, informed decision-making, efficient resource allocation and sustained community support while fostering a holistic and thriving educational environment.

School Vision (limit 200 words)

Our vision at Great Oaks Middle School is to create a vibrant, joyful, and inclusive school community that inspires students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. We believe in increasing student engagement and motivation by providing relevant educational opportunities in and out of the classroom along with differentiated support, fostering a love for learning that is accessible to all. We work to cultivate a growth mindset, resilience, and self-advocacy in our community. We prioritize building strong relationships that foster academic achievement and social-emotional development. We actively involve parents in our educational journey, recognizing their vital role in supporting their child's success. We commit to being EPIC (Excellence, Perseverance, Integrity, and Compassion), ensuring a safe and nurturing environment where students' potential can flourish.

Great Oaks Charter High School seeks to provide a welcoming atmosphere that creates a sense of belonging as a means for our students to realize their talents and reach their fullest potential. Our students will be deeply rooted in their identity on their quest for self-definition. We seek to maintain an inclusive, caring environment, which acknowledges and respects all members of the Great Oaks community. We value our family and community partnerships as an integral part of the academic and emotional success of our students. All of our students will explore their passions and interests. Through mastery of standards and skills, they will be able to identify the college and/or career of their choice.

School Theory of Action (limit 200 words)

- If Great Oaks Charter School successfully enhances Tier 1 strategies and interconnects development across Talent, Academic, Culture, and Operations, then the school will establish consistency, build capacity, and significantly enhance student outcomes.
- If the cohesive and sustained professional development, aligned instructional support, and specific strategies for staff retention and recruitment are effectively implemented, then the school will witness improved instructional practices, increased teacher competence, and higher staff retention rates.
- If the implementation of a rigorous Tier 1 curriculum, embedded coaching, and a scientifically research-based instructional framework are achieved, then academic rigor will improve, teachers will confidently apply Tier 1 strategies, and evidence-based teaching practices will prevail.
- If differentiated instruction within Tier 1, enhancements in school culture, and efforts to reduce suspensions succeed, then diverse learning needs will be met, creating a positive learning environment with improved attendance and fewer disciplinary incidents.
- If operational support is well-executed, then the plan will operate efficiently.
- In a three-year cycle, if there is continuous development of Tier 1 structures and teacher empowerment, then sustained growth in student outcomes, decreased disciplinary incidents, and increased teacher effectiveness will be realized.

One of the clear keys to successful turnaround is strong leadership at all levels (Herman et al., 2008). The objectives for both school and district leaders are to articulate a clear and compelling vision, create attainable short-term goals, define high performance expectations, hold faculty and staff accountable for those expectations, and continually celebrate wins (Leithwood, 2012). Research points to the importance of having a strong leader who can change culture and influence staff efficacy (Meyers & Hitt, 2017) and who demonstrates an intense focus and direction on academic outcomes (Picucci, Brownson, Kahlert, & Sobel, 2002). In addition, the district needs to embrace the turnaround effort as a district-led initiative. One study finds that the "district instructional leadership builds capacity by coordinating and aligning work of others through communication, planning, and collaboration" (Rorrer, Skrla, & Scheurich, 2008, p. 318). Throughout the turnaround process, the district must coordinate the work by setting high performance expectations, sharing those expectations in a transparent way, continually checking progress on those expectations, and — with the school — co-developing further interventions, as needed, based upon the school's progress (Leithwood, 2012). These types of leadership focuses can contribute to a productive, supportive and energizing school culture that enables adults in schools and district offices to collaboratively work toward improved outcomes for students (Kruse & Louis, 2009).

Instructions: In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the process to hire and retain an exceptional school principal with a track record of success, preferably in school turnaround and/or an urban school environment.

Great Oaks Charter School is dedicated to retaining our experienced principals through a comprehensive support system, including resources, tailored coaching, mentorship programs, professional development opportunities, recognition for achievements, and direct assistance from the Chief Executive Officer to balance efforts. If a leadership search would need to occur, the following would be applied:

- **Define Leadership Profile**: Clearly outline the desired leadership profile, emphasizing urban experience and a proven track record in teacher development. This would require 3 years or more of leadership experience in a turn-around setting or urban school environment.
- **Highlight Opportunities**: Emphasize professional development opportunities, staff interaction, collaboration, and mentorship as integral components of the leadership role.
- **Utilize Professional Networks**: Tap into professional networks to identify suitable candidates. Look within the organization for potential leaders with prior leadership roles. Target specific districts and programs to create a robust candidate pool.
- **Stakeholder Involvement**: Engage stakeholders (teachers, parents, administration) throughout the interview and hiring process to ensure alignment with our entire community.
- **Simulated Experiences**: Incorporate simulations of common school experiences during the interview process to assess candidates' responses and suitability.
- **Reference Checks**: Conduct thorough reference checks for all potential hires.

Great Oaks Charter School remains committed to cultivating strong, effective leadership for our school community. Through a defined leadership profile, active engagement of stakeholders, and careful screening processes, we aim to attract and retain a highly qualified principal who shares our vision for academic excellence and community impact. In the event that a new leader was selected through the process that did not have turn-around experience, leadership training during the

summer in coordination with the Chief Executive Officer inclusive of campus visitation, specific readings and initiative development using a action research format during summer school would occur. This would include monitoring, mentoring, and actionable feedback.

Explain how administrators will be evaluated on an annual basis to inform leadership staffing decisions.

Great Oaks administrators undergo comprehensive annual evaluations that encompass several key areas:

- **Professional Growth**: Assessment of administrators' personal and professional development.
- **Initiative Implementation**: Evaluation of their successful execution of school initiatives.
- **Problem Solving**: Examination of their ability to identify and address existing challenges.
- **Collaboration**: Assessment of their willingness and effectiveness in collaborating with peers and Executive Leadership.
- **Student Success**: Focus on administrators' contributions to student success and growth based on state indicators.
- **Performance Aligned with Marshall Rubric**: Evaluation of their performance aligned with the Marshall Rubric for Leadership.

This multifaceted evaluation approach is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of administrators' performance. It considers their personal and professional growth, examining how they have developed and enhanced their skills over the evaluation period. The assessment also delves into their success in implementing school-wide initiatives, gauging their ability to translate strategies into tangible results.

Furthermore, administrators are evaluated on their direct impact on student success and growth, aligning their efforts with state indicators. This ensures a focus on outcomes and the continuous improvement of the educational experience for students.

This holistic evaluation approach aims to capture the complexities and varied dimensions of administrators' roles, offering a thorough and nuanced perspective on their contributions to the school's overall success.

Describe the district's role in supporting and monitoring school administration in regard to implementation and monitoring of the improvement plan and budget, if approved.

The district plays a crucial role in supporting and monitoring school administration concerning the implementation and monitoring of the improvement plan and budget. Principals engage in weekly check-in and coaching sessions with the CEO, where progress towards short-term and yearly goals is discussed using the approved Commissioner's Network Plan as a guiding document. These meetings delve into data related to assessments, student passing rates, observations, and initiative implementation.

Simultaneously, weekly Instructional Team walkthroughs involve school-based administration, District Curriculum Directors, and instructional coaches, accompanied by the CEO. These walkthroughs align with stakeholder-informed plans and inform extended leadership team meetings, focusing on professional development, instructional goals, program development, data enhancement, and impact budgeting.

The district takes the collected information and communicates it to the State and stakeholders, following communication strategies outlined in the plan. This multifaceted approach ensures comprehensive support, alignment, and accountability in the implementation and monitoring of the improvement plan and budget.

Describe stakeholder (family, community, student, other) engagement processes and structures (planning and development, implementation, and revising of plan to meet current needs).

At the commencement of our planning year, staff and fellows were informed about the planning process, participation opportunities, and the intended outcome of the plan (school improvement). Public Board meetings featured presentations and discussions on plan creation, with regular updates provided. Families received notifications, and some were invited to participate in the Planning Committee, offering valuable insights and feedback.

As the plan evolved, we leveraged community partner connections to identify supporters for our initiatives. These commitments included providing various services, assisting in finding contacts for professional services, and expanding our network for staff recruitment. Staff received updates through email, dedicated meeting time, and drop-in sessions to discuss plan elements, provide feedback, and address questions. Teacher and staff representatives conveyed thoughts and feedback from daily interactions with staff members.

Moreover, student feedback played a crucial role in shaping academic directions, offering insights into instructional structure, climate, culture, and ideas for school improvement. Engaging staff, parents, and students proved to be a valuable starting point, fostering a collaborative effort to enhance the success of our community. The feedback from these stakeholders served as the foundation for creating a plan that addresses the diverse needs of our school community.

PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Instructions: Network school progress will be compared to the leading and lagging indicators identified in the chart below. Under the "Baseline and Historic Data" columns, please enter school data for each of the past three years. *The indicators with an asterisk must be in alignment to Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Milestone targets when determining performance targets.*

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 YTD	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Student Enrollment	465	664	664	643	**661**	**661**	**661**
Next Generation Accountability Index*	48.2	48.8	54.5	n/a	**68.9**	**71.6**	**74.3**
English Language Arts (ELA) School Performance Index (SPI)*	52.3	48.3	51.9	n/a	**62.1**	**64.2**	**66.4**
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth *	58.3%	49.3%	69.9%	n/a	**71.3%**	**76.1%**	**80.9%**
Math School Performance Index (SPI)*	43.1	40.9	42.2	n/a	**60.3**	**62.8**	**65.2**
Math Smarter Balanced Growth *	40.5%	55.5%	56.7%	n/a	**77.8%**	**81.5%**	**85.2%**
Average Daily Attendance Rate	92%	96.8%	89.1%	87.5%	**89%**	**90%**	**91%**
Percentage of Students Chronically Absent*	23.4%	30.4%	36.8%	11.2%	**7.8%**	**7.3%**	**6.8%**
Classroom Teacher Attendance (Average FTE Days Absent)	6.3	5.1	1.9%	.55	**3.5**	**3.0**	**2.5**
Suspension/Expulsion Rate	15.1%	17.4%	11.6%	6.3%	**9%**	**6%**	**5%**
Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 YTD	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Grade 6 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-"Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level"	15.2%	21.3%	27.5%	n/a	31%	34%	38%

Performance Indicators	Baseline/Historic Data				Performance Targets		
	2018-19	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 YTD	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Grade 7 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-"Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level"	18.1%	#	26.5%	n/a	31%	35%	39%
Grade 8 ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment-"Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level"	27.3	27.6%	33.7%	n/a	30.5%	34.5%	39%
Grade 6 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment-"Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level"	7.6%	10.5%	16.9%	n/a	19%	24%	29%
Grade 7 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment-"Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level"	11.4%	11.2%	13.1%	n/a	16%	20%	29%
Grade 8 Math Smarter Balanced Assessment-"Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level"	17.0%	12.4%	10.9%	n/a	16%	20%	25%
Grade 8 NGSS Science - "Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level"	26.1%	19.4%	19.8%	n/a	23%	26%	29%
Grade 11 NGSS Science - "Meets or Exceeds Achievement Level"	N/A	9.2%	10.5%	n/a	13%	18%	25%
Grade 11 ELA SAT- "Meets or Exceeds Achievement Standard"	N/A	9%	#	n/a	14%	18%	25%
Grade 11 Math SAT- "Meets or Exceeds Achievement Standard"	N/A	#	#	n/a	8%	12%	16%
Number of Students enrolled in dual enrollment or AP courses	0	0	23	51	40	60	80
4-year Cohort Graduation Rate* (HS only)	n/a	82%	86%	n/a	90%	92%	94%

Indicators with an asterisk must be in alignment to ESSA Milestone targets
 # The data are suppressed to ensure confidentiality.

Root Cause Analysis

Using the school data, along with the school audit findings reported by the Turnaround Office as a foundation, the turnaround committee will conduct a root cause analysis. Root cause is defined as: the deepest underlying cause or causes of positive or negative outcomes within any process that, if dissolved, would eliminate or substantially reduce the outcome. Root cause analysis is the process that allows us to move from data to action. The data analysis and identification of challenges and contributing factors tell us what is happening at our schools. Root cause analysis will tell us why it is happening. Once we understand the why, we can then develop targeted interventions to address the challenge. There are several resources available to conduct a root cause analysis. Two of the most common methods are the "5 Whys" model or the Fishbone Diagram. Root Cause Analysis: A School Leader's Guide to Using Data to Dissolve Problems (Preuss, 2013), provides additional examples specific to schools. Additionally, the CSDE Needs Assessment with Root Cause Toolkit utilizes data collection, analysis and protocols to aid in the process of identifying those root causes. **The root cause findings should serve as the basis for school improvement plan development.**

Instructions: Please select one of the following turnaround models described in C.G.S. § 10-223h(d). Using the space provided, describe the core components of the model that pertain to talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations.

As a committee, Great Oaks Charter School in Bridgeport has chosen Model E, a strategy developed by the turnaround committee. This model incorporates proven effective strategies, methods, and best practices from various educational institutions. The committee focused on developing interconnected strategies across Talent, Academic, Culture, and Operations, aiming for consistency and capacity building within the school to enhance student outcomes and reduce the need for budgetary assistance through the network.

The centerpiece of the plan is the development of Tier 1 strategies. Feedback from the Connecticut State Department of Education indicated positive shifts but highlighted inconsistencies in application, feedback, and support, causing delays in realizing maximum opportunities for growth. Insights from interviews with students, parents, staff, and observational data were pivotal in shaping the plan.

The core components of this model include:
- **Cohesive and Sustained Professional Development**: Focused on Tier 1 strategies to increase engagement and accelerate growth.
- **Aligned Instructional Support**: Aligned with Professional Development objectives and methods.
- **Specific Strategies for Staff Retention and Recruitment**: Ensuring a pool of certified professional staff.
- **Implementation of Rigorous Tier 1 Curriculum**: Enhancing academic rigor.
- **Embedded Coaching**: Supporting Tier 1 implementation aligned to Professional Development.
- **Scientifically Research-Based Instructional Framework**: Guiding instructional practices.
- **Differentiated Instruction within Tier 1**: Catering to diverse learning needs.
- **Enhancing School Culture for Increased Attendance**: Fostering a positive learning environment.
- **Reducing Suspensions**: Through consistent and cohesive school expectations and addressing social media challenges.
- **Operational Support**: Backing the plan through structures, data streamlining, and enhanced communication.

2024 – 2025 Through Line
The first year of the plan lays the groundwork for the development of teacher practice during whole-group instruction, redefining culture to be unified, and creating universal Tier 1 approaches to accelerate learning and development of students and staff.

Talent:
The initial implementation year focuses on developing instructional staff for "whole group" instruction. This involves identifying and realigning key content standards and skills, followed by the delivery of engaging material. Whole group instruction, crucial for student engagement, is redefined to address disruptions, with coaching models revised to provide real-time support and feedback.

Academics:
Aligned with professional development, teachers collaborate to identify areas requiring additional instruction. This realignment, supported by the Great Oaks Instructional Framework, extends across the instructional plan, emphasizing the need for data streamlining, High Dosage Tutoring Model, and differentiated instruction to enhance engagement.

Culture:
Shifting instructional expectations necessitates aligning culture expectations. Tier 1 culture work targets consistency in school-wide and classroom behavioral and learning expectations. Redefining Tuesday, a weekly half-day for adult learning, aims to become a student-focused experience, enhancing the overall school climate. This transformation seeks to make Tuesday a pathway to deeper learning, experiences, and support developed in partnership with students, creating a highlight of the week and positively impacting the overall school climate.

Redefining Tuesday:
To support Talent, Academics, and Culture, the redefining of our Tuesday schedule will be a crucial pillar for the overall culture and focus of the school. Since our inception nine years ago, Great Oaks has dedicated a weekly half-day to promote adult learning. Data has shown that Tuesday has been an underattended day by our students, perceiving the shortened periods as less important to their learning. By reimagining this time to be more student-focused and developed in partnership with our students, we believe that this can serve as a pathway to deeper learning, experiences, and support, becoming a highlight of the week. This transformation will not only change the climate of the school leading into professional development but will also enhance the overall experience for our staff.

Operations:
For this plan to work effectively, it will be essential that time is built into teachers' programs for the required instructional time, collaborative meetings, coaching time, vertical planning, and data teams. Additionally, the space required to work with students, engage in support, hold mediations, work with families, and meet around essential school functions such as attendance interventions and hiring will be needed. This is the goal of our operations team over the course of the plan.

2025-2026 – Through Line
Building off the groundwork for Tier 1 universal design, year 2 continues to develop Tier 1 structures, systems, and supports. While Culture and Operations follow a path of deeper development from year 1, Talent and Academics develop different portions of Tier 1 that are vital to increasing student outcomes.

Talent:
With the completed realignment of standards and curriculum based on student needs and the implementation of engaging and scaffolded Tier 1 whole group instruction, the focus shifts to redefining Tier 1 small group instruction. In working with Visual Learning +, we will model and develop specific instructional strategies for teachers to accelerate learning in small group environments. This will be assisted greatly through the enhancement of data systems and embedded coaching on specific structures within the classroom.

Academics:
With a more engaging whole group instructional portion of the Instructional Framework, teachers and students will be ready to engage in small group instruction. Small group instruction makes up most of the class period and focuses on student discourse, guided practice in small groups on specific concepts and skills aligned to learning levels, and releases responsibility to the student over time.

Focusing Professional Development on engagement strategies during this time will impact student growth and achievement significantly. With the student prepared to engage in this learning after the initial whole group period, teachers will be able to better promote discourse, interaction, and transference of student understanding.

The realignment of Universal High Dosage Tutoring to support the small group environment during Tier 1 instruction will help develop embedded skills within the standards while teachers work with students to develop a deeper understanding of core concepts and apply knowledge to real-world situations. Through the alignment of essential skills within small groups supported by AmeriCorps Fellows (tutors), teachers will be able to spend longer periods with small groups, ensuring comprehension and application.

Differentiation will be further developed with the addition of data-informed flexible grouping to further accelerate student learning in key areas and to continue the development of prerequisite knowledge. Differentiation is also supported through Visual Learning + through the development and enhancement of embedded tasks to create multiple entry points for students to work towards grade level standards.

2026-2027 Through Line
While Culture and Operations enter a cycle of review and revision, Talent and Academics aim to provide teachers with specific tools to revise and support students to enhance engagement and promote deeper understanding within small groups.

Talent:
Through work with the Schlechty Institute, teachers will develop a deeper understanding of authentic engagement based on student work samples, student responses, and student behavior when engaging in tasks and discussions. When applying the specific strategies learned from Visual Learning + and applying the feedback from the embedded coaching model during the second year of implementation, the transference of ownership shifts to the teacher in the classroom.

In developing a deeper understanding of authentic engagement, teachers will be able to monitor and adjust engagement opportunities for students. This will give them a variety of strategic moves, questioning techniques, and an understanding of how to adjust lessons and assignments that enhance engagement without losing rigor or standards alignment.

Academics:
The continued focus on small group instruction shifts to providing teachers additional tools and embedding their work from the previous year into their day-to-day operations through the inclusion of exemplars for learning, student interactions, and transference of ownership. This, aligned to the shift in our MTSS/SRBI model, will provide more time during Tier 1 instruction for teachers to dedicate focused time to students in more need of support or levers to provide additional in-class High Dosage Tutoring to students with higher needs while accelerating learning for the entire class.

Further development and support for differentiated learning and flexible grouping through enhanced data understanding, and data aligned directly to what is being taught and developed, will make strategic decision making for Tier 1 easier and more fluid with more ownership placed within teacher leaders and teacher-led groups who have more first-hand knowledge of the students they are instructing.

By the end of our three-year plan, we expect to see significant increases in student achievement as well as decreases to suspensions, in class incidents, off campus incidents resulting in student discipline, and chronic absenteeism.

Section 6: Turnaround Framework for School Improvement

The Commissioner's Network Plan is based upon the framework centered around four key overarching and research-based leverage points for school improvement: Talent, Academics, Culture and Climate, and Operations (TACO). Each of these domains play an integral role in the realization of school's goals to increase student outcomes.

- **Talent:** Systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers, and support staff.

- **Academics:** Rigorous, aligned, and engaging academic program that allows all students to achieve at high levels, including aligned curricula, instruction, and assessments.

- **Culture and Climate:** Positive learning environment that supports high-quality teaching and learning and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process.

- **Operations:** Systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources.
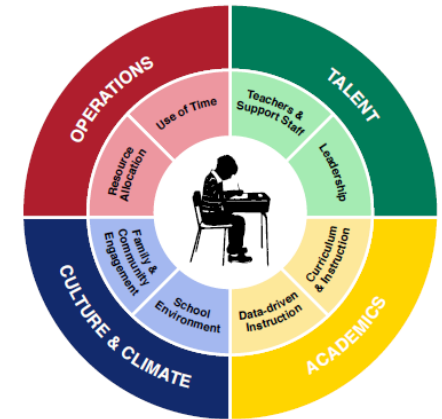
Plan Development
➢ **Prioritize**

As a result of the needs assessment and root cause analysis, the Turnaround Committee should engage in a prioritization process to identify key priority areas for each TACO domain.   Although more can be identified, going deeper in improving fewer areas is often more effective. In the table below, delete the examples and list 1-3 priority areas for each domain based on the needs assessment.

Talent	Academics
- Create and implement professional learning systems - Teacher retention and hiring of certified staff	- Increase Tier 1 instructional effectiveness - Differentiate Tier 1 instruction - Assessment and Implementation of Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)
Culture and Climate	**Operations**
- Reduce chronic absenteeism - Promote social and emotional well-being to improve Learning Environment	- Time allocation for effective use of instruction and support. - Space allocation for the support of key initiatives and support.

Now that the priority areas have been identified in each of the TACO domains, a rigorous, yet attainable plan is created based on the needs assessment and root cause analysis. Each of the four domains will include two parts:

- **Part One** - A series of domain specific questions which provide an overview of high-level thinking regarding future actions.

- **Part Two** - An action plan which includes the following components:
  - **Goal**: A goal should be developed for each of the four domains including indicators, data source, baseline, and targets spanning three years. A goal performance measure is a means by which progress toward a goal is gauged.
  - **Root Cause:** Statements describing the deepest underlying cause, or causes, of performance challenges that, if dissolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the performance challenge.
  - **Strategies**: A strategy should address the identified root cause. Strategies should take two or more years to implement, often much longer (Layland & Redding, 2016). If a strategy can be accomplished in one year, then it is too narrow and is most likely a useful milestone within a broader strategy. **Strategies are powerful, high leverage work that builds capacity and changes practice, behavior, and belief so students are more successful.** One bold strategy can have more impact than a litany of poorly implemented strategies.
  - **Timeline:** The strategies (effective practices) to address root causes should be outlined over the course of three years.
  - **Indicators of success**: Indicators of success help to monitor how well the strategies are working to address the root cause, i.e. If we do what we said we were going to do, how do we know it made a difference?
  - **Resources**: Identify items that require funding support from the Commissioner's Network. This could include: partnerships, professional learning, materials, personnel, supplies, etc.

Part One

Instructions: The Talent domain focuses on systems and strategies to recruit, hire, develop, evaluate, and retain excellent school leaders, teachers and educator support specialists. In the boxes below, address the following:

Explain how the review of school data, school audit findings, and the completion of the root cause analysis will inform staffing decisions.

In reviewing the initial data submitted by staff, we observed that a notable 74% of teachers feel that professional development has assisted them in addressing the needs of their students. While acknowledging the majority's positive response, we acknowledge that this falls slightly below our target. Our goal is to elevate this figure to a minimum of 90% by the end of our three-year plan.

The findings in the initial audit report provide additional insights, revealing that staff often feel uncertain about the expectations related to the implementation of professional development sessions. Additionally, there is a lack of a structured method for administration and coaches to monitor the success or full implementation of the strategies discussed during these sessions. Additionally, administration and coaches lack a structured method to monitor the success or full implementation of the strategies discussed during these sessions. In committee discussions, concerns were highlighted about frequent shifts in professional development focus. There was a lack of a discernible common thread as the year progressed. This inconsistency contributes to confusion about priorities, causing misalignment between coaching and administrative support and teacher development. Notably, this is illustrated through the introduction of various "one-off" topics during professional development, showcasing a correlation between the lack of "understanding expectations for implementation" and the support provided by administration and coaching.

The framing and discussion of these issues before the root-cause analysis guide the five-why protocol. To frame and discuss these issues before the root-cause analysis, we use the five-why protocol. Our discussions delve into questions such as:

- Why do teachers feel uncertain about expectations?
- Why is there a lack of implementation?
- Why do teachers feel that professional development is not adequately meeting the needs of students?

These discussions uncover issues related to systems and structures being put in place, deviated from, and then replaced with new systems instead of consistent support and implementation. Additionally, discussions touch on different perceptions of data and the number of hours allocated for professional development, which are crucial aspects of the root cause analysis. A key point of discussion centers on the statements, "PD that we receive does not address the day-to-day realities that we need to develop professionally," highlighting a noticeable disconnect between professional development and what students need for buy-in.

These understandings frame our discussions on future staffing decisions, which now include considerations of student motivation, engagement, transference, and the importance of small group learning in our model. As we look for additional and new staff members, our focus will be on individuals who can contribute to a culture of consistent student self-improvement, aligning with our ongoing efforts to build a school academic culture and enhance class engagement.

Explain how the district and school will cultivate a professional learning environment to attract, support, develop, and retain high-quality teachers?

Great Oaks prioritizes the cultivation of a professional learning environment aimed at supporting, developing, and retaining high-quality teachers. Through the creation of structures such as weekly professional development, structured coaching, and transparency with our goals, we communicate that investing in educators is a deeply rooted belief within our community.

To continue attracting high-quality teachers, we believe in the importance of recruitment strategies and plan to change those strategies to highlight the benefits and growth opportunities within our school through teacher narratives and data. Along with this change, we will continue to leverage diverse recruitment channels, enhance our job fair presence, clearly communicate certification opportunities to engaged staff, and strengthen our relationships with colleges and universities. As our reputation for being an inclusive and diverse environment grows, the strengthening of our teacher development program will make us a destination for strong new-to-the-profession teachers and teachers looking to advance their careers.

As shown through our scheduling, we are dedicated to ongoing professional development, which we believe will become a highlight to our structure through our improvements under this plan. Our district offers a range of professional learning opportunities that will be more tailored to meet the diverse needs and interests of our educators. Our teacher leader program will provide strong bonds through mentorship paired with our embedded coaching efforts to enhance classroom performance and align with our professional learning opportunities. Additionally, we encourage instructional risk-taking and provide resources, technology, and research-based instructional strategies that empower teachers to take those risks through innovation to meet the needs of our students.

Finally, we continue to develop our retention strategies through investment in our teachers, the provision of new leadership opportunities for both classroom-dedicated professionals and those looking for administrative opportunities. Great Oaks believes that retention begins with creating a supportive and inclusive workplace culture where teachers feel valued, respected, and acknowledged for their contributions and for having a meaningful impact. By developing and streamlining our communication and feedback to our professional learning cycle and creating tiered support for teachers, we believe teachers will feel our appreciation of them during our celebrations.

Explain how teachers will be evaluated to inform professional learning offerings and staffing decisions?

Through the embedded coaching model, instructional walkthroughs, and observation process, teachers will receive feedback, serving as data to inform our professional learning structure. During the cycle, teachers will work with administration and coaches to identify prerequisite skills, develop units and lessons aligned to those prerequisites after analyzing data, and collaborate with coaches and administration to create learning stations for Fellows. During the implementation of the unit, professional development will focus on key areas of implementing the instructional framework.

Feedback provided will be directly correlated to the professional development topic. The feedback will be reviewed weekly during the Executive Leadership Team meeting. A threshold of 85% of teachers meeting the evaluatory expectations aligned to the Teacher Evaluation Tool is required before moving to a new topic. Using the Teacher's Evaluation Plan as a guide, teachers will be placed into Tiered Coaching support structures to provide the level of assistance needed to meet the goal of the professional development topic.

Once the threshold is met, those teachers who have not yet met expectations will continue to receive support in their Tiered level of coaching while we proceed to the next topic. This will provide an opportunity for continued engagement for the majority of our staff while offering next steps, connections, and continued support to teachers that are still growing in a specific competency.

Describe ongoing support and coaching opportunities for staff and school leadership.

Emphasizing growth and development through a single-point rubric of expectations for teacher evaluation instead of strictly relying on assigned numbers for ten individual indicators allows us to better align coaching outcomes for our teachers. By reducing the number of topics covered in our professional development, we provide clarity regarding priorities and how they align with student outcomes. This shift also enables coaches to tailor support specifically for individual teachers and offer consistent assistance until the implementation of the concept reaches the desired level.

For leadership, responding to this shift involves coaching aimed at a mindset shift towards growth in specific areas aligned with our plan. This includes highlighting strengths and building on them, enabling administration to delve deeper into practices instead of relying on very broad observations that tend to overlook strengths and areas for development due to time constraints and the breadth of the evaluation rubric. This shift also fosters additional development in key academic and teacher areas to create a more robust understanding of academic leadership and less emphasis on management.

Both areas are constructed upon our inclusive and supportive environment but allow for more focus and attention to detail as we condense multiple initiatives into more manageable pieces with a clearly articulated timeline and clear goals for achievement.

Part Two
Instructions: Using the table below, identify the Talent three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year Talent Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year:	Target Year 1:	Target Year 2:	Target Year 3:
Percentage of veteran teacher retention	Returning veteran teachers (includes school counselors, School Social Workers) (*3 or more years of service)	Total Teaching Staff: 56 Staff with 3 or more years of service: 30 (53%)	Maintain 27, add 10 Slated 58 FTE for 2024-2025: Goal 37/58 (63.7%)	Maintain 35, add 5 Staffing to be determined by school-based budget process	Maintain 38, add 8 Staffing to be determined by school-based budget process

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Talent goal.

Talent Priority: Create and implement professional learning systems					
Root Cause: A lack of effective monitoring and consistency of provided professional development topics.					
Person(s) Responsible: Dr. Karen Francis-Barnes, Kay-Ann Hewell-Walker, Dr. Brian Frazier					
Strategies to address root cause	**Timeline**			**Indicators of Success**	**Resources**
	Year 1	**Year 2**	**Year 3**		
Professional development to improve Tier 1 instruction	● Professional development on Unit and Lesson design to incorporate prerequisite skills. ● Curriculum alignment with prerequisite skills for Tier 1 instruction. ● Incorporation of MidSchoolMath and Illustrative Math consultant into targeted content meeting times for math content.	● Professional development on student engagement and actionable feedback, and task design. ● Alignment of curriculum embedded tasks with student engagement levels with increased engagement through actionable feedback as discussed through Visual Learning + (Hattie). ● Incorporation of Visual Learning + consultant into targeted professional development meeting times.	● Professional development on monitoring student progress and adjustment. ● Alignment of curriculum embedded tasks with student engagement and adjustment (Schlechty). ● Incorporation of Schlechty Institute consultant into targeted professional development meeting times.	Student achievement increases in ELA and Math as a result of increased engagement and core alignment. Increased Tier 1 instructional practices as evident through instructional rounds and observations. Reduction of students referred to MTSS/SRBI for level 2 and higher because of increased Tier 1 engagement and effectiveness.	Teacher summer stipends for curriculum and engagement alignment work. Consultant, professional development delivery, and materials on engagement and rigor (Schlechty Institute, Visual Learning +). Consultants for teachers, coaches, and administrators for the implementation of MidSchoolMath, Illustrative Math, and Fishtank.

	● Incorporation of Fishtank Learning consultant into targeted content meeting times for English content.	● Incorporation of content specific/program specific training during the on-boarding process.	● Incorporation of content specific/program specific training during the on-boarding process inclusive of mentor teachers.		
Implementation of professional development	● Clear and detailed Instructional Team walkthrough calendar to collect data on fidelity of implementation to inform professional development. ● Administrative coaching conducted by the Chief Executive Officer to promote development in instructional leadership and observation to further implementation. ● Embedded coaching expectations and	● Review of teacher feedback associated with Professional Development from year one with alterations as appropriate. ● Modeled instructional rounds by the Chief Executive Officer to promote development in instructional leadership and observation to further implementation. ● Embedded coaching with specific	● Review of teacher feedback associated with Professional Development from year two with alterations as appropriate. ● Grade Level Leaders on Instructional Team to guide professional development implementation. ● Administrator led instructional rounds observed by the Chief Executive Officer to promote development in instructional leadership and observation. ● Embedded coaching with specific	By plans end, 85% of teachers will indicate that Professional Development has helped improve their practice. By plans end, 80% of teachers will indicate their day-to-day experience is impacted by professional development. By plans end 90% of teachers will indicate there are clear expectations and monitoring of instructional elements discussed in professional development. TEVAL CSDE report showing increased performance.	Stipends for Professional Development and Evaluation Committee Redesign of cafeteria to serve as an appropriate whole group gathering inclusive of PA system and related equipment, noise dampening tiles for concrete ceiling, and flexible seating

	monitoring for the implementation of Tier 1 engagement strategies (whole group) and support of professional development strategies.	expectations for the implementation of Tier 1 engagement strategies (small group).	expectations for the implementation of Tier 1 engagement strategies (independent practice).	Improved instructional practices indicated in walkthrough notes.	
Effective assessment and data use practices	● Integration of key data drivers (student assessments, academic performance, attendance, behavior) into one teacher dashboard. ● Clearly articulated data team process with implementation and monitoring by assigned supervisor. ● Development and implementation of an articulated Tiered coaching cycle for STEM and Humanities.	● Implementation of a shared space for coaching and observation feedback, and coaching notes aligned to teacher development plans and coaching strategies with updates. ● Clear expectations and artifact storage for collaborative meetings accessible to all members of that specific team and supervisor. ● Revision of the articulated Tiered coaching cycle for STEM and Humanities after feedback review.	● Train grade level leaders to act as data team leads promoting teacher ownership of data. ● Create community opportunities (during and after-school hours) to learn about and understand the data of their students and promote transparency. ● Development of teacher mentors as selected through TEVAL categories to serve as teacher mentors for specific areas of need.	Increased performance of data teams as evidenced through document collection. Increased detail of parent communication on student performance as indicated on parent survey. Streamlined Tier 1 intervention and reduction of SRBI/MTSS referrals as evidenced through referrals for Special Education. Reduction of assessment as evidenced through assessment calendar.	1 FTE responsible for data platforms, syncing, and data distribution and analysis; member of data teams and assessment review committee. Staff reading, "Driven by Data" by Paul Bamrbrick Sontoyo

	• Create more cohesive and easily accessible data rich structure to inform collaborative planning and coaching to meet student needs.	• Review assessment calendar, remove testing redundancy, and ensure cohesive and aligned data sources.	• Establishment of an assessment committee to consider testing options to ensure alignment of data acquired to data needed for appropriate student accelerated growth.		

Talent Priority: Teacher Retention and Hiring of Certified Staff

Root Cause: A general decline in teacher availability and enrollment in education programs requires a shift in retention, hiring, and marketing practices to secure certified staff members.

Person(s) Responsible: Latoya Hubbard, Ryanne Davis, John Scalice

Strategies to address root cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	**Year 2**	**Year 3**		
Branding and marketing of the "Great Oaks Teacher" to promote the benefits and opportunities offered within the school	● Teacher survey data used to develop materials for local colleges and hiring fairs on the benefits of working at Great Oaks compared to other districts. ● Distribution of materials to colleges and teacher certification programs of materials with follow-up visits and active recruitment from Human Resources.	● Teacher survey testimonials and videos added to our website used for local colleges and hiring fairs on the benefits of working at Great Oaks compared to other districts. ● Student work samples that highlight expectations for students held by staff. ● Multiple visits and active recruitment from Human Resources on-site at local colleges and teacher certification programs. ● Partnerships to obtain student-teachers at Great Oaks.	● Teacher visits to local colleges and hiring fairs to promote the benefits of working at Great Oaks compared to other districts. ● Arrangement for certification sites to visit Great Oaks for instructional rounds style walkthroughs hosted by Great Oaks to enhance understanding of Charter Schools and promote employment.	Great Oaks will obtain and sustain 100% certified staff status. Great Oaks will increase the percentage of incoming certified teachers with 3+ years' experience from other districts. Great Oaks will increase the number of teachers entering certification programs from our High Dosage Tutor Model. Artifacts of materials distributed and distribution logs. Attendance logs for Hiring Fairs and artifacts of job postings.	Teacher survey creation assistance from Panorama Branding consultant and assistance in generating and creating materials.

	• On-Site hiring fair promoted locally and through teacher certification programs. • Articulated pathway for teacher certification provided to non-certified staff, AmeriCorps Fellows, and Long-Term Subs with assistance obtaining certification. • Referral award to teachers or staff recommending certified staff who become hired.	• On-Site hiring fair, twice annually, promoted locally and through teacher certification programs. • Strengthening of partnerships with certification programs and local colleges and universities to increase internal promotion of certification.			
Teacher leadership opportunities	• Creation of defined Professional Development & Evaluation Committee meeting times and agendas monthly for ongoing professional development feedback. • Establishment of grade level leaders to serve as primary	• Collaborative development of teacher professional learning sessions with the Professional Development & Evaluation Committee with opportunities for teacher led sessions. • Training of 7 grade level leaders that will	• Collaborative development of teacher professional learning sessions with the Professional Development & Evaluation Committee with 1 series per cycle led directly by teachers. • Creation of leadership opportunities for	Great Oaks will retain a higher percentage of teachers with 3+ years of teaching experience through internal promotion. Great Oaks will reduce the need to recruit from outside sources for leadership opportunities or professional development through	Teacher stipends for teacher leaders Funding for teacher leader training, apart from general teacher training in Schlechty and Hattie Teacher salary differential for leadership role for before/after-school program management

	touch points for grade level teams. Establish clear roles and expectations to support the ongoing implementation of the Commissioner's Network plan.	offer non-evaluative peer feedback.	before/after-school program management, committee development and leadership, arrange for inter-class observation, and have a voice with the Instructional Leadership Team regarding teacher needs.	in-house development. Training artifacts for grade level leaders. Instructional Leadership Team and Extended Leadership Team agendas and attendance artifacts.	Two building substitute positions for mentor meeting times, inter-class observation, Extended Leadership Team, and instructional rounds coverage. Teacher stipends for PD development and delivery
Teacher and staff appreciation	● Creation of "Teacher of the Month" for Middle School and High School. ● Creation of "Staffulty Member of the month" that include student and staff member celebrations inclusive of positive quotes and information/picture of the staff member. ● Reinstatement of Great Oaks Teacher	● Transference of teacher awards to Professional Development & Evaluation Committee inclusive of planning budget for March Gladness and Teacher Recognition.	● Implement additional Professional Development & Evaluation Committee opportunities for teacher appreciation inclusive of anniversary awards, and other recognitions or environment structures possible.	Increased teacher retention. Increased staff positive reviews of "feeling appreciated" questions on survey.	Teacher appreciation budget

	and Fellow of the Year with award ceremony.				

Part One

Instructions: The Academics domain focuses on how the school will redesign and/or strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment to increase student achievement. In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the school's academic program and instructional philosophy, including the process to align the curricula and academic program to the rigor of the Connecticut Core Standards.

The school's academic program and instructional philosophy are based on the belief that all learners benefit when core instruction and support are delivered in the classroom as the primary setting, allowing for variations based on Individualized Education Plans, 504 support plans, and the varying needs of Multi-Language Learners. To reinforce the ability to support students in the classroom, Great Oaks uses a Universal High-Dosage Tutoring Model composed of AmeriCorps volunteers embedded in the classroom to help with the delivery of instruction and create the opportunity for more intensive small group instruction during Tier 1 delivery.

To accelerate learning for students, we implement a block schedule at the middle school level providing extended time for English and Math, and our extended high school day allows for additional credit accumulation, credit recovery, and dual enrollment opportunities for students with the support of teachers and AmeriCorps Fellows. Our AmeriCorps Fellows are trained to run small groups aligned to the skills embedded in the Connecticut Core Standards. This provides additional opportunities for teachers to work in small groups to develop student understandings embedded in the Connecticut Core Standards.

During the first five years of our redesign and turnaround of the school with our previous Foundation support (The Great Oaks Foundation), we have seen three curriculum transitions.

- **2017-18:** The continuation of the originally recommended curriculum material provided by the Great Oaks Foundation and a stand-alone tutoring model established under the previous two Executive Directors. Shortly after, significant effort was used in conjunction with professional development provided by CSDE to align the provided curriculum to Connecticut Core Standards, which resulted in positive shifts, leading to the understanding that more work was needed to accelerate learning for our students.
- **2020-2021**: Great Oaks Charter School conducted research and piloted several units of study from various curricula for implementation based on our Curriculum Directors' recommendations, teacher feedback, and student results and feedback.
- **2022- Current**: After reviewing teacher feedback from pilots and the strength of alignment to Connecticut Core Standards, curriculum implementation began in 2022-2023 with CSDE support and feedback. This resulted in significant progress as reported in the areas of student growth and achievement. In 2023-2024, year two of our implementation, we have continued to deepen our understanding of the curriculum and the implementation to fit our student's needs.
- **2024 - Forward**: Our plan details steps needed to further align curriculum to Connecticut Core Standards and enhance acceleration for our students through unit mapping and lesson development to incorporate areas of needed focus based on student performance data.

The most recent feedback from the Connecticut State Department of Education was positive with the review of our current curriculum of Fishtank (English grades 6-12), MidSchoolMath (6-8), and Illustrative Math (9-12) for alignment to Connecticut Core Standards and rigor. Recommendations focused primarily on instructional presentation, adherence to the Great Oaks Instructional Framework, and implementation of the curriculum. Additional recommendations related to using the instructional materials within the curriculum to drive instruction and promote accelerated learning. With this starting point in mind, our academic plan was framed.

Describe how educators will use data to inform lesson plans, differentiate instruction, and provide remedial support to meet the academic and developmental needs of all students.

By deepening the understanding of unit and lesson planning and ensuring continued alignment of our curriculum with the Connecticut Core Standards to meet the needs of our students and accelerate learning through professional development, teachers will use various elements of data to design lesson plans and differentiate instruction through Tier 1 delivery during the beginning of the plan.

To begin, teachers will use end-of-year data from two sources (internal assessment and SBA data) and beginning-of-the-year baseline assessment to develop initial units of study to address needs. This will result in the initial unit and lesson delivery cycle. After the completion of this alignment, teachers, Curriculum Directors, and coaches will develop instructional stations for implementation and student support. AmeriCorps Fellows will be trained on their specific station implementation. Coaches will provide embedded support aligned with our professional development and provide feedback to teachers on the implementation of the curriculum and the use of the resources provided.

After reviewing feedback from coaches, teachers will be placed in tiers of support with coaches. While this cycle continues, data teams will meet to review student work samples, monitor progress, and discuss next steps. Students will be monitored through a variety of data points such as work samples, short standards-aligned quizzes, and exit tickets that summarize their understanding of daily lessons. This information will be used to inform various activities during small group instruction to support differentiated learning for all students.

This data will be used in the planning and development of lessons with coaching support and will inform the continued station development and ongoing professional learning opportunities for our teachers and AmeriCorps Fellows. Midway through the unit, continued support will be offered through tiers for the current unit, and the development of the next unit of study will begin.

Describe ongoing professional learning opportunities to build staff capacity around the collection, analysis and use of data to drive and differentiate instruction.

Professional learning opportunities to build staff capacity around the collection, analysis, and use of data to drive differentiated instruction will begin with assigned readings aligned to professional development of the book "Driven by Data" by Paul Bambrick-Santoyo. Throughout this book, there are specific strategies on work analysis, data collection, and steps that provide instructional support in a Tier 1 environment. These specific strategies will be demonstrated through the unit and lesson alignment required to accelerate learning and in the development and professional learning for station development in small group settings.

Year one of our plan primarily focuses on whole group support and the beginning of small group learning through design and Tier 1 implementation. In year two, our plan takes a deeper focus on engagement and support during Tier 1 instruction and adds the professional learning component around Flexible Grouping.

Coaching on the use of these strategies for planning and development is also ongoing during teacher coaching sessions as well as administrator support during Data Team meetings for the first year. As we continue to develop this with staff, the data team responsibilities will transition to Teacher Leaders who are more connected to the work as they are also directly instructing the students being discussed.

Clear communication channels will be established to articulate expectations regarding the transition of data team responsibilities to Teacher Leaders. This will include detailed guidelines, timelines, and regular updates to ensure a smooth and transparent transition process. Expectations will be communicated through staff meetings, written documentation, and individual consultations to address any questions or concerns from the team. Regular feedback loops will be integrated to assess progress and adjust as needed.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, the Academic three-year goal will include School Performance Index and Smarter Balanced Growth Model (as applicable) indicators for ELA and Math. The baseline and targets should reflect the ESSA Milestone Targets.

Three-Year English Language Arts Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 22-23	Target 1 Year: 24-25	Target 2 Year: 25-26	Target 3 Year: 26-27
ELA School Performance Index	EDSight	48.3	64.2	66.4	68.5
ELA Smarter Balanced Growth Model	EDSight	69.6%	76.1%	80.9%	85.7%

Three-Year Math Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year:	Target 1 Year: 24-25	Target 2 Year: 25-26	Target 3 Year: 26-27
Math School Performance Index	EDSight	40.9	62.8	65.2	67.7
Math Smarter Balanced Growth Model	EDSight	56.7%	81.5%	85.2%	88.9%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Academic goals.

Academic Priority: Increase Tier 1 instructional effectiveness					
Root Cause: Curriculum and pacing calendar does not allow for the development of pre-requisite skills.					
Person(s) Responsible: Chris Pellegrino, Denise Linares, Dr. Karen-Francis Barnes, Kay-Ann Hewell-Walker, John Scalice					
Strategies to address Root Cause	**Timeline**			**Indicators of Success**	**Resources**
	Year 1	**Year 2**	**Year 3**		
Embed prerequisite skills for accelerated learning.	• Identify prerequisites and prior knowledge required for the curriculum. • Yearlong professional development on prerequisite scaffolded instruction. • Data team review of short pre-unit assessments focusing on specific skills required for curriculum access. • Implement appropriate scaffolded curriculum	• Review cohort data to identify initial prerequisite teaching required for accelerated learning. • Yearlong professional development on engaging instruction in small groups aligned to prerequisite instruction. • Clear identification of defined learning stations for small group instruction based on data for prerequisites and accelerated learning for all students. • Implement teaching strategies and station rotation aligned to professional	• Data review to identify initial prerequisite teaching with students to inform goal setting. • Yearlong professional development on adjusting instruction and monitoring student engagement to accelerate learning. • Use of exemplars, stations, and feedback to promote Mastery Learning based on data and student progress. • Implementation of student engagement monitoring and adjustment as	Increased student performance on key academic indicators (ELA, Math, Science, SAT). Reduction of referral to Tier 2 or higher through MTSS/SRBI. Observational increases in support for all learners. More teacher time on grade appropriate standards and concepts resulting in more time on task. Reduction in Chronic Absenteeism.	Common core companion Stipends for summer work on alignment of curriculum, engagement, and tasks

	materials aligned to pacing and sequence. ● Create unit and lesson plans that provide opportunities for additional prerequisite instruction. ● Clearly articulated and visible daily objectives with provided exemplars for student modeling with checks for understanding. ● Embedded coaching for direct instruction, scaffolding, and checks for understanding in a whole group setting.	development from Visual Learning +. ● Create lesson plans and small group learning activities that promote engagement and accelerated learning. ● Provision of exemplar assignments aligned to standards through rubrics and actionable feedback. ● Embedded coaching for modeling student station rotation, actionable feedback and small group instruction.	developed through the Schlechty Institute. ● Mastery learning targets clearly identified within the curriculum aligned to standards for each unit. ● Clearly aligned rubrics and exemplars provided at the beginning of each unit demonstrating Mastery of standards for students with progress checks. ● Embedded coaching for mastery learning, engagement monitoring, and two-way feedback.		
Consistent use of the Great Oaks Instructional Framework (GOIF)	● Administration led professional development on the expectations and implementation of the Great Oaks Instructional Framework (GOIF).	● Review of teacher feedback on the Great Oaks Instructional Framework and coaching support in year 1.	● Review of teacher feedback on the Great Oaks Instructional Framework and coaching support in year 2.	Increased student performance on key academic indicators (ELA, Math, Science, SAT). Reduction of referral to Tier 2 or higher through MTSS/SRBI.	2 FTE for instructional coaches (*1 Stem, 1 Humanities)

	● Specific new-teacher onboarding of expectations related to the GOIF.	● Alterations to support and new-teacher onboarding on expectations of the GOIF.	● Alterations to support and new-teacher onboarding on expectations of the GOIF.	Increased time on task. Observations specifically referencing implementation of the framework.	
	● Provision of specific, coaching modeled, whole group strategies aligned to the GOIF on Student Learning Objectives, Strong Starts, and Direct Instruction.	● Provision of specific coaching modeled small group instructional strategies aligned to the GOIF for standards aligned grouping to data, engagement, and guided practice.	● Continuation of coaching modeled small group instructional strategies aligned to the GOIF for student led discussions, conferencing, and peer feedback.		
	● Embedded coaching and modeling of lessons using the GOIF.	● Embedded coaching and modeling station rotations, and small group instruction strategies aligned to the GOIF.	● Embedded coaching on enhancing engagement, adjusting instruction, grouping, and student conferencing during small group instruction.		

Academic Priority: Differentiate Tier 1 instruction					
Root Cause: A lack of differentiated instruction has made it difficult for teachers to promote accelerated learning for students.					
Person(s) Responsible: Chris Pellegrino, Denise Linares, Dr. Karen-Francis Barnes, Kay-Ann Hewell-Walker, Shari Ifrach, Dr. Brian Frazier, John Scalice					
Strategies to address Root Cause	**Timeline**			**Indicators of Success**	**Resources**
	Year 1	**Year 2**	**Year 3**		
Use curriculum specific resources for scaffolding	● Teachers will review pre-unit assessment data to design unit and lesson plans that make use of scaffolded materials for their planning with assistance from coaches.	● Teacher and student exemplar assignments will be added to the supplemental materials for students.	● Review teacher feedback on supplemental curriculum materials.	Increased student performance on key academic indicators (ELA, Math, Science, SAT). Increased student performance and growth on LAS Links assessment.	Materials to increase accessibility for students; manipulatives, leveled books, etc.
	● Teachers will use data and grouping to develop and discuss supplemental material that meets the needs of their students.	● Modeling and implementation of learning stations to engage content through differentiated materials and stations.	● Align station implementation pacing calendar to prerequisite knowledge data for curriculum.	Reduction of referral to Tier 2 or higher through MTSS/SRBI. Increased time on task.	
	● Teachers will provide a variety of materials for prerequisites that cater to different learning styles, identified needs, and multi-language learners.	● Development of stations that accelerate learning based on relevant data.	● Adjustment of stations based on student response and engagement monitoring.	Lesson plans defining differentiated planning, materials, assignments.	
	● Teachers will monitor progress through	● A variety of materials that are culturally relevant to all	● Teachers will help students select materials that are		

	scaffolded questions and assignments. ● Embedded coaching for scaffolded questioning and checks for understanding.	students, inclusive of our multi-language learner population. ● Curriculum team will curate materials for specific units to address targeted areas appropriate for small group instruction. ● Embedded coaching for station implementation and development, and targeted student support.	more relevant to their experiences from a library of appropriate materials. ● Teachers and coaches will collaborate on materials for specific units to address targeted areas appropriate for universal support.		
Flexible Grouping		● Teachers will meet with coaches and data teams to create groupings based on standards. ● Clearly established expectations (visible) in the classroom for group work and independent practice school wide. ● Teachers will engage in coaching sessions	● Teachers will meet with coaches and data teams to groupings based on standards embedded skills. ● Clearly established and content specific expectations (visible) in the classroom for group work and independent practice. ● Teachers will engage in coaching sessions	Increased student performance on key academic indicators (ELA, Math, Science, SAT). Increased student performance and growth on LAS Links assessment. Reduction of referral to Tier 2 or higher through MTSS/SRBI. Increased time on task.	Materials to increase accessibility for students; manipulatives, leveled books, etc.

		and data teams in a practice of reflection regarding grouping and outcomes.	and data teams in a practice of reflection regarding grouping and outcomes.	Lesson plans defining differentiated planning, materials, assignments.	
Targeted differentiation through Universal High Dosage Tutoring	● AmeriCorps Fellows (Fellows) will use aligned curriculum materials to support instruction within the classroom at the teacher's direction. ● Fellows will assist in Tier 1 differentiation through the implementation and monitoring of skill specific stations aligned to Tier 1 instruction. ● Fellows will monitor progress of students in skill stations through work samples and checks for understanding.	● Fellows will use aligned, differentiated materials, to work with specific groups on targeted skills based on data and teacher direction. ● Fellows will assist with the support of small group instruction through the use of differentiated materials during the implementation of skill-based stations aligned to Tier 1 instruction. ● Fellows will monitor progress of students in skill stations through work samples and checks for understanding to help inform group movement and flexibility.	● Fellows will work with students independently using aligned programs to assist with the provision of Tier 2 interventions under the direction of the Curriculum Team. ● Fellows will provide additional support through extended skill development with small groups using varied materials and methods of implementation. ● Fellows will monitor progress of students in skill stations through work samples and checks for understanding to help differentiate between teacher led groups and Fellow led groups based on	Increased student performance on key academic indicators (ELA, Math, Science, SAT). Increased student performance and growth on LAS Links assessment. Reduction of referral to Tier 2 or higher through MTSS/SRBI. Increased time on task Lesson plans defining differentiated planning, materials, assignments.	Materials to increase accessibility for students; manipulatives, leveled books, etc.

			specific skills and concepts.		
Redefine existing Tuesday schedule for students differentiation and engagement	• Define structures for community partners involvement, expectations, and community meetings. • Schedule design that is student focused for community meetings and community participation opportunities. • Establish grade level community contribution goals for Middle School and community service guidelines for High School graduation.	• Define structures for internships and organized learning experiences with community partners. • Inclusion of student choice elements (Full Theme Days) organized through Student Board and staff collaboration. • Organized choice time inclusive of community centered clubs and learning opportunities with community partners. • Incorporation of student community achievement into community meetings.	• Monitor and revise structures for internships and evaluate effectiveness of partnerships. • Inclusion of at least one Expeditionary Learning Experience for students on a series of Tuesdays with an established community partner aligned to the curriculum. • Student embedded choice schedule allowing for multiple self-select options. • Learning opportunities culminating in community displays of learning.	Increased student performance on key academic indicators (ELA, Math, Science, SAT). Increased student performance and growth on LAS Links assessment. Reduction of referral to Tier 2 or higher through MTSS/SRBI. Increased time on task. Lesson plans defining differentiated planning, materials, assignments.	Materials to increase accessibility for students; manipulatives, leveled books, etc. Funding for expeditionary learning experiences.

Academic Priority: Realignment of MTSS/SRBI to new Tier 1 practices

Root Cause: A lack of engaging Tier 1 practices has resulted in an over-identification of students for Tier 2 interventions or higher.

Person(s) Responsible: John Scalice, Dr. Karen Francis-Barnes, Dr. Brian Frazier

Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Revise MTSS/SRBI procedure	• Restructure MTSS/SRBI manual and process to align with Tier 1 shifts. • Provide specific coaching support when numbers of students qualifying for referral increase in a specific class or content area. • Make use of Tier 1 strategies and monitor implementation for direct instruction and prerequisite teaching.	• Review and revise provided Tier 1 instructional material for student acceleration as appropriate, based on data. • Provide specific coaching support when numbers of students qualifying for referral increase in a specific class or content area. • Make use of Tier 1 strategies and monitor implementation of small group instruction and station implementation.	• Review and revise provided Tier 1 instructional material for student acceleration as appropriate based on data and feedback. • Implement revised MTSS/SRBI process with clear expectations and coaching support for teachers experiencing high levels of referral. • Restructure the MTSS/SRBI team to include grade level leads as primary organizer for MTSS/SRBI referral process.	Reduction of Special Education referrals. Increased differentiation of Tier 1 as evidenced through lesson plans and student performance indicators in ELA and Math.	Staff reading resource, Grading for Equity Four additional High Dosage Tutors contracted service.
Curriculum and assessment alignment	• Review curriculum and assessment to ensure alignment with classroom	• Review data with data teams, review instructional practices, and share	• Identify aligned program opportunities for Tier 2 and above	Increased student performance on key academic indicators	Staff reading resource, Grading for Equity

	instructional procedures and expectations.	best practices for Tier 1 instruction.	directly aligned to the curriculum.	(ELA, Math, Science, SAT).
	● Clarify expectations for student data and documentation prior to referral process.	● Review data collection process and conjunction with teacher observation and coaching notes as part of the referral process.		Increased student performance and growth on LAS Links assessment. Reduction of referral to Tier 2 or higher through MTSS/SRBI.

Part One

Instructions: The Culture and Climate domain targets creating a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for all students and staff, and engages families and the community as partners in the educational process. In the boxes below, address the following:

Describe the school's behavior management system and strategies to shape positive school culture.

Currently, teachers and administration collaborate to create general behavioral expectations through a "Level" system ranging from level 1 through level 5. These levels have clearly defined behavior identifiers, ranges of support for students, and a range of disciplinary levels. Incidents involving level 3, 4, or 5, type behaviors require administration notification with differentiated tiers or support and disciplinary actions. These are communicated to our students and staff through our "Student and Families Culture Manual" and reinforced through our four-core pillars of "Excellence, Perseverance, Integrity, and Compassion."

Teachers work with students to create classroom expectations that reinforce expected behaviors and our core values:

- **Excellence** - We are committed to producing high-quality work and never settling for good enough; We use our unique gifts and talents for our own and the broader good.
- **Perseverance** - We give our best effort to every task at every time; We strive to be the best version of ourselves; We persist in the face of challenges and take pride in our accomplishments.
- **Integrity** - We tell the truth to ourselves and others; We ensure alignment between our beliefs and actions; We engage in honest self-reflection and do what is good, just, and true.
- **Compassion** - We see the greatness in each other; We appreciate each other's strengths while supporting each other to improve and grow; We act with care and concern for others; We show and give respect to ourselves and each other.

Great Oaks believes in a restorative approach to incidents that have an impact on the school community and learning environment. Actions aligned with this belief include behavioral support, counseling, student mediation, family mediation, and teacher/student mediation. This approach has resulted in a significant decrease in both overall suspension rates and suspension repetition.

Explain how the school will promote strong family and community connections to support school goals.

By including more community events, restructuring communication expectations for staff, improving communication accessibility for our multi-language learners and families, and implementing clear accountability checks for family communication, Great Oaks will enhance two-way communication with our community. Moreover, organizing student celebrations throughout the school year will foster increased parent engagement, involving them in celebrating their children's accomplishments.

Through identifying and communicating clear goals and objectives in areas such as academic growth, professional development, and support structures for students with attendance and culture, we aim to leverage our growing community partnership base effectively. This will enable us to better support our students and

families with needs aligned to the missions of individual organizations. Consequently, our students and families will receive support in areas crucial for their success at Great Oaks.

Describe the school's attendance intervention system.

Great Oaks currently employs an attendance team constructed of the school principal, guidance counselor, social worker, operation representative, and Special Services Coordinator that meet weekly to identify students who frequently miss school. Upon identifying these students, the team initiates contact with their families, engaging in conversations about attendance needs and determining the necessary support. The attendance team collaborates to formulate individualized support plans aimed at improving daily attendance. Regular check-ins with students and families are conducted to assess the effectiveness of the support provided. Students nearing benchmarks of concern are individually assigned to team members for targeted assistance, identification of supportive adults, and implementation of interventions. Progress is regularly reported during subsequent attendance team meetings and grade level meetings, facilitating a comprehensive discussion to evaluate the impact of interventions and determine future steps.

Describe how the school will address students' social and emotional well-being.

To offer continued support to the social and emotional well-being of our students, Great Oaks will continue to train staff in recognizing and addressing concerns and support students through de-escalation steps. Additionally, Great Oaks will continue to focus on developing staff in creating positive relationships with students, providing more avenues for students to reach out to caring adults whom they trust with issues they may be experiencing. Great Oaks will also continue to offer Second Step programming in the Middle School and mentoring groups in the High School to provide additional support for students. Supports at Great Oaks also include group and individual counseling, crisis intervention and response, our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), collaboration with Special Education and Bridgeport Public Schools, and the expansion of SEL opportunities through grade level community meetings.

As we continue to expand our supports, our community partners will play a more comprehensive role in delivering school-wide programs and individual supports as aligned to their missions and roles within the community. Great Oaks will also continue to collaborate with parents and students around their experiences at the school to further our improvement in areas of social and emotional well-being. Great Oaks is also researching various training opportunities to establish Peer Mentoring and support for our community.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the Culture and Climate three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year School Culture and Climate Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 22-23	Target 1 Year:24-25	Target 2 Year: 25-26	Target 3 Year: 26-27
Chronic Absenteeism	EdSight/ESSA	30.4%	7.3%	6.8%	6.4%
Suspension Rate	EDSight	11.6%	9.0%	7.5%	5%

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year Culture and Climate goal.

Culture and Climate Priority: Chronic Absenteeism					
Root Cause: Practices misaligned to expectations do not promote consistent attendance					
Person(s) Responsible: Chris Pellegrino, Denise Linares, Jacqueline Perez, Mark Shaw					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Improve monitoring and communication of attendance	● Articulated expectations regarding attendance are aligned to grading and credit accrual through a revised grading structure that includes participation in classroom student centered activities. ● Improving our Attendance Monitoring system to increase frequency of the communication and manner of student attendance - Potential revisions.	● Monitor and revise grading policy and credit accrual and expectation alignment. ● Formalizing teaching expectations to include student centered activities to add additional value to work products based on student discourse. ● Early indicators of potential student absences (lateness, reduction of class or period attendance, historical data) are communicated with higher frequency through the attendance team.	● Monitor and revise grading policy and credit accrual and expectation alignment. ● Monitor and revise teaching expectations aligned to the Great Oaks Instructional Framework are shifted to add additional value to work products based on student discourse. ● Monitor and revise early indicators of potential student absences (lateness, reduction of class or period attendance, historical data) are communicated with higher frequency	Decrease in chronic absenteeism. Increased daily attendance to > 90%. Reduction of overall behavioral issues through community building and communication improvement. Artifacts of increased communication and data to families.	Attendance monitoring technical assistance from PowerSchool.

			through the attendance team.		
	● Student expectations for attendance are included as a highlighted component of student goal setting with student self-tracking. ● Resetting of attendance expectations through family and grade level community meetings.	● Student expectations for attendance are included as a highlighted component of student conferences.			
Student celebrations of attendance	● Progress monitored data is used to create school-wide student awards for attendance milestones. ● Historical data of attendance trends is used to create school-wide incentive periods to counteract typical periods of "high absenteeism." ● Promote student voice in the creation of incentives for attendance.	● Progress monitored data is used to create school-wide and class specific student awards for attendance milestones. ● Grade level trends of attendance are used to create class and school-based incentives to counteract typical periods of "high absenteeism." ● Create more opportunities for student voice and involvement in the		Decrease in chronic absenteeism. Increased daily attendance to > 90%. Reduction of overall behavioral issues through community building and communication improvement.	Student celebration budget

		promotion of positive attendance.			
Creating a Multi-Tiered System of Support for Attendance	● Family and student survey to better understand the underlying root cause to student attendance baseline. ● Home visits and communication with families and students on the importance of daily attendance. ● Operational attendance tracking and monitoring is implemented with fidelity. ● Awareness of student attendance and improvement through visible displays and celebrations of attendance. ● Incorporate daily and class attendance monitoring and strategies into the MTSS/SRBI process with clearly defined interventions.	● Annual Family and student survey to better understand the root causes to student attendance (comparative). ● Continue home visits with connections to community partners and communication on attendance initiatives. ● Monitor and revise operational implementation of attendance tracking. ● Community partner mentors for students with patterns of chronic absenteeism.	● Annual Family and student survey to better understand the roadblocks to student attendance (comparative). ● Continue home visits with connections to community partners and communication on attendance initiatives. ● Monitor and revise operational implementation of attendance tracking. ● Involve Student Board in the messaging, visual displays, and celebrations of attendance. ● Student attendance partners are implemented to support positive peer attendance interaction.	Decrease in chronic absenteeism. Increased daily attendance to > 90%. Reduction of overall behavioral issues through community building and communication improvement.	1 FTE for attendance coordinator for home visits and attendance intervention coordination.

Culture and Climate Priority: Reduction of suspensions and loss of student's classroom instruction time					
Root Cause: Lack of accountability, training, and support regarding the implementation of classroom and school-wide expectations					
Person(s) Responsible: Heather Chila, Angela Ford					
Strategies to address Root Cause	**Timeline**			**Indicators of Success**	**Resources**
	Year 1	**Year 2**	**Year 3**		
Teacher training and support	● Tiered structures of infractions and interventions are realigned to consider the impact on the learning environment. ● Teacher and Fellow development on student relationship building and leveraging relationships to promote engagement with SNT Consulting. ● Development of consistent school wide expectations and responses to behavior inclusive of specific action steps and support with SNT Consulting. ● Implementation of parent communication expectations with clear responsibilities and	● Review and revise tiered structures of infractions and interventions with teacher feedback. ● Continued teacher and Fellow development on student relationship building and leveraging relationships to promote engagement with SNT Consulting. ● Review and revise school wide expectations and responses to behavior inclusive of specific action steps and support with SNT Consulting. ● Review and revise parent communication expectations with clear responsibilities and communication		Consistent application of classroom and school-wide expectations as evidenced through behavioral data collection. Revised classroom and school wide expectations as evidenced through restructured Tiers of support and intervention in Culture Manual. Consistent application evidenced through increased Parent Survey response to "The school consistently applies expectations". Overall decrease in student suspensions OSS > 5%.	SNT Consulting for teacher training on classroom management, de-escalation techniques, parent communication, diversity-equity-inclusion in the classroom

	communication trees with monitoring and support.	trees with monitoring and support.		Increased teacher retention as evidenced through EDS.	
Data generation and application of support	● Teacher feedback on reporting structure for feedback on use of process and reduction of redundancy in reporting to increase consistent reporting. ● Assignment of duties and responsibilities to support team members with clearly articulated support structures for student monitoring and support. ● Clearly defined administrative action steps for student support, parent communication, and accountability.	● Revise reporting structure based on feedback for reporting to increase consistent reporting. ● Revise duties and responsibilities from support team members on support structures for students. ● Revise administrative action steps for student support, parent communication, and accountability based on feedback.		Increased parent communication with more clarity on incidents and support steps as evidenced in parent survey responses. Clarity of responsibility and clearly delineated action steps as evidenced in the Culture Handbook. Increased teacher responses on survey in areas of school climate and culture. Overall decrease in student suspensions OSS > 5%. Increased teacher retention as evidenced through EDS.	
Creating systems to mitigate the impact of social media interactions	● Digital literacy workshops for students, focusing on responsible online behavior, the challenges of social media, and strategies for monitoring and guiding children's online activities	● Develop or locate a curriculum focusing on cyber ethics, digital citizenship, online etiquette, and the potential consequences of negative online		Overall decrease in student suspensions OSS > 5%. Reduction in off-campus incidents resulting in out of school suspensions.	1 FTE Social Worker for Digital Media and Digital Citizenship. Digital Citizenship curriculum training.

	coordinated and delivered by a Social Worker. ● Set up anonymous reporting mechanisms for students who witness or experience online negativity that are sent to the Culture Team and Social Worker for early intervention. ● Parent forums with community partners and local law enforcement focusing on responsible online behavior, the challenges of social media, and strategies for monitoring online activities developed and delivered by our Social Worker.	interactions coordinated by our Social Worker. ● Launch programs that empower students to be positive influencers online. This could include workshops on peer support, kindness campaigns, and creating a culture of inclusivity. ● Recognize and celebrate instances of positive online behavior. This could include awards, shout-outs in school newsletters, or acknowledgment in school assemblies.		More time on task in classes as indicated by a reduction of class removals and required mediations. Increased teacher retention as evidenced through EDS.	

Part One

Instructions: The Operations domain focuses on systems and processes that promote organizational efficiency and effectiveness, including through the use of time and financial resources. In the boxes below, address the following:

Propose the length of the school day and year for students and describe how the proposed schedule will maximize instructional time on task for each major instructional/content area.

Great Oaks Charter School operates on a 180-day calendar with slight variations from our host districts' vacation days. This reduces confusion regarding attendance days since a high percentage of our families are split between Bridgeport Public Schools and Great Oaks. Great Oaks students have a longer day on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday than the host school. This adjustment is made to accommodate the district's needs regarding bus provision for our Middle School and to accommodate our half-day Tuesday schedule, which allows for weekly professional development for staff.

The proposed length of the school day for the High School is as follows:
- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: 6 hours and 45 minutes; students in need of additional coursework and support: 7 hours 40 minutes
- Tuesday: 4 hours and 30 minutes
  - **High School Impact**: The switch to semesters from trimesters, and a general schedule of 7 periods (excluding lunch) of 52-minute period classes occurs four times per week. Including the time dedicated to instruction on our half-day, the average student will accumulate 9,102 minutes of instruction per course (151 hours and 42 minutes of instruction) as opposed to the State requirement of 7,200 minutes per credit (120 hours of instruction). This additional time will allow teachers to implement the aspects of the plan to accelerate learning, implement the Great Oaks Instructional Framework, and allow High Dosage Tutoring support as needed.

The proposed length of the school day for the Middle School is as follows:
- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: 7 hours and 30 minutes
- Tuesday: 4 hours and 30 minutes
  - **Middle School Impact**: The increased time in the middle school allows for 90-minute blocks for ELA and Math to accelerate learning for all students, provide a variety of select specials (art, physical education, foreign language), additional High Dosage Tutoring support, and daily instruction for Science and Social Studies across all grades. This time also provides adequate time for collaborative planning and instructional support meetings.

The time allocation for core instructional courses will be dependent on the approval of our Commissioner's Network Plan in consultation with New Solutions K12 to assess and assist in the creation of a consistent schedule to meet the needs of our students and utilize staffing and high-dosage tutoring more effectively. Great Oaks is interested in looking at time variations for instruction that do not necessarily align with traditional block programming (allocating time in the same increments to all subjects) to better serve our students and our staff meeting and planning needs.

Propose the length of the school day and year for staff, including additional time before and during the school year, for professional learning and/or common planning time.

Great Oaks Charter School was founded with the idea that professional development of staff is a key component of improving student outcomes. Additionally, we recognize that staff need appropriate time to plan, coordinate, and develop action steps aligned with our initiatives. The typical school day for High School and Middle School staff is 7 hours and 30 minutes. On Tuesday, both schools experience a 4-hour and 30-minute day which provides 2 hours of professional development time for all staff.

- Coaches and Curriculum Directors will meet for 10 assigned days over the summer.
- New-to-school staff will meet with Operations and Curriculum for 3 days prior to all staff returning.
- Staff will meet with Operations, Curriculum, and Principals for 5 days over the summer.
- Staff meets for approximately 36 Tuesdays over the course of the school year in various configurations.
- Staff will have between 4 and 6 hours of planning time in their schedule.
- Staff will have 1 hour per week scheduled for coaching provision in their schedule (individual or group).
- Middle School staff will have 1 hour per week for Data Teams and Collaborative Planning (alternating weeks) in their schedule.
- High School staff will have 1 hour per week for Data Teams and Collaborative Planning (alternating weeks) as part of the extended day for High School.
- Staff will have 1 hour every other week for vertical team meetings as part of professional development.
- Flexibility will be built into staff schedules to allow for more intensive support or to be used as additional planning time.

Through initial iterations of scheduling, inclusive of existing structures built into the annual calendar and staff requirements, this plan will not add cost to the proposed plan during year one. To build staff leadership, the allowance of Teacher Leaders to conduct peer observations will require additional substitute staff in year 3.

Part Two

Instructions: Using the table below, identify the school Operations three-year goal including indicators of success, data sources, and three annual targets.

Three-Year School Operations Goal:

Indicator	Data Source	Baseline Year: 2022-2023	Target 1 Year: 2024-2025	Target 2 Year: 2025-2026	Target 3 Year: 2026-2027
Overall School Accountability Index	Next Generation Report Card	54.5	71.6	74.3	77.0

Action Steps:

Instructions: Using the table below, describe key action steps which will be implemented across three years in order to achieve the three-year operations goal.

Operations Priority: Time allocation for effective use of instructional time					
Root Cause: Time allocated to instruction is not used effectively.					
Person(s) Responsible: Latoya Hubbard, John Scalice, Chris Pellegrino, Denise Linares, Shari Ifrach					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Restructure schedule	• Shift from a Trimester to a Semester schedule. • Determine class period lengths based on needs for accelerated learning and adjust building schedule accordingly using New Solutions K-12 consultant. • Create schedule that allocates more time for AmeriCorps members for student intervention using New Solutions K-12 consultant. • Ensure that the Great Oaks	• Review teacher and student feedback and performance data to make any schedule changes that will impact engagement. • Review data results and feedback to make any revisions necessary to the Great Oaks Instructional Framework. • Leverage potential dual licensure from staff members to create a wider variety of courses offered.		Schedule artifacts showing all key elements of the academic and talent portions of this plan implemented. Increased student performance in key areas of ELA, Math, and SAT growth.	New Solutions K-12 consulting for scheduling assistance and creation.

	Instructional Framework is aligned to new time allocations. • Coordinate scheduling to meet student needs for Special Education and Multi-Language Learners using New Solutions K-12 consultant. • Consider populations for extended hours for High School students.				
Collaborative Planning Time	• Align schedules between the high school and middle school to allow for vertical team planning. • Align grade level schedules to allow for data team meetings and weekly meetings with the Diverse Learning staff. • Establish coaching tiers and assign	• Review feedback from teachers regarding meeting and planning time, make appropriate adjustments. • Continue to align schedules for high school and middle school to make more appropriate use of space aligned to the new footprint of the school.		Schedule artifacts showing all key elements of the academic and talent portions of this plan implemented. Increased student performance in key areas of ELA, Math, and SAT growth.	New Solutions K-12 consulting for scheduling assistance and creation.

	appropriate time to teacher programs for coaching meetings.				

Operations Priority: Space allocation for effective use of instructional time					
Root Cause: Limited space creates ineffective personnel usage reducing time with students.					
Person(s) Responsible: Latoya Hubbard, Michael Little					
Strategies to address Root Cause	Timeline			Indicators of Success	Resources
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
School footprint mapping	• Review space and space needs, historical classroom assignments per school, and school program design with Wilkie Architecture (original designer of our building) to make recommendations on effective allocation of space. • Review classroom set-up, furniture, and square footage of each classroom to maximize instructional use with Wilkie Architecture.	• Finalize grade level occupancy for all grades to create consistent space usage for Middle and High School. • Review feedback on space alignment. • Shift methods and models for student recruitment to ensure earlier occupancy benchmarks. • Consider time-shifts for upper high-school career and college pathway students to maximize off campus opportunities and create more flexibility with school footprint.		Schedule artifacts showing all key elements of the academic and talent portions of this plan implemented. Increased student performance in key areas of ELA, Math, and SAT growth.	Willkie Architecture for consult on space realignment and purposing.

	• Reassign office space and designations to create additional instructional space as possible.				

Instructions: In the box below, describe the sustainability plan which addresses the following:

- How will the school build its capacity in order to sustain progress made using Commissioner's Network funds during Commissioner's Network participation years?
- How will the district support and monitor plans and activities subsequent to the end of Commissioner's Network participation?

To build and sustain capacity beyond Commissioner's Network participation, Great Oaks Charter School will implement a multifaceted approach. The school will strategically allocate Commissioner's Network funds to targeted, ongoing professional development programs. This investment will empower educators with the necessary skills to continue successful strategies post-network involvement. Additionally, the school aims to cultivate a culture of collaborative learning through mentorship programs, where experienced staff will guide their peers in implementing effective practices.

In addition to investing in the professional growth of educators, Great Oaks Charter School recognizes the critical role of leadership in sustaining progress beyond Commissioner's Network participation. The school aims to establish leadership development programs that groom and empower current and emerging leaders within the institution. This initiative includes mentorship opportunities, leadership workshops, and access to external resources to enhance administrative skills. By building a cadre of effective leaders, Great Oaks ensures continuity in the implementation of successful strategies and the ability to adapt to changing educational landscapes. This emphasis on leadership capacity will fortify the school's resilience, enabling it to navigate challenges and sustain positive outcomes even after the conclusion of Commissioner's Network funding. Continuous collaboration with the district and relevant stakeholders will further strengthen the school's capacity to uphold advancements made during Commissioner's Network participation, fostering enduring success in student achievement and school improvement initiatives.

Data-driven decision-making will be a cornerstone, with regular assessments to identify strengths and areas needing improvement. Great Oaks will establish systems for continuous feedback, enabling educators to adjust strategies based on real-time insights. Furthermore, the school will invest in technology and resources to ensure the seamless integration of successful initiatives into daily practices.

Post-Commissioner's Network participation, the Great Oaks District's support will persist through a robust monitoring system. Regular evaluations will gauge the effectiveness of implemented plans and activities, with a focus on sustaining positive outcomes. The district's Executive Leadership will facilitate ongoing collaboration, knowledge transfer sessions, and resource-sharing, ensuring a smooth transition and continued growth for Great Oaks Charter School. Open communication channels and periodic reviews will be integral to refining strategies and addressing evolving challenges, fostering a dynamic and adaptive educational environment.

8.1 BUDGET PROPOSAL

After the SBE approves the Turnaround Plan, the school is eligible to receive a Network grant in accordance with C.G.S. § 10-223h(a). The district and school will work with the Turnaround Office to develop a proposed Commissioner's Network budget aligned to the SBE approved plan.   Please note that personnel funded through the Commissioner's Network grant, will need to use the following formula for all salaries and benefits:

Year 1: 80 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/20 percent paid through other funding
Year 2: 65 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/35 percent paid through other funding
Year 3: 50 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/50 percent paid through other funding
Year 4: 35 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/65 percent paid through other funding
Year 5: 20 percent paid through Commissioner's Network funding/80 percent paid through other funding

Section 9: Modifications

During the term of the school's participation in the Commissioner's Network, the Commissioner shall review the progress of each school. The Commissioner or designee may, on the basis of such review, convene the Turnaround Committee to, as part of its monitoring responsibility, address a lack of sufficient progress or other implementation issues at the school. The Turnaround Committee may consider and enact changes to the Turnaround Plan by consensus. If the Turnaround Committee does not enact changes or the changes are unlikely to result in sufficient progress or adequately address implementation concerns, the Commissioner may take appropriate actions to ensure sufficient progress at the school, including, but not limited to, finding the Turnaround Plan deficient and developing a revised Turnaround Plan.

Appendix A: Turnaround Committee Signatures Page

Please Note: Applicants should not sign this section of the application until the Turnaround Committee reaches consensus on the Turnaround Plan and is ready to submit a final copy of such plan to the CSDE.

We, the undersigned members of the Turnaround Committee, on the basis of a consensus agreement, submit this Turnaround Plan to the Commissioner for final selection of the school into the Commissioner's Network.

_____   _____
Signature of Superintendent, Non-Voting Chair   Date

__John Scalice_____
Name of Superintendent *(typed)*

_____   _____
Signature of Board of Education-appointed Parent   Date

__Robert Carlson_____
Name of Board of Education-appointed Parent *(typed)*

_____   _____
Signature of Board of Education-appointed Administrator   Date

____John Scalice_____
Name of Board of Education-appointed Administrator *(typed)*

_____2/20/24_____
Signature of Union-appointed Teacher   Date

_____Robert Karl_____
Name of Union-appointed Teacher *(typed)*

_____ _____2/6/24_____
Signature of Union-appointed Teacher   Date

_____Kelli Mills_____
Name of Union-appointed Teacher *(typed)*

_____ 2/6/24_____
Signature of Union-appointed Parent   Date

_____Eunice Mann_____
Name of Union-appointed Parent *(typed)*

_____
Signature of Commissioner of Education   Date

_____
Name of Commissioner of Education (*typed*)

Turnaround Committee Participation

In the table below, please input the names and titles of the additional stakeholders not referenced above that were involved in the development of this turnaround application:

Name	Title
Beatrice Mitchell	ELA Coach
Diana Soto	Parent
Jose Soto	Parent
Josie Marquez Clemente	Culture Team Member
Brandon Hubbard	Culture Team Member
Denise Linares	Middle School Principal
Margaret Hughes	CSDE

Appendix C: Statement of Assurances

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES | GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE: Commissioner's Network

THE APPLICANT: **Great Oaks Charter School District**   HEREBY ASSURES THAT:

Great Oaks Charter School

(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

A.   The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;

B.   The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;

C.   The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;

D.   The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the Connecticut State Department of Education;

E.   Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;

F.   Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;

G.   The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut State Department of Education, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut State Department of Education may find necessary;

H.   The Connecticut State Department of Education reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;

I.   If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;

J. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;

K. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut State Department of Education any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

II. NONDISCRIMINATION
A. For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:
1. "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
2. "Contract" and "contract" include any extension or modification of the Charter;
3. "Contractor" and "contractor" include any successors or assigns of the Charter Board;
4. "Gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.
5. "good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
6. "good faith efforts" shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements;
7. "marital status" means being single, married as recognized by the State of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
8. "mental disability" means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders", or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;
9. "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise, and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of C.G.S. § 32-9n; and
10. "public works contract" means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

For purposes of this Section, the terms "Contract" and "contract" do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, unless the contract is a municipal public works contract or quasi-public agency project contract, (2) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in C.G.S. § 1-267, (3) the federal government, (4) a foreign government, or (5) an agency of a subdivision, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), or (4).

B. The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, status as a veteran, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to ensure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, status as a veteran, intellectual disability, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the Contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission, advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and C.G.S. §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; and (5) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor as relate to the provisions of this Section and C.G.S. § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, municipal public works contract or contract for a quasi-public agency project, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he or she will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works or quasi-public agency projects.

C. Determination of the Contractor's good faith efforts shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following factors: The Contractor's employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

D. The Contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.

E. The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (B) of this Section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and in every subcontract entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a municipal public works contract for a quasi-public agency project, and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with C.G.S. §46a-56, as amended; provided if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission regarding the State contract, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

F. The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.

G. (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such Contractor has a

contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to C.G.S. § 46a-56; and (4) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor which relate to the provisions of this Section and C.G.S. § 46a-56.

H. The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with C.G.S. § 46a-56, as amended; provided, if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission regarding a State contract, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

M. The grant award is subject to approval of the Connecticut State Department of Education and availability of state or federal funds.

N. The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official, hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Superintendent Signature:

Name: *(typed)*
John Scalice

Title: *(typed)*
Chief Executive Officer

Date:
March 13, 2024

PART V: REFERENCES

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