

Renewal Petition Staff Report

Lodestar: A Lighthouse Community Public School

Decision Hearing: October 21, 2025

School Overview

Lodestar: A Lighthouse Community Public School

Charter Management Organization (CMO):	Lighthouse Community Public Schools	Previous Renewal Year(s):	2020
Year Opened:	2016	Campus Address:	701 105 th Ave, Oakland, CA 94603
OUSD Board District:	7	Current Enrollment: ¹	755
Current Grades Served:	TK-12	5-Year Projected Enrollment	732, 732, 732, 732, 732

Staff Recommendation

Although there are multiple legally compliant options, based on the contents of this Staff Report, Staff recommends approval of the renewal petition for Lodestar for 5 years, beginning July 1, 2026, until June 30, 2031, to serve students in Grades TK-12 and a projected annual enrollment as outlined in the table above, with performance and fiscal benchmarks as detailed in the full staff recommendation on page 42.

Summary of Findings:

Strengths	Challenges
- Schoolwide improvement in both ELA and Math proficiency in most recent three years. - Improvement in average DFS for all student groups in both ELA and Math in most recent three years. - Majority of grade levels and student groups made at least one year's progress per verified data results in 2023-24 First graduating class had high graduation and A-G completion rates. - Post-pandemic decline in chronic absenteeism. - Stable and sustainable enrollment with healthy fund balance. - NWEA MAP data shows majority of student groups and grades made at least one year's progress in 2024-25.	- Schoolwide average proficiency and DFS remained below District average in both Math and ELA in most recent year, with ELA receiving a Red indicator on the 2024 Dashboard. ELs making progress declined in most recent year, with Red on the ELPI Dashboard indicator. - Low high school Math proficiency: 0% in 2021-22 and 2022-23, and 6% most recently. - Most recent audit identified a material weakness. - Approximately 53% of teaching assignments considered "Ineffective".

¹ Per first month statistical report submitted to OUSD on August 29, 2025.

Criteria for Evaluation and Procedural Background

Criteria for Renewal

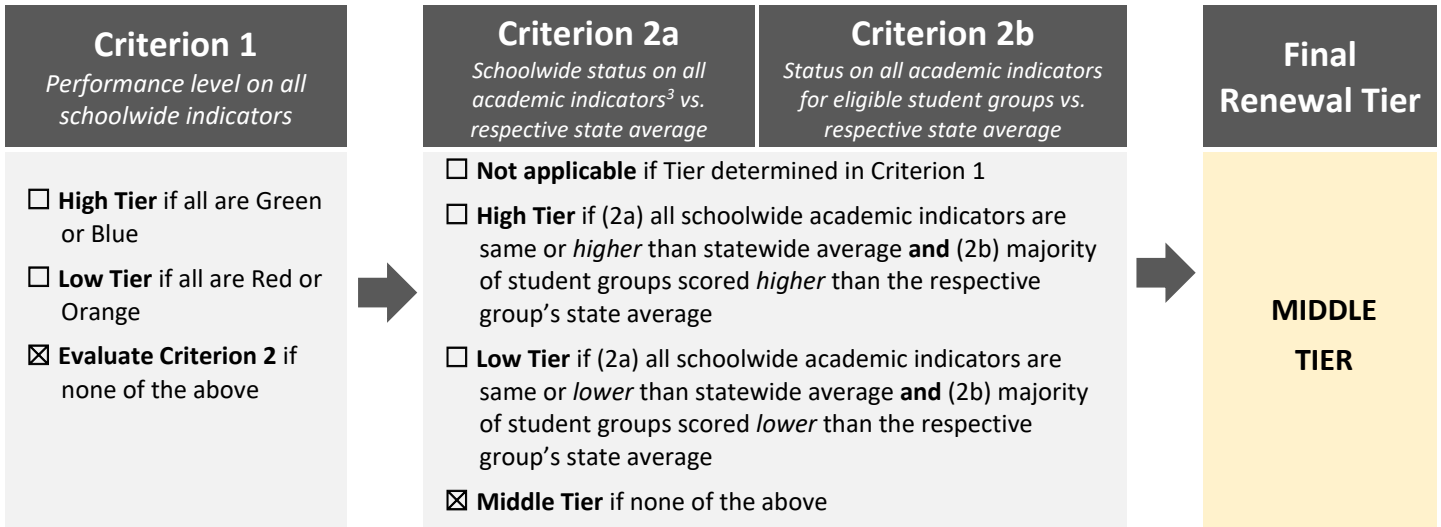
The Charter Schools Act of 1992 and subsequent amendments established the criteria by which charter renewal applications must be evaluated. In order to recommend the approval of a charter school renewal, Office of Charter Schools (“OCS”) Staff must determine that the charter school has met the requirements set forth in Education Code (“Ed Code”) Sections 47605, 47607, and 47607.2. Specifically, in order to be recommended for renewal, OCS Staff determines whether the charter school has met the following renewal criteria:

- I. *Has the Charter School Presented a Sound Educational Program?*
- II. *Is the Charter School Demonstrably Likely to Successfully Implement the Proposed Educational Program?*
- III. *Is the Petition Reasonably Comprehensive?*
- IV. *Is the School Serving All Students Who Wish to Attend?*

Renewal Tier Analysis

In addition to the criteria outlined above, Education Code outlines a three-tiered system of performance categories for most² charter schools seeking renewal. This system provides additional criteria and conditions for evaluating the charter school’s renewal petition based on the performance category, or “Tier”, in which the school is placed. Figure 1 below shows a summary of the criteria used by the California Department of Education (“CDE”) to determine Lodestar’s Renewal Tier. A more detailed analysis of the Charter School’s Renewal Tier, including analyses of each criterion and sub-criterion, can be found in Figures 2-4.

Figure 1: Lodestar Renewal Tier Analysis



Sources: California School Dashboard; CDE Charter School Performance Category Data File; CDE “Determining Charter School Performance Category” Flyer

Criterion 1 Analysis

Criterion 1 is based on the performance colors received for **all** state indicators on the Dashboard for the two previous State Dashboard years. Per Education Code, if all state indicators are Blue or Green, the Charter School is assigned to the High Tier. If all state indicators are Orange or Red, the Charter School is assigned to the Low Tier. In all other circumstances, an evaluation of Criterion 2 is necessary to determine the Charter School’s Tier. As shown in Figure 2 below, Lodestar did not fit the requirements for Low Tier or for High Tier in Criterion 1, thus, an evaluation of Criterion 2 is necessary.

² The three-tiered system does not apply to schools that qualify for the Dashboard Alternative School Status (DASS) program.

³ “Academic indicators” refer to the ELA, Math, English Learner Progress, and College and Career Readiness Indicators on the California School Dashboard.

Figure 2: Criterion 1 Analysis – Schoolwide Results

Indicator	2023	2024
ELA	Orange	Red
Math	Orange	Orange
EL Progress	Green	Red
College/Career	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate	N/A	N/A
Suspension Rate	Green	Orange
Chronic Absenteeism	Yellow	Yellow

Source: California School Dashboard

Criterion 2 Analysis

Criterion 2 is based on the “Status” (or the current year data) for all **academic** indicators (ELA, Mathematics, EL Progress, and College/Career) with a performance color for the two previous Dashboard years. Performance determinations are then based on the overall status compared with the statewide averages for the previous two Dashboard years. Criterion 2 is broken into two sub-criteria – Criterion 2a evaluates the Charter School’s schoolwide performance and Criterion 2b evaluates the Charter School’s student group performance, specifically for student groups which scored below the statewide average⁴. Per Education Code, if (Criterion 2a) all **schoolwide** academic indicators are same or higher than the statewide average *and* (Criterion 2b) the majority of eligible student groups are higher than their group’s respective statewide average, then the Charter School is placed in the High Tier. If (Criterion 2a) all **schoolwide** academic indicators are same or lower than the statewide average *and* (Criterion 2b) the majority of eligible student groups are lower than their respective statewide average, then the Charter School is placed in the Low Tier. In all other circumstances, the Charter School is placed in the Middle Tier. As shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4 below, the Charter School did not meet the requirements for High Tier or for Low Tier, thus, Lodestar is placed in the Middle Tier⁵.

Figure 3: Criterion 2a Analysis

Academic Indicator	2023			2024		
	School Status	State Status	Result	School Status	State Status	Result
ELA	-80.7	-13.6	Lower	-83.9	-13.2	Lower
Math	-115.3	-49.1	Lower	-99.9	-47.6	Lower
EL Progress	50.7%	48.7%	Higher	37.8%	45.7%	Lower
College / Career	N/A	43.9%	N/A	N/A	45.3%	N/A

Source: California School Dashboard

Figure 4: Criterion 2b Analysis

Indicator	Student Group	2023			2024		
		School Status	State Status	Result	School Status	State Status	Result
ELA	African American	-96.1	-59.6	Lower	-89.5	-58.9	Lower
	English Learner	-97.4	-67.7	Lower	-110.4	-67.6	Lower
	Hispanic/Latino	-79.5	-40.2	Lower	-85.9	-39.3	Lower
	SED	-81.4	-42.6	Lower	-85.4	-40.9	Lower
	SWD	-158.2	-96.3	Lower	-159.5	-95.6	Lower

⁴ For more information regarding which student groups are included in the analysis for Criterion 2b, please see the CDE’s Performance Categories Flyer: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/documents/categoryflyer.pdf>

⁵ Charter school performance categories for all California charter schools can be found here: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/performcategorydf.asp>

Math	African American	-135.3	-104.5	Lower	-118.5	-102.2	Lower
	English Learner	-124.2	-93.4	Lower	-120.7	-93.4	Lower
	Hispanic/Latino	-112.6	-80.8	Lower	-99.5	-79.2	Lower
	SED	-115.6	-80.8	Lower	-100.1	-78.2	Lower
	SWD	-181.9	-127.3	Lower	-172.8	-124.3	Lower
EL Progress		50.7%	48.7%	Higher	37.8%	45.7%	Lower

Source: California School Dashboard

Additional Guidance for Middle Tier Schools

As noted previously, there are additional criteria and conditions for evaluating a Charter School's petition depending on the assigned Renewal Tier. Figure 5 below outlines the renewal conditions and additional evaluation guidance applicable to schools placed in the Middle Tier.

Figure 5: Renewal Tier Additional Guidance

MIDDLE TIER - Additional Guidance and Decision Criteria	
Term	May only be renewed for a 5-year term.
Additional Renewal Conditions	May be denied upon making written findings that: 1. <i>The charter school has failed to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting standards that provide a benefit to the pupils of the school; AND</i> 2. <i>The closure is in the best interest of the pupils; AND</i> 3. <i>The decision provided greater weight to performance on measurements of academic performance (if applicable).</i> May also be denied with a written finding that the school is demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition due to a finding which demonstrates either: A. <i>Substantial fiscal or governance concerns; or</i> B. <i>The school is not serving all pupils who wish to attend, as documented by data provided by the CDE or by any substantiated complaints that the charter school has not complied with suspension, expulsion, or involuntary disenrollment procedures.</i> A chartering authority may only deny for either of the two reasons listed above only after it has provided at least 30 days' notice to the charter school of the alleged violation and provided the charter school with a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation, including a corrective action plan proposed by the charter school. The chartering authority may deny renewal only by making either of the following findings: A. <i>The corrective action proposed by the charter school has been unsuccessful; or</i> B. <i>The violations are sufficiently severe and pervasive as to render a corrective action plan unviable.</i>
Verified Data ⁶ (Optional)	If the charter school chooses to submit, the authorizing entity shall also consider clear and convincing evidence⁷, demonstrated by verified data, showing either: A. <i>The school achieved measurable increases in academic achievement, as defined by at least one year's progress for each year in school; or</i> B. <i>Strong postsecondary outcomes, as defined by college enrollment, persistence, and completion rates equal to similar peers.</i>

Source: Education Code §47607.2(b)

⁶ Ed Code §47607.2(c) defines verified data as data derived from nationally recognized, valid, peer-reviewed, and reliable sources that are externally produced. The State Board of Education established criteria to define verified data and identify an approved list of valid and reliable assessments that shall be used for this purpose. For more information, please review the CDE's Verified Data website page: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/verifdata.asp>

⁷ Pending renewal of Ed Code §47607.2(b)(5) beyond January 1, 2026

Procedure

1. The Charter School submitted a renewal petition to the District on August 15, 2025.
2. OCS Staff conducted an interview with 3 members of the Lighthouse Community Public Schools Governing Board on August 29, 2025, after all of the board members submitted a self-evaluation to assess strengths and gaps in the Governing Body.
3. The OUSD review team conducted a site visit on September 4, 2025. This site visit involved classroom observations and focus group interviews with students, families, teachers, and school leadership.
4. The review team conducted a review of the school's documents, policies, financials, academic performance, and renewal petition to assist in developing the staff report.
5. The initial public hearing was held on September 25, 2025.
6. Staff findings were made public by the 15-day posting requirement, which was October 6, 2025.
7. The decision public hearing is being held on October 21, 2025.

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I. Renewal Criteria I: Has the Charter School Presented a Sound Educational Program?

In order for a charter school’s renewal petition to be approved, it must present a sound educational program for its students. For schools in the Middle Tier, the District is required to consider the school’s performance on California School Dashboard indicators, providing greater weight to performance on academic indicators. Although Education Code does not specifically reference similar criteria for schools meeting the Middle Tier criteria (outside of the Renewal Tier Analysis), the following is being included for context. To provide a comprehensive overview of the educational program, the evaluation below includes evidence from the California School Dashboard as well as results from the California Assessment of Student Performance Progress (“CAASPP”) Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (“SBAC”) assessments, graduation data, CORE growth data, ELPAC results, a summary of the renewal site visit, and verified data submitted by the Charter School. As a high-level summary, Figure 6 below represents the academic indicator results from the California School Dashboard over the course of the charter term, details for which can be found in the subsequent sections.

Figure 6: California School Dashboard Academic Indicator Summary⁸

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
English Language Arts	No Color ↔	Orange ↔ 36.00 pts	Red ↔ -3.20 pts
Math	No Color ↔	Orange ↔ 28.10 pts	Orange ↔ 15.40 pts
English Learner Progress	No Color ↔	Green ↔ 3.10 pp	Red ↔ -12.90 pp
College/Career Readiness	No Color ↔		No Color ↔

Source: California School Dashboard

A. SBAC Performance Summary – English Language Arts

The below section represents a summary of the results from the ELA SBAC assessment at the Charter School including schoolwide average proficiency rates disaggregated by grade span, average Distance from Standard (“DFS”) results disaggregated by student group, and CORE growth results, if applicable. Results for the California Alternate Assessments (“CAAs”) were not included as Lodestar did not surpass the required threshold of tested students and, therefore, no data is available. While a more detailed analysis can be found in the subsequent sections, a summary of these data is below:

⁸ The 2018-19 and 2022-23 column has been intentionally left blank, as Lodestar did not receive an English Learner Progress Indicator on the 2019 California School Dashboard or the College/Career Indicator on the 2019 and 2023 California School Dashboard.

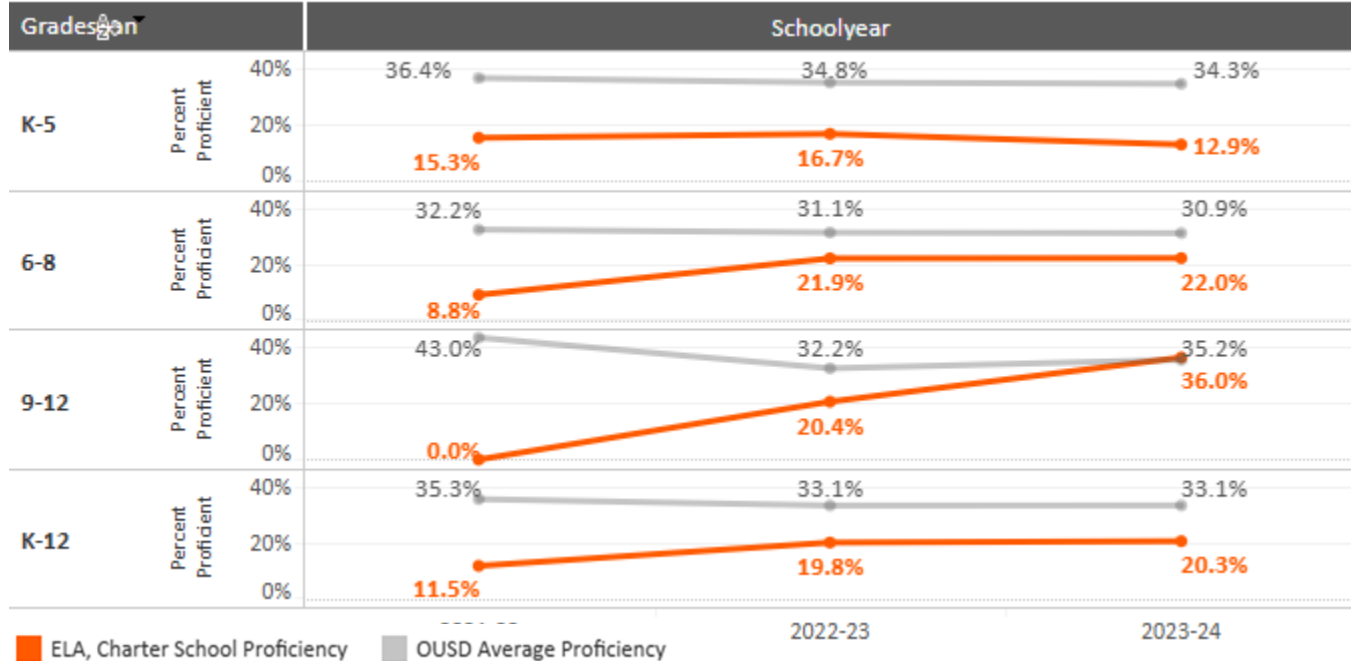
- **Schoolwide Trends:** Between 2021-22 and 2023-24, Lodestar’s schoolwide proficiency and schoolwide DFS increased each year, although remained below the respective District average.
- **Grade Span Trends:** Between 2021-22 and 2023-24, Lodestar’s K-5 average proficiency rate decreased slightly, while Lodestar’s 6-8 and 9-12 average proficiency rates increased. In 2023-24, both the K-5 and 6-8 grade bands demonstrated below-average CORE growth, while Lodestar’s 9-12 grade bands saw above-average growth.
- **Student Group Trends:** Between 2021-22 and 2023-24, average ELA DFS increased for each student group. In 2023-24, the Hispanic, Black/African American, and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged student groups had an average DFS which exceeded or was similar to the respective District average.

Average Proficiency Rates and Grade Span Results

To supplement the information provided in the California School Dashboard, additional analyses of the results from the ELA SBAC assessment are provided in this and subsequent sections. Below, Figure 7 represents the Charter School’s average proficiency rates on the ELA SBAC over the course of the charter term, or the percentage of students who have met or exceeded the “Standard” threshold for this exam. The results have been disaggregated by grade span and the figure additionally includes average proficiency rates for the corresponding grade spans at OUSD for further context. As shown below:

- From 2021-22 to 2023-24, Lodestar’s K-5 grade proficiency rate stayed relatively consistent and in 2023-24, was about 21 percentage points below the District average.
- From 2021-22 to 2023-24, Lodestar’s 6-8 grade proficiency rate increased before leveling off. In 2023-24, Lodestar’s proficiency rate was about 7 percentage points below the district average.
- From 2021-22 to 2023-24, Lodestar’s 9-12 grade proficiency rate increased. In 2023-24, Lodestar’s 9-12 proficiency rate increased about 16 percentages points and was similar to the District average.

Figure 7: Schoolwide ELA SBAC Proficiency Rates Over Time – Lodestar and OUSD*



Source: Downloadable CAASPP Research Files

*Testing for 2019-20 was cancelled due to COVID-19. Testing for 2020-21 was optional.

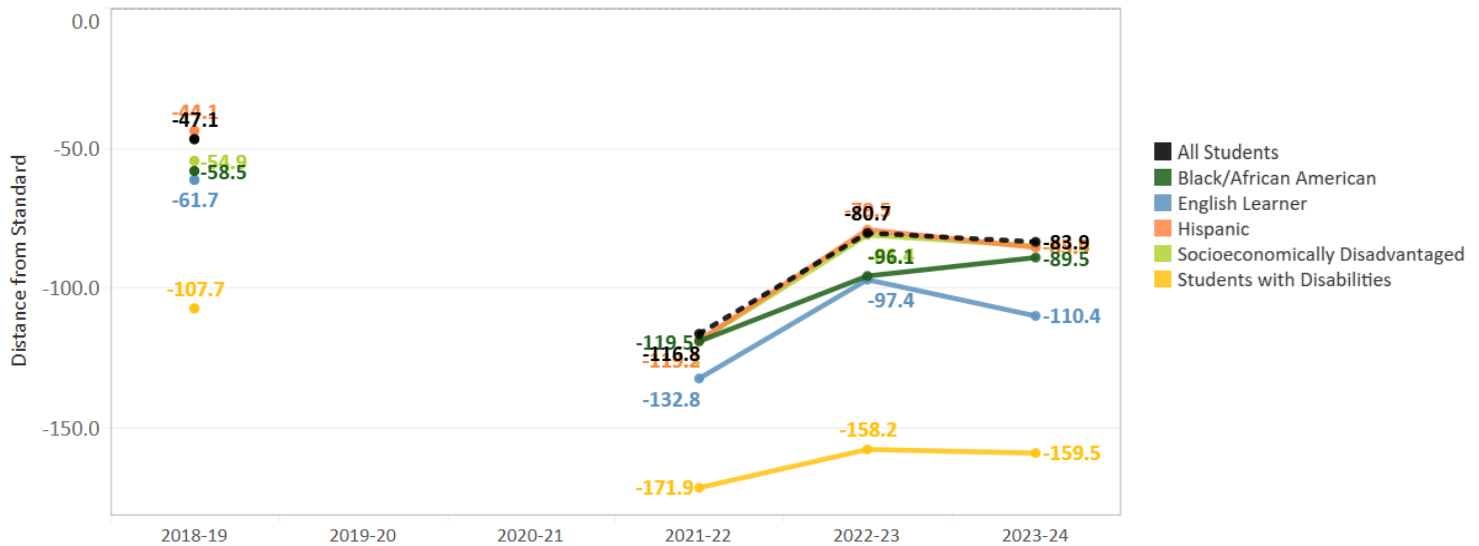
Distance from Standard (DFS) and Student Group Results

Figures 8 and 9 below represent the Charter School’s average Distance from Standard (“DFS”) on the ELA SBAC assessment over the course of the charter term. While average proficiency rates illustrate the percentage of students

scoring at or above the “Standard Met” threshold on the SBAC assessment, average DFS measures how far, on average, student results deviate from the “Standard Met” threshold, providing a more granular analysis. As shown in Figure 8 below:

- From 2021–22 to 2023–24, the average DFS for each student group initially increased before declining in the subsequent year—except for the Black/African American student group, whose average DFS consistently improved over the entire period.

Figure 8: Lodestar ELA DFS Over Time*



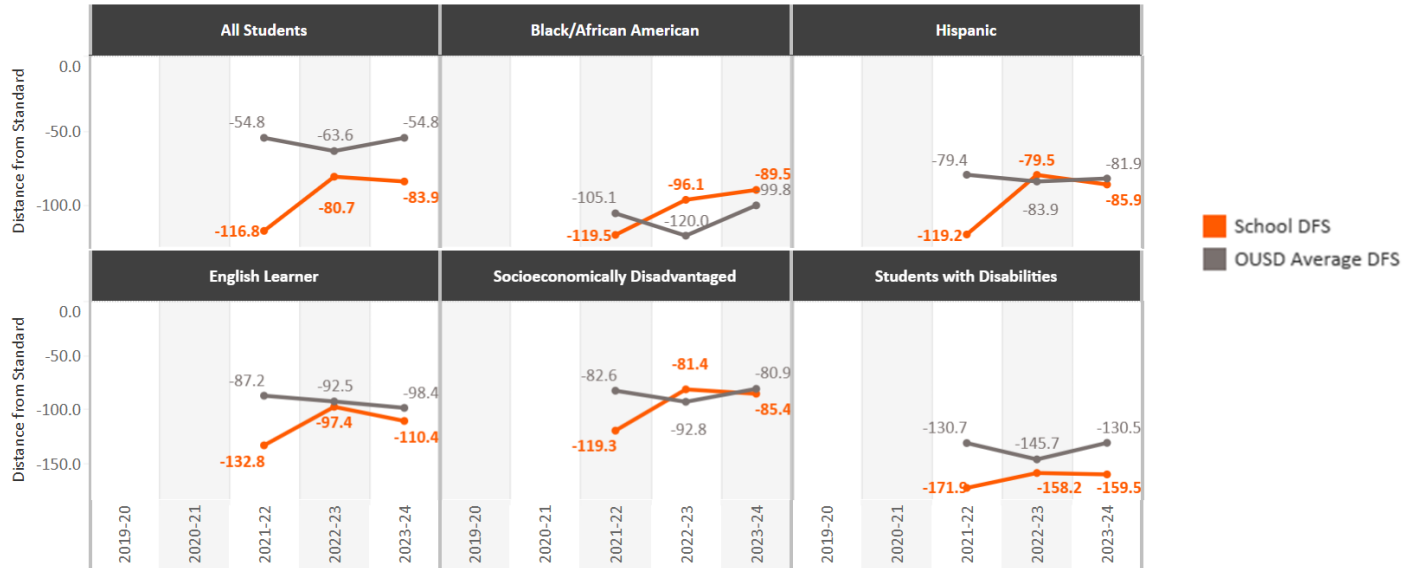
Source: Downloadable CAASPP Research Files

*Testing for 2019-20 was cancelled due to COVID-19. Testing for 2020-21 was optional.

Figure 9 below again shows the average DFS, both schoolwide and for key student groups, over the course of the charter term, but also compares these results with the OUSD average for each corresponding group. Please note, despite the comparisons below, students within the same group may be quite different from one another (e.g. severity of disability for special education students, progress levels for English Learners). As shown below:

- For all years of the charter term, the English Learner student group, Students with Disabilities student group, and the All Students group had an average DFS below the respective District average.
- Black/African American students made consistent growth throughout Lodestar's charter term. In 2023-24, the Black/African American student group was about 10 points above the respective District average.
- In 2023-24, the Hispanic, English Learner, and Socioeconomically disadvantaged student group average DFS declined from the previous year but was similar to the respective District average.

Figure 9: Lodestar and OUSD ELA DFS Over Time*



Source: Downloadable CAASPP Research Files

*Testing for 2019-20 was cancelled due to COVID-19. Testing for 2020-21 was optional.

CORE Growth

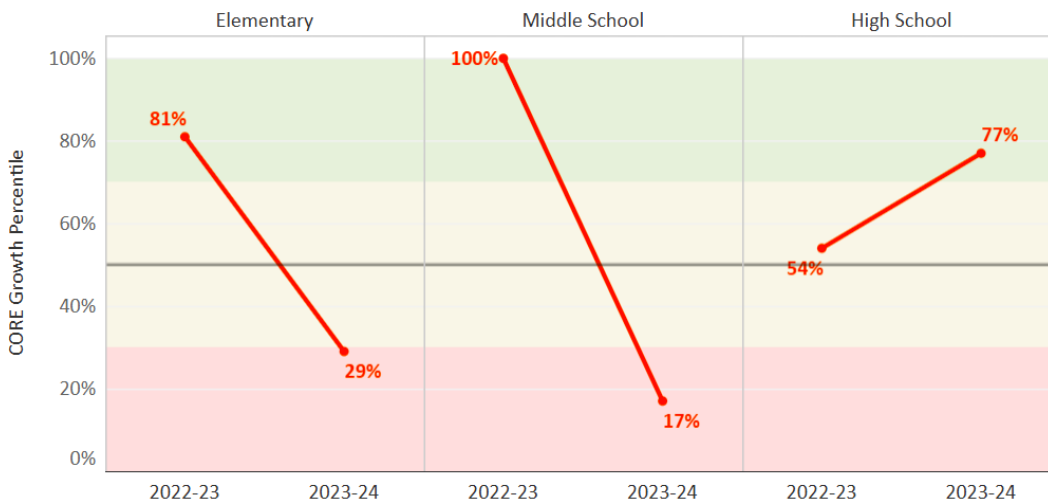
Figure 10 below represents the Charter School’s most recent CORE Growth results. The CORE Growth metric measures the year-over-year growth of students on the SBAC exams, compared to similar students across the state based on prior test score history and several demographic factors. The growth percentile indicates the percentage of similar students that students at the school outperformed (i.e. 50th percentile indicates average growth). CORE categorizes growth percentile rankings as follows:

- “Below Average” or “Low” growth: 30% or below
- “Average” or “Medium” growth: above 30% and less than or equal to 70%
- “Above Average” or “High” growth: above 70%

According to CORE and the figure below:

- In 2023-24, students in grade 11 at Lodestar had above average growth in ELA compared with similar students, with growth estimated to be in the 77th percentile.
- In 2023-24, students in grade 3-5 and students in grade 6-8 had below average growth in ELA compared to similar students, with growth estimated to be in the 29th and 17th percentile, respectively.

Figure 10: 2024 ELA CORE Growth by Grade Span



Source: CORE360 Dashboard

B. SBAC Performance Summary – Mathematics

The below section represents a summary of the results from the Math SBAC assessment at the Charter School including schoolwide average proficiency rates disaggregated by grade span, average Distance from Standard (“DFS”) results disaggregated by student group, and CORE growth results, if applicable. Results for the California Alternate Assessments (“CAAs”) were not included as Lodestar did not surpass the required threshold of tested students and, therefore, no data is available. While a more detailed analysis can be found below, a summary of these data is below:

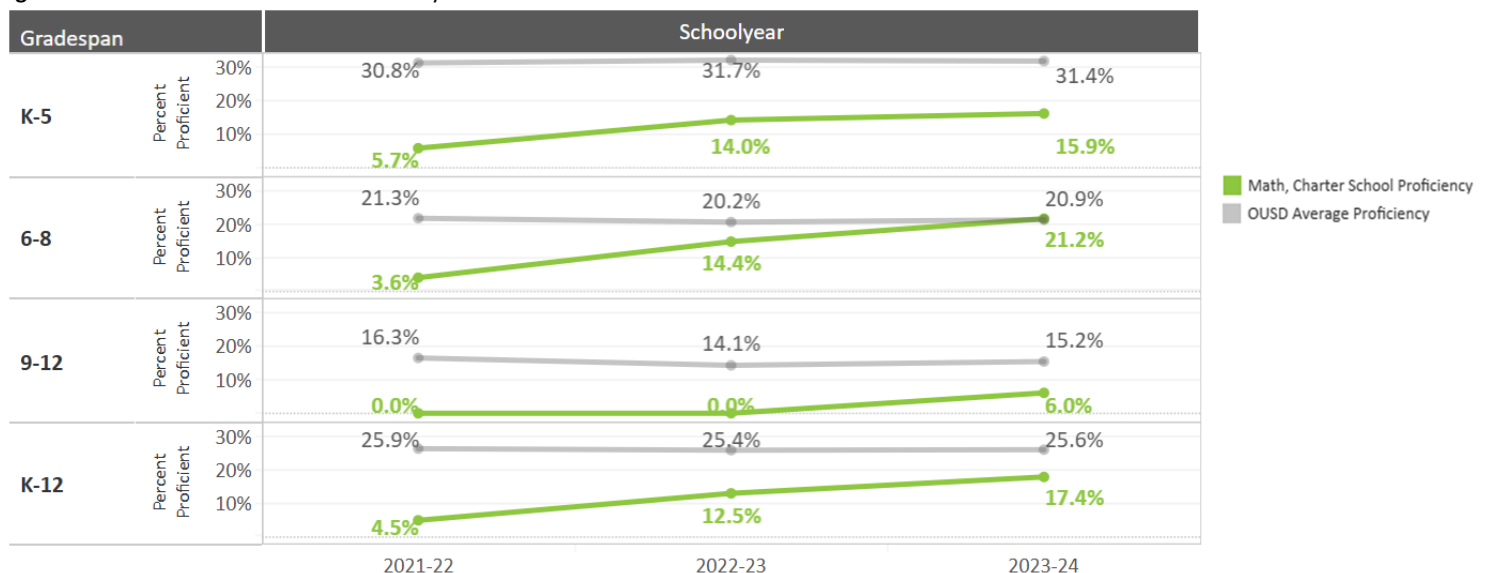
- **Schoolwide Trends:** Between 2021-22 and 2023-24, Lodestar’s schoolwide average proficiency rate and DFS increased, but remained below the District average.
- **Grade Span Trends:** Between 2021-22 and 2023-24, average proficiency rates increased for all grade spans. In 2023-24, the middle and high school grade spans had above average CORE growth, while the elementary grade span had average CORE growth.
- **Student Group Trends:** Between 2021-22 and 2023-24, average DFS for all student groups increased. In 2023-24, the Hispanic, Black/African American, English Learner, and Socioeconomically disadvantaged student groups each had an average DFS which exceeded or was similar to the respective District average.

Average Proficiency Rates and Grade Span Results

To supplement the information provided in the California School Dashboard, additional analyses of the results from the Math SBAC assessment are provided in this and subsequent sections. Below, Figure 11 represents the charter school’s average proficiency rates on the Math SBAC over the course of the charter term, or the percentage of students who have met or exceeded the “Standard” threshold for this exam. The results have been disaggregated by grade span and the figure additionally includes average proficiency rates for the corresponding grade spans at OUSD for further context. As shown below:

- From 2021-22 to 2023-24, proficiency rates for all grade spans increased.
- For all years of the charter term, the K-5 grade proficiency rate was below the District average. In 2023-24, the K-5 proficiency rate was about 15 percentage points below the District average.
- The 6-8 grade proficiency rate was below the District average in both 2021-22 and 2022-23 but was slightly above the District average in 2023-24.
- In both 2021-22 and 2022-23, the 9-12 proficiency rate was 0%. In 2023-24, the 9-12 grade proficiency rate improved 6 percentage points and was about 9 percentage points below the District average.

Figure 11: Schoolwide Math SBAC Proficiency Rates Over Time – Lodestar and OUSD*



Source: Downloadable CAASPP Research Files

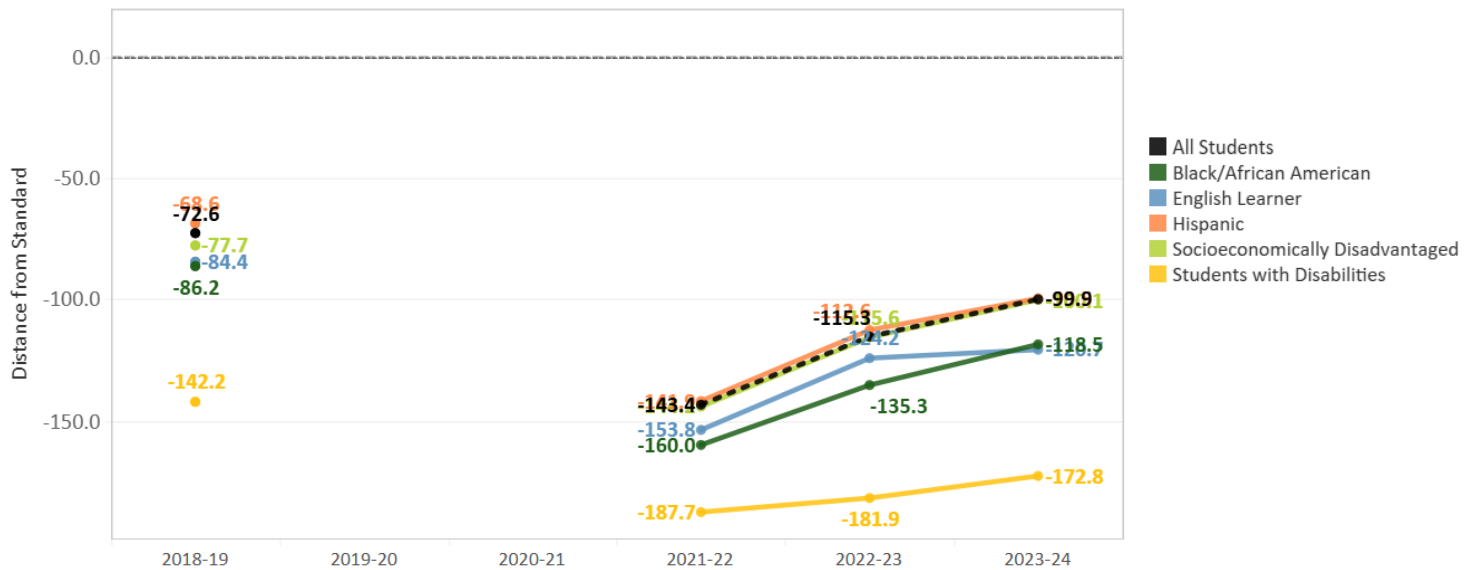
*Testing for 2019-20 was cancelled due to COVID-19. Testing for 2020-21 was optional.

Distance from Standard (DFS) and Student Group Results

Figures 12 and 13 below represent the Charter School's average Distance from Standard ("DFS") on the Math SBAC assessment over the course of the charter term. While average proficiency rates illustrate the percentage of students scoring at or above the "Standard Met" threshold on the SBAC assessment, average DFS measures how far, on average, student results deviate from the "Standard Met" threshold, providing a more granular analysis. As shown in Figure 12 below:

- From 2021-22 to 2023-24, the average DFS for each student group increased both years with the Hispanic, Black/African American, and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged student groups showing the greatest overall gains.

Figure 12: Lodestar Math DFS Over Time*



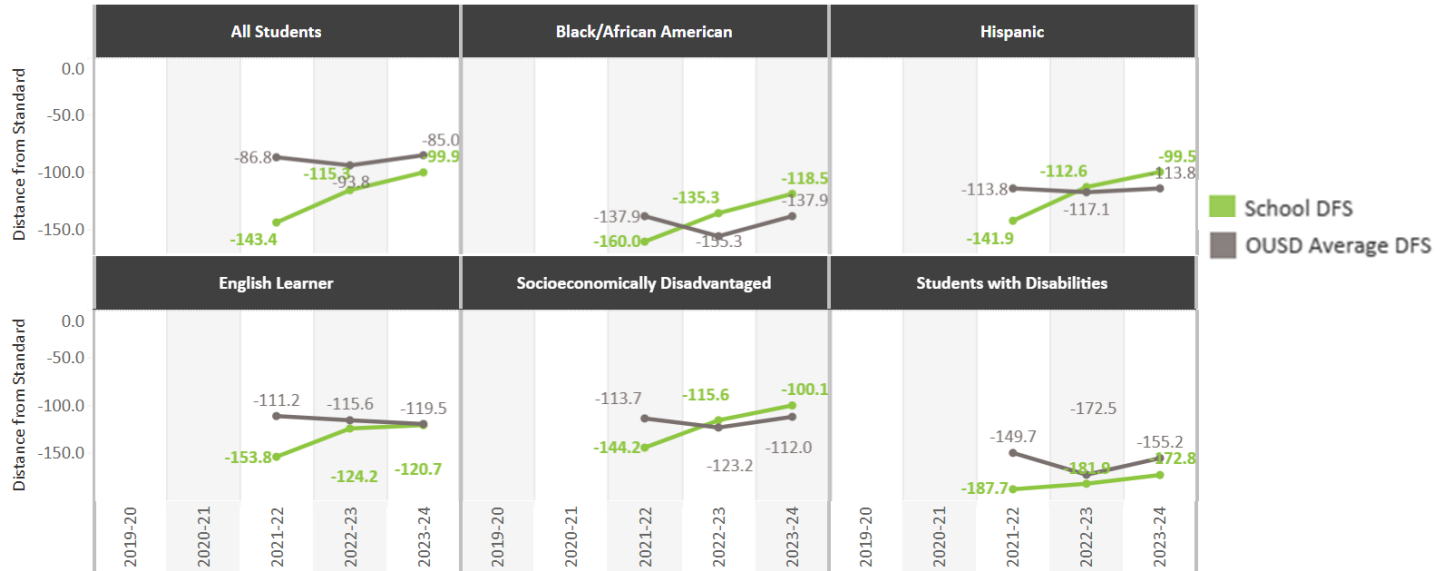
Source: Downloadable CAASPP Research Files

*Testing for 2019-20 was cancelled due to COVID-19. Testing for 2020-21 was optional.

Figure 13 again shows the average DFS, both schoolwide and for key student groups, over the course of the charter term, but also compares these results with the OUSD average for each corresponding group. Please note, despite the comparisons below, students within the same group may be quite different from one another (e.g. severity of disability for special education students, progress levels for English Learners). As shown below:

- In 2023-24, the Black/African American student group average DFS increased about 24 points from the previous year and was about 19 points above the respective District average.
- The Hispanic, Black/African American, and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged student groups initially scored below their respective District average in 2021-22 but increased and exceeded their respective 2023-24 District average.

Figure 13: Lodestar and OUSD Math DFS Over Time*



Source: Downloadable CAASPP Research Files

*Testing for 2019-20 was cancelled due to COVID-19. Testing for 2020-21 was optional.

CORE Growth

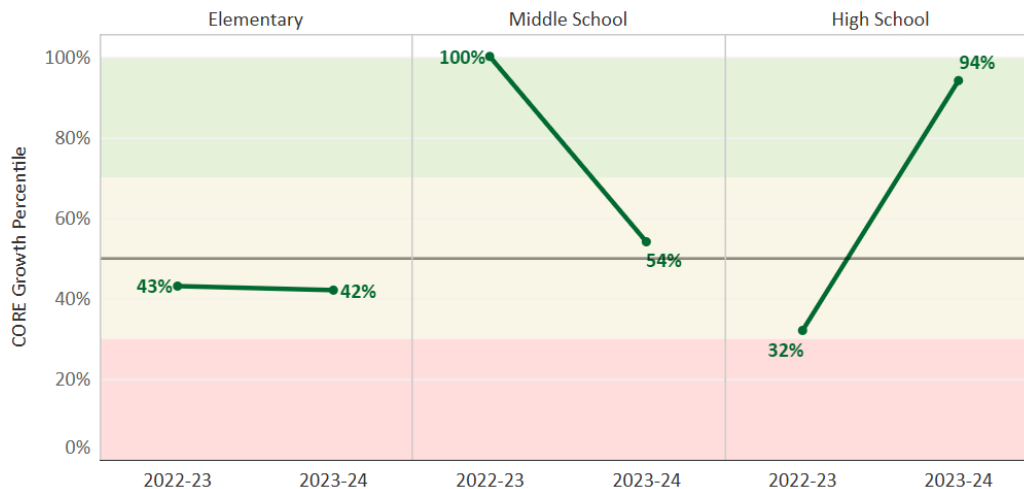
Figure 14 represents the Charter School's most recent CORE Growth results. The CORE Growth metric measures the year-over-year growth of students on the SBAC exams, compared to similar students across the state based on prior test score history and several demographic factors. The growth percentile indicates the percentage of similar students that students at the school outperformed (i.e. 50th percentile indicates average growth). CORE categorizes growth percentile rankings as follows:

- "Below Average" or "Low" growth: 30% or below
- "Average" or "Medium" growth: above 30% and less than or equal to 70%
- "Above Average" or "High" growth: above 70%

According to CORE and the figure below:

- In 2023-24, students in grade 11 at Lodestar had above average growth in ELA compared with similar students, with growth estimated to be in the 94th percentile.
- In 2023-24, students in grade 3-5 and students in grade 6-8 had average growth in ELA compared to similar students, with growth estimated to be in 42nd and 54th percentile, respectively.

Figure 14: 2024 Math CORE Growth by Grade Span and Grade



Source: CORE360 Dashboard

C. College and Career Readiness Measures

The below section represents a summary of the results from various college and career readiness measures, including results from the California School Dashboard College/Career Indicator (“CCI”) and graduation metrics.

Graduation Metrics

The figures below compare the four-year cohort graduation⁹ and A-G graduation rates¹⁰ between OUSD and Lodestar. As shown below:

- In 2023-24, Lodestar’s first graduating class’s four-year cohort graduation rate and A-G graduation rates were higher than the OUSD graduation and A-G rate.
- In 2023-24, Lodestar’s A-G graduation rates were higher than its respective OUSD rate for all key student groups.

Figure 15: Four-Year Graduation Rate – Charter School and OUSD



Source: CDE Downloadable Data Files

Figure 16: 2023-24 A-G Rate – Charter School and OUSD

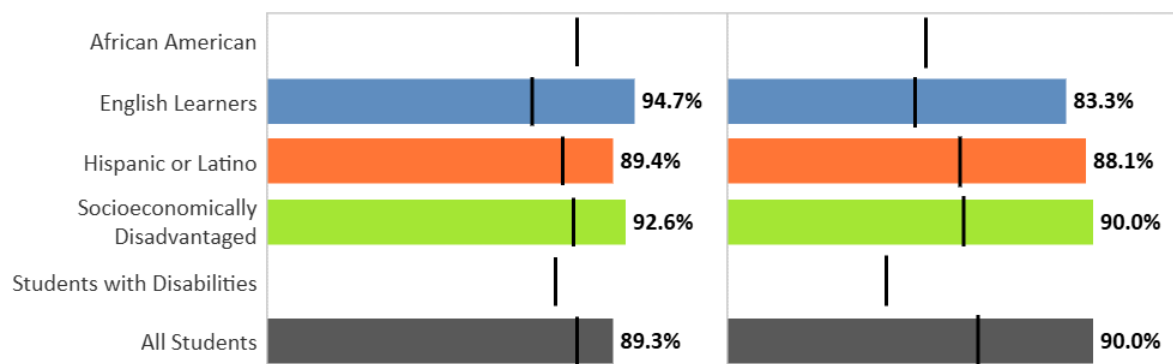


Source: CDE Downloadable Data Files

⁹ The four-year cohort graduation rate is the number of students who graduate from high school in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort for the graduating class.

¹⁰ The A-G graduation rate refers to the percentage of high school graduates who successfully complete the A-G course sequence with a grade of "C" or better, making them eligible to apply to the University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) systems.

Figure 17: 2023-24 Graduation and A-G Rate – Charter School and OUSD



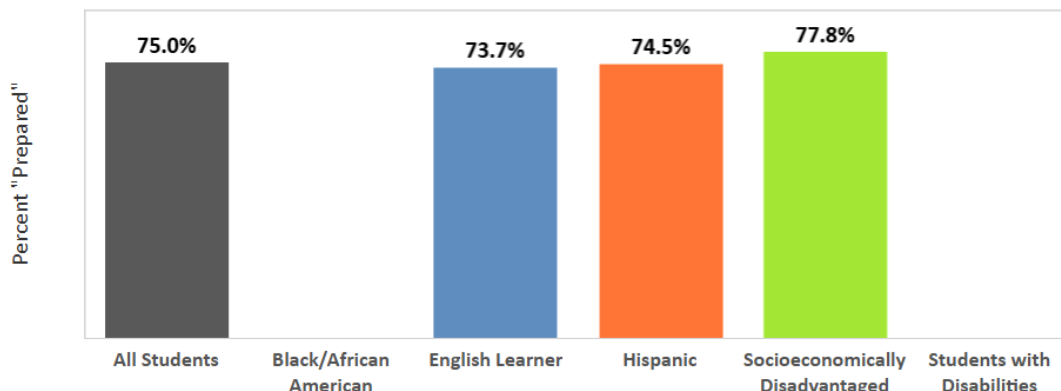
Source: CDE Downloadable Data Files

CCI Indicator Summary

The figure below represents the percentage of students in various student groups who were considered “Prepared”¹¹ on the CCI Indicator in the 2023-24 school year. As shown below:

- *Lodestar’s schoolwide “Prepared” rate is consistent with the rates observed across all student groups.*

Figure 18: 2023-24 CCI Indicator “Prepared” Rate by Student Group



Source: CDE Downloadable Data Files

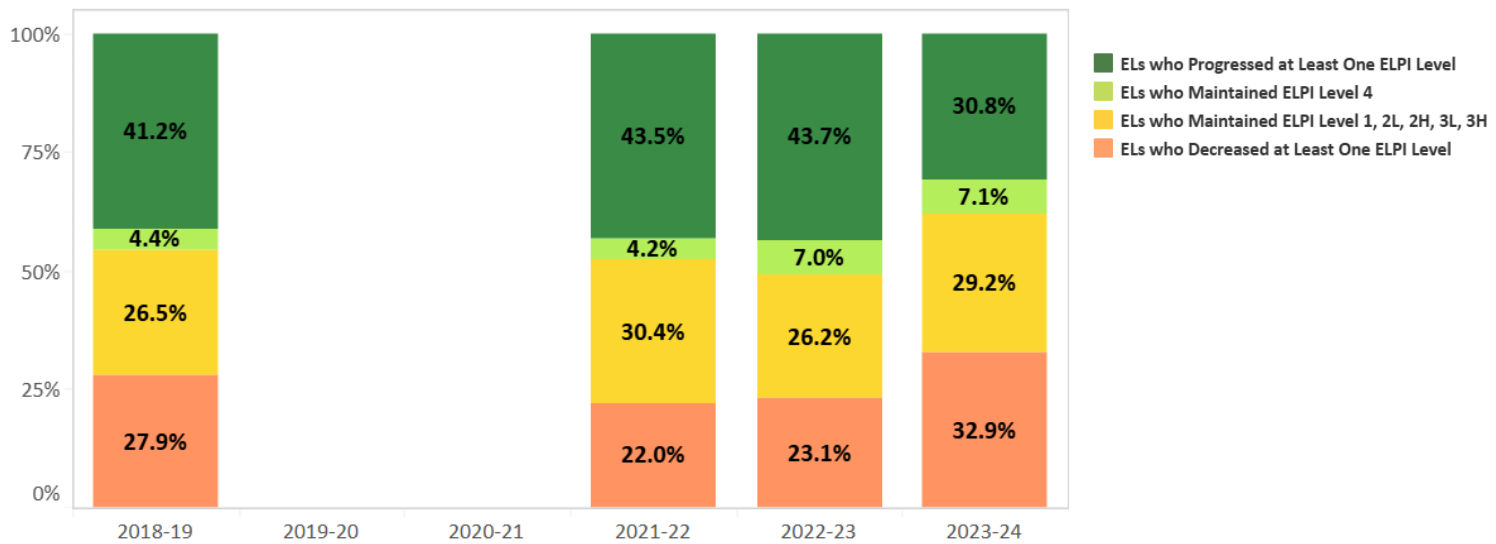
F. English Learner Progress

In the past four years with available data, Lodestar tested 136, 191, 288, and 296 students on the Summative English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPAC), respectively. The figure below shows the percentage of these students who progressed at least one English Learner Progress Indicator (ELPI) level, maintained ELPI level 4, maintained lower ELPI levels, and decreased at least one ELPI level. As shown below:

- *Post-pandemic, the percentage of English Learners making progress towards English language proficiency remained relatively stable until a decline in 2023-24. That year, approximately 30.8% of English Learner students at Lodestar made progress, representing a decrease of about 13 percentage points from 2022.*

¹¹ For more information on how graduates can meet the CCI “Prepared” Criteria, please see <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/documents/ccicollege.pdf>

Figure 19: Summative ELPAC Results



Source: California School Dashboard

G. Differentiated Assistance Eligibility

Differentiated Assistance (“DA”) is a system of targeted technical assistance to support school districts and charter schools improve student outcomes and address equity gaps. Eligibility for DA¹² is based on student group results on the California School Dashboard. Prior to the 2023-24 school year, charter schools were not eligible to be identified for DA. Charter schools became eligible for DA beginning with the 2023 California School Dashboard results.

Based on the results of the 2023 and 2024 California School Dashboards, Lodestar **was not** identified for Differentiated Assistance.

H. Renewal Site Visit Summary

School Quality Review Rubric Report

Charter school renewal site visits are guided by the District’s School Quality Review (“SQR”) process. The process is based on a rubric¹³ which describes three key domains (Mission and Vision, Quality Program Implementation, and Collective Leadership and Professional Learning) which are further broken into three threads (Instruction, Culture, and Systems and Structures). In order to gather evidence for each of these domains, the OUSD Review Team conducted classroom observations, document reviews, an interview with Charter School leadership, and focus groups with students, families, and teachers. Following the renewal site visit, the OUSD Review Team rated each domain and sub-domain collaboratively using the SQR Rubric Ratings range from 1 (low) to 4 (high): 1 = Emerging, 2 = Developing, 3 = Implementing, and 4 = Sustaining.

Figure 20: Renewal Site Visit Summary

Lodestar Renewal Site Visit, September 4, 2025

OUSD Review Team: Kelly Krag Arnold (OCS Director), Guadalupe Nuño (OCS Community Liaison), Tim Morris (OCS Policy Specialist), Jennifer Corn (Director of Continuous School Improvement), Jason Yamashiro (Academic Consultant)

¹² Detailed criteria for differentiated assistance can be found at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/leaproposedcrit.asp>.

¹³ The School Quality Review Rubric can be found here: <https://www.ousd.org/officeofcharterschools/for-charter-school-staff/charter-petitions#renewal>

SQR Domains and Threads	Domain 1: Mission and Vision	Domain 2: Quality Program Implementation	Domain 3: Collective Leadership and Professional Learning
Thread A: Instruction	2.6	2.7	2.5
Thread B: Culture	2.9	2.9	3.1
Thread C: Systems and Structures	2.7	3.3	2.5

Within each Domain and Thread in the SQR Rubric, there are multiple “sub-domains”. The following represent the three highest rated and the three lowest rated sub-domains for Lodestar.

Figure 21: Highest and Lowest Rated SQR Sub-Domains

Highest Rated Sub-Domains		
Score	Sub-Domain	Description of Sub-Domain
3.7	2C.5 Special Education Policies and Procedures, including IEPs	Special Education Case Managers write timely, student-centered, and data-driven IEPs that are individualized to support student growth and educational benefit. Special Education Department policies and procedures are followed for initial assessments, student discipline, and change of least restrictive environment (LRE) determinations.
3.4	3B.1 Collaborative Professional Culture	The school has a professional culture in which educators have authentic opportunities for collaboration and are able to leverage each other’s knowledge and skills in service of the school’s vision, mission, priorities and goals. Adults have interdependent, trusting relationships, and address conflict productively in the service of student learning and well-being. The school prioritizes the mental health and wellness of educators on campus.
3.4	3C.5 Partnerships with Community Based Organizations	School utilizes the community schools model to build meaningful partnerships with community based organizations that support and honor youth and community and expand access to family supports, enrichment, and health services.
Lowest Rated Sub-Domains		
Score	Sub-Domain	Description of Sub-Domain
2.2	2A.1 Quality Standards-Based Curriculum and Instruction	High quality instructional materials are consistently used to provide daily standards-based instruction, with a focus on differentiation and equity. Curriculum is grade-level appropriate, language rich, well-sequenced, and coherently builds student understanding within and across grade levels/disciplines. School has clear expectations for implementation of the standards-aligned, high quality curriculum, including integrated and designated ELD, and systems to support teachers and hold them accountable for implementation.
2.2	2B.3 Meaningful Student Engagement	The school community uses Universal Design for Learning (UDL) guidelines to ensure that diverse learners are authentically engaged and can easily access school activities and programs inside and outside the classroom. Additionally, students’ prior knowledge and cultural and linguistic assets are activated and built upon using culturally and linguistically responsive practices.
2.2	3A.4 High-Quality Professional Learning	Educators participate in ongoing, well planned, high quality professional development (PD) that is clearly aligned to school priorities, is committed to improving teaching and learning, and provides clear expectations for implementation. Educators receive both Foundational PD and Ongoing Professional Learning in core curriculum and standards. In addition to instructional supports, the staff Professional Learning plan includes Relationship Building, Equitable Learning & Anti-racist practices, and Joyful schools.

Renewal Site Visit Strengths and Areas for Improvement

The OUSD Review Team noted the following strengths and areas for improvement based on the evidence collected throughout the site visit.

Strengths:

1. **Collaborative Staff Culture:** Lodestar demonstrates established collaborative structures with staff regularly engaging with data and assessment analysis and curriculum planning with a strong focus on knowing their students. Teacher turnover rates remain low and it was evident that staff collaborate weekly on data, assessment, and curriculum with a strong focus on knowing their students.
2. **Special Education Policies and Procedures:** Communication around special needs is a strength at Lodestar and this is reflected in their reported timely IEPs, core teacher knowledge of modifications and accommodations, and observations and conversations on the site.
3. **Community Based Partnerships:** Lodestar has established a number of partnerships with key community organizations and views itself as a community school. Partners collaborate with Lodestar to provide counseling and social services to students and families, high school internships, and after school opportunities.

Areas for Improvement

1. **Meaningful Student Engagement:** In the classrooms students were largely on task, but opportunities for structured academic discourse or meaningful engagement with the curriculum were rare. Students generally followed a teacher led lesson which included significant guidance or copying, or worked individually. When group projects or more challenging partner dialogue were required, students often struggled.
2. **Quality Standards Based Curriculum:** Further work could be done in mathematics, but it is a more urgent issue in ELA. Lodestar is working to bring teachers together around a core curriculum, but teachers need more guidance and support to make the Expeditionary Learning curriculum come alive and work effectively for the Lodestar students.
3. **High Quality Professional Learning:** Lodestar has carved out significant professional learning time within its teacher schedule, but an expanded focus on targeted professional development would support building staff capacity in curriculum and instruction.

I. Additional Verified Data Provided by the School¹⁴

Verified Data Background

For schools in the Middle Renewal Tier, Education Code requires that the District consider clear and convincing evidence, demonstrated by verified data, showing either of the following:

- The school achieved measurable increases in academic achievement, as defined by at least one year's progress for each year in school; or
- Strong postsecondary outcomes, as defined by college enrollment, persistence, and completion rates equal to similar peers.

The California State Board of Education ("SBE") adopted a list¹⁵ of academic progress indicators and postsecondary indicators that met the established criteria outlined in Education Code Section 47607.2 and that may be used in the renewal process. Assessments or data sources that are not on this list may not be used as verified data. To be eligible for inclusion as verified data, a data source must include the results of at least 95 percent of eligible students.

The Charter School provided the district with data from NWEA MAP to be considered as an academic progress indicator for the purposes of verified data. Upon review, Lodestar did surpass the 95 percent participation threshold, and thus, the District's analysis is included below. Additionally, the Charter School's Performance Report, included in the renewal petition, includes the Charter School's own analysis of the results.

¹⁴ Pending renewal of Ed Code §47607.2(b)(5) beyond January 1, 2026

¹⁵ A full list of the adopted academic progress and postsecondary indicators can be found here: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ch/verifdataacadprogress.asp>

Verified Data Analysis – NWEA MAP (Grades 1-12)

NWEA MAP utilizes Conditional Growth Index (“CGI”) values for individual students or groups of students. The CGI is an indicator of how much individual students or groups of student growth deviates from their respective norms. A CGI of zero means a student showed gains that were equivalent to the growth norms. A positive CGI means a student’s growth was above the norm, while a negative CGI means a student’s growth was below the norm. **For both the student and school CGI values, a CGI range of –0.2 to 0.2 (or greater) could be used as an approximation of one year’s growth** (or more) in a subject and indicates that the growth observed is generally consistent with the amount of growth observed by students in the same grade and subject with the same starting achievement level receiving a similar amount of instructional exposure. Figure 22 below shows Lodestar’s grade level CGI values by subject from 2021-22 to 2024-25. Figures 23 and 24 below shows Lodestar’s grade level CGI values by student group from 2021-22 to 2024-25 for both Math and Reading, respectively. According to this data, the analysis is below:

- In 2024-25, a majority of Lodestar’s grade level CGI values were above the -0.2 threshold for both Math and Reading.
- Similarly, a majority of the Black/African American and Hispanic student group grade level CGI values were above the -0.2 threshold for both Math and Reading.

Figure 22: School CGI Values by Grade Level and School Year; MAP Growth by NWEA, Grades 1-12

		School year			
		2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Math	1	-5.43	-0.20	-0.77	-0.57
	2	-2.13	0.86	0.20	1.39
	3	-1.89	-0.57	0.08	-0.03
	4	-0.48	-0.63	-0.21	-0.87
	5	-1.05	0.91	0.39	-0.83
	6	-1.23	0.79	0.02	-0.52
	7	-1.06	0.31	0.84	-0.04
	8	-1.03	-0.35	0.43	0.47
	9	-0.27	-0.31	0.28	0.08
	10	0.03	0.19	0.30	0.65
	11		-0.20	0.45	0.66
Reading	1	-5.62	-0.34	0.16	0.03
	2	-2.63	0.13	0.07	0.10
	3	-1.64	-0.28	-0.53	-0.39
	4	0.60	-0.15	-0.25	-0.41
	5	-0.74	0.58	-0.52	0.14
	6	-1.93	0.61	-1.25	0.76
	7	-1.54	0.96	0.10	0.13
	8	-1.83	0.19	-0.01	0.07
	9	-0.08	-0.23	-0.06	-0.03
	10	0.11	-0.44	0.36	0.48
	11		-0.29	0.34	0.52

Figure 23: School CGI Values by Student Group and School Year; MAP Math Growth by NWEA, Grades 1-12

Student Group	Grade	Math			
		2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Black/ African American	1	-4.87	0.24	0.46	1.30
	2	-0.90	0.40	1.30	1.34
	3	-2.93	-0.87	0.13	-0.02
	4	-0.44	-0.41	0.09	0.48
	5	-0.38	0.40	1.11	-0.05
	6	-0.68	1.72	-0.50	-1.50
	7	-0.40	0.58	0.60	-0.13
	8	-1.07	-0.58	1.10	-0.16
	9	-0.30	-0.84	0.59	-0.41
	10	-0.21	-0.41	1.01	0.30
	11		0.06	1.08	0.30
Hispanic	1	-5.94	-0.35	-1.19	-0.75
	2	-2.61	1.05	-0.06	1.35
	3	-1.65	-0.51	0.06	-0.07
	4	-0.47	-0.70	-0.31	-0.95
	5	-1.22	0.95	0.21	-0.95
	6	-1.40	0.66	0.04	-0.40
	7	-1.24	0.28	0.88	0.00
	8	-0.98	-0.26	0.37	0.48
	9	-0.34	-0.28	0.22	0.13
	10	0.06	0.27	0.27	0.71
	11		-0.30	0.38	0.67

Figure 24: School CGI Values by Student Group and School Year; MAP Reading Growth by NWEA, Grades 1-12

Student Group	Grade	Reading			
		2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Black/ African American	1	-6.13	0.01	2.58	1.43
	2	-3.01	0.23	-0.20	-0.13
	3	-1.87	-0.01	-0.24	-0.01
	4	0.03	0.27	-0.19	0.86
	5	-2.43	1.64	0.16	0.02
	6	-2.82	0.79	-1.27	-0.05
	7	-0.60	1.97	-0.85	0.12
	8	-1.21	0.11	0.69	1.19
	9	-0.28	-1.03	-0.58	-0.41
	10	0.03	-0.94	0.27	0.58
	11		-0.33	0.89	0.69
Hispanic	1	-5.79	-0.43	-0.49	-0.21
	2	-2.41	0.14	0.17	0.04
	3	-1.59	-0.58	-0.58	-0.46
	4	0.71	-0.28	-0.26	-0.49
	5	-0.38	0.30	-0.69	0.22
	6	-1.82	0.48	-1.33	0.84
	7	-1.88	0.80	0.28	0.18
	8	-1.89	0.21	-0.07	0.01
	9	-0.06	-0.13	0.04	0.00
	10	0.11	-0.38	0.32	0.49
	11		-0.29	0.31	0.57

J. Previous Renewal Conditions and Performance Improvement Plan

Background

In fall 2020, Lodestar was granted a 2-year renewal term accompanied by a school-created Performance Improvement Plan (“PIP”) as required for schools in the Low Renewal Tier.¹⁶ The Charter School developed and submitted the PIP outlining performance goals for the following four years. The initial 2-year term was subsequently extended to 5 years through legislative action during the pandemic. 2024 data indicates that the school did not achieve the majority of their self-established Year 1 and Year 4 PIP objectives, although it should be noted that this period coincided with Covid-19 disruptions to education.

¹⁶ Lodestar’s 2020 PIP can be found on page 79 of their 2020 renewal petition here: <https://ousd.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8888384&GUID=5B66632D-F66B-4B08-A244-C7A8C683D678>. The 2020 OUSD staff report, which contains an analysis of the PIP, is located here: <https://ousd.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8888394&GUID=5F47FFCF-BA36-4276-BC09-2D5AC16DFB52>

Goal Analysis

Figure 25: Lodestar 2020 PIP Goals and 2024 Performance

Growth Area	Metric	School Baseline (2019 Dashboard)	Year 1 Goals (Spring 2022)	Year 4 Goals (Spring 2025)	2023-24 Performance	Year 1 Goal Comparison
ELA	Percent Proficient	28%	33% (+5% from baseline)	38% (+10% from baseline)	20.3%	Not Met
	DFS	-47.1	-42.1 (+5 from baseline)	-37.1 (+10 from baseline)	-83.9	Not Met
	CORE Growth Percentile	ES: 38%	Above 50th percentile on CORE comparison of non-charter schools in student's attendance area in the Live/Go dashboard ¹⁷	Above 50th percentile on CORE comparison of non-charter schools in student's attendance area in the Live/Go dashboard	ES: 29% (Below 50 th percentile)	Not Met
		MS: 75%			MS: 17% (Below 50 th percentile)	Not Met
		HS: N/A			HS: 77% (Below 50 th percentile)	Not Met
Math	Percent Proficient	19%	24% (+5% from baseline)	29% (+10% from baseline)	17.4%	Not Met
	DFS	-72.6	-67.6 (+5 from baseline)	-62.6 (+10 from baseline)	-74.3	Not Met
	CORE Growth Percentile	ES: 88%	Above 50th percentile on CORE comparison of non-charter schools in student's attendance area in the Live/Go dashboard	Above 50th percentile on CORE comparison of non-charter schools in student's attendance area in the Live/Go dashboard	ES: 42% (Below 50 th percentile)	Not Met
		MS: 50%			MS: 54% (Below 50 th percentile)	Not Met
		HS: N/A			HS: 94% (50 th percentile)	Met
Chronic Absenteeism	Percent Chronically Absent	17%	15% (-2% from baseline)	13% (-4% from baseline)	34.5%	Not Met
Suspension Rate	Percent Suspended at least once	4.6%	2% (-2.6% from baseline)	2% (-2.6% from baseline)	4%	Not Met

Based on the most recent available data, Lodestar did not meet any of its Year 1 goals for each PIP goal area: zero of three goals in both ELA and Math, zero of one goal for Chronic Absenteeism, and zero of one goal for Suspension rate. The CORE Growth percentile goal was assessed by comparing Lodestar's grade span CORE Growth percentile to all non-charter schools in Lodestar's high school attendance area, Castlemont/CCPA/Madison, to determine its relative ranking.

School Response

In response to the inquiry raised by the Office of Charter Schools, Lodestar organized their response into three parts: background and executive summary, actions taken during the 2021-2025 term for each PIP goal area, and an analysis of

¹⁷ Comparison school(s) included in the Madison Primary elementary school Attendance Area include Madison Park Academy Elementary. Comparison school(s) included in the Madison Upper middle school Attendance Area include Madison Park Academy 6-12. Comparison school(s) included in the Castlemont/CCPA/Madison high school attendance area include: Castlemont High, Coliseum College Prep Academy, Madison Park Academy 6-12, and Sojourner Truth.

academic performance that informed their strategic planning through the end of the 2027-28 school year. The full response can be found in Appendix D.

Part one describes how the 2020 PIP relates to Lodestar's movement from the Low Renewal Tier to the Middle Renewal Tier. Lodestar cites two external factors, the COVID-19 pandemic and demographic shifts, that occurred after the 2020 PIP goals were created. According to Lodestar, the charter school implemented all the strategies outlined in the PIP and achieved one of three ELA goals, one of three Math goals, zero of one Chronic Absenteeism goal, and one of two Suspension goals.

Part two summarizes each PIP goal area's progress, challenges, and corrective actions. Lodestar states that between 2021-22 to 2024-25, Lodestar's ELA proficiency increased from 12% to 23%, while the school addressed teacher retention, leadership transition, and changes in English Language Learners, Newcomers, and Students with Disabilities. During the same period, Lodestar states that Math proficiency increased from 4% to 24%. For Chronic Absenteeism, the charter school identifies four barriers with corrective interventions currently in the early stages of implementation. Lodestar states they met the 2% Suspension goal for most student subgroups, with the exception of the African American and Students with Disabilities. The response discusses school-specific challenges and investments towards school culture.

Part three presents strengths and obstacles for each PIP goal area. For 2025-28, Lodestar has goals around three priorities: student-centered learning, community school development, and staff investment. Each priority includes four initiatives with annual goals related to each PIP goal area. Lodestar commits to reporting progress through its board governance website, with additional documentation available upon request.

Staff Assessment

Lodestar's PIP inquiry response demonstrates institutional awareness and planning capacity. The school's 2025-28 improvement plan identifies project ownership, monitoring approaches, and time-bound measurable outcomes.

While Lodestar did not meet any of the Year 1 goals, the measurement period coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, during which schools nationwide experienced significant academic declines due to school closures and ongoing recovery challenges. Additionally, the school reports demographic shifts that substantially altered its student composition from when the 2020 PIP was developed.

According to the Lodestar's reporting, post-pandemic data shows improvement in ELA proficiency from 12% to 23% between 2021-22 and 2024-25, and Math proficiency from 4% to 24%. Both Chronic Absenteeism and Suspension rates have also improved from pandemic-era levels, though performance has not yet returned to pre-pandemic baselines.

II. Renewal Criteria II: Is the Charter School Demonstrably Likely to Successfully Implement the Proposed Educational Program?

In order for a charter school's renewal petition to be approved, it must be demonstrably likely to successfully implement the program set forth in the petition.¹⁸ Evidence considered for this criterion include an analysis of the Charter School's operations, financial condition, enrollment, enrollment demographics, compliance with regulatory elements (Notices of Concern), board health and effectiveness, and staffing and credentialing.

¹⁸ EC §47605(c)(2)

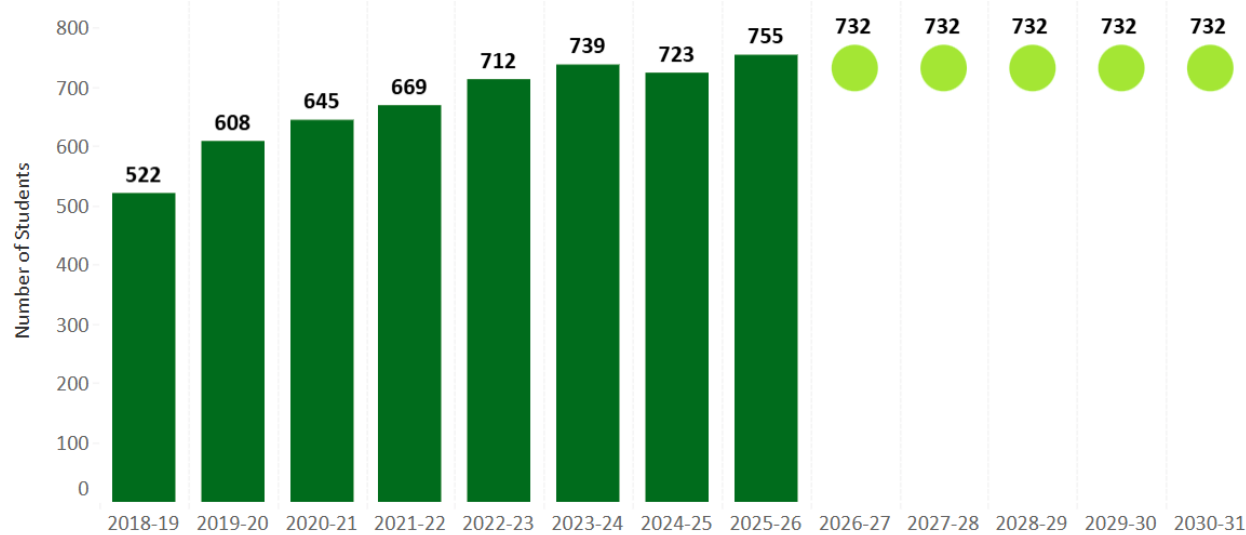
A. Enrollment

Total Enrollment by Year – Actual and Projected

The figure below includes the total enrollment of the Charter School over the course of the term, the 2025-26 enrollment as of August 29, 2025, and the projected enrollment included in the Multi-Year Projection (“MYP”). As show below:

- Lodestar’s total enrollment has been increasing from the start of the charter term as a result of phasing in new grade levels and additional sections of students.
- Lodestar has completed their phase-in period and is projecting a stable enrollment for the next 5 school years.

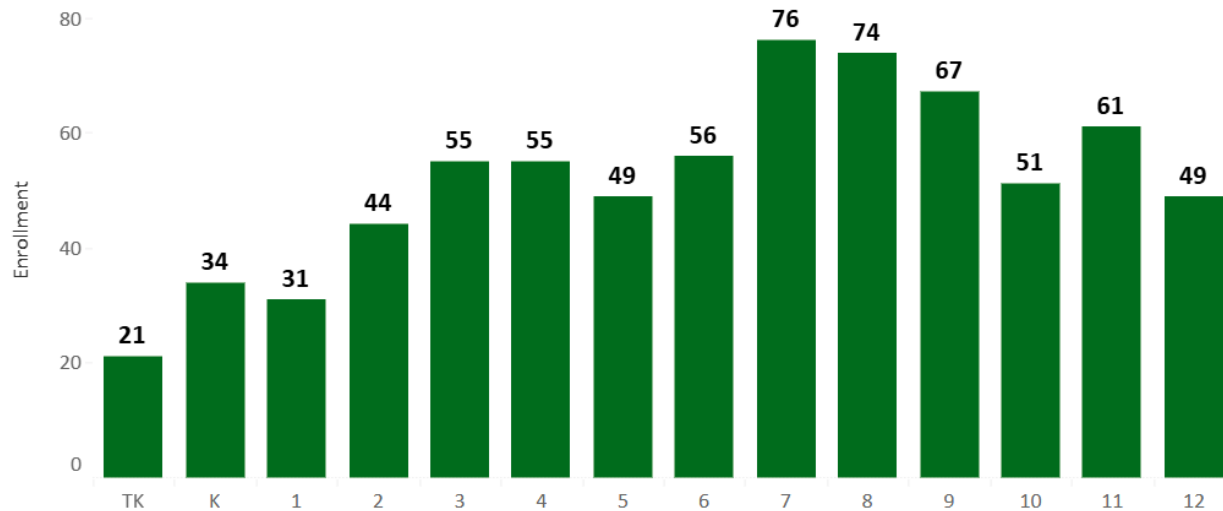
Figure 26: Total Enrollment Over Time, Actual and Projected



Source: CDE Downloadable School Enrollment Data Files; August Enrollment Submission to OCS, MYP

Enrollment by Grade Level

Figure 27: 2024-25 Enrollment by Grade Level



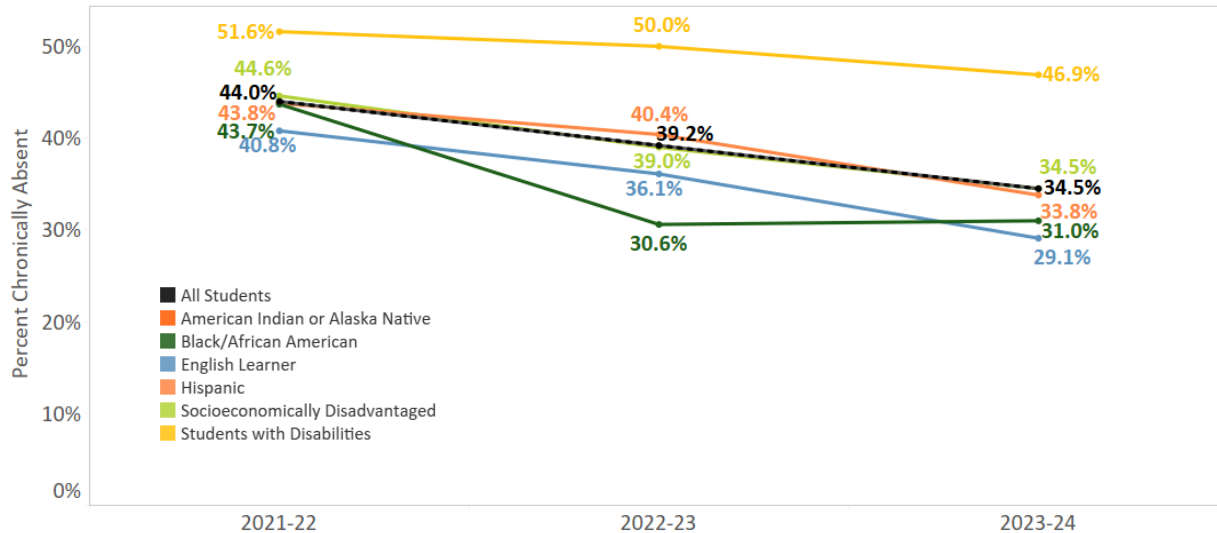
Source: CDE Downloadable School Enrollment Data Files

Chronic Absenteeism

The figure below shows the percentage of students at the Charter School who were chronically absent, which is defined as students who were absent for 10 percent or more of the instructional days they were enrolled. As shown below:

- In 2023–24, chronic absenteeism declined schoolwide and across all student groups, except for the Black/African American student group. However, when looking at the overall post-pandemic period, the Black/African American student group experienced the most significant decline in chronic absenteeism.

Figure 28: Chronic Absenteeism Rate by Student Group



Source: CDE Downloadable Data Files

B. Financial Condition

Summary

The Charter School's financial condition is good based on its fiscal health indicators and multi-year budget projections. The Charter School's forecast realistically considers the school's historical and present enrollment trends, while its growing fund balance suggests efficient resource management. However, the Charter School's audit reports document recurring statutory compliance findings, and the most recent audit identified a material weakness.

Fiscal Health

The figure below summarizes key fiscal indicators throughout the current charter. As shown below:

- The Charter School increased the fund balance by \$2,500,348, or 108%, during the current charter term.
- Although the debt ratio increased from 0.42 to 0.92, this level indicates the school retains the ability to borrow additional funds if needed.
- The Charter's cash reserves exceeded FCMA's recommended 5% floor over the past four years.
- The CMO's ending fund declined by \$539,902, or 4.6%, over the course of the charter term, while its debt ratio remained at or below 0.89.¹⁹

¹⁹ See Appendix C: Charter Management Organization's Key Fiscal Indicators

Figure 29: Fiscal Health Summary

Financial Indicator	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25 2 nd Interim
Annual Surplus or (Deficit) <i>Indicates whether the school spent more or less than it received in revenue during the year. Deficits are shown in parentheses.</i>	(294,896)	(295,657)	2,043,774	752,231
Ending Fund Balance <i>Typically represents unrestricted funds, although in some cases, restricted funds that were not fully spent in previous years may be included.</i>	2,320,731	2,025,074	4,068,848	4,821,079
Debt Ratio <i>A ratio less than 1 indicates the school has lower debts than assets, representing a lower level of financial risk.</i>	0.42	0.56	0.92	Unavailable
Budgetary Reserve <i>Given the school's ADA, FCMAT²⁰ prescribes a minimum 4% reserve (calculated as Unrestricted Net Assets / Total Expenditures) as a set aside to prepare for potential liabilities. Reserve rates below this rate indicates poor financial condition.</i>	20%	14%	27%	30%
Cash Reserve <i>FCMAT recommends 5%+ cash reserve of the total of all budgeted expenditures (calculated as Unrestricted Cash / Total Expenditures). Below 5% is indicative of a poor financial condition.</i>	17%	17%	14%	11%

Source: 2018-19 through 2023-24 Annual Audit Reports and 2024-25 2nd Interim Budget Report submitted with Renewal Petition.

Annual Financial Audit Reports

Education Code requires charter schools to submit annual audits by December 15 of each year.²¹ As shown below:

- The Charter School's CMO received unmodified audit opinions throughout the charter term.
- The audit reports were submitted after December 15th statutory deadline for the past three years, with Lodestar having had statutory compliance findings in the most recent three audit reports.
- The latest audit report identified a material weakness for various under and overstatements to assets and liabilities ranging from \$0.5 million to \$0.9 million, as well as a \$0.5 million understatement in revenue. OCS sent the CMO a Notice of Concern and the CMO provided a response, including plans for corrective action. See Appendix E for full response.

Figure 30: Annual Financial Audit Reports Summary

Indicator	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Timely Audit Submission <i>State law requires annual audits to be submitted by December 15.</i>	No	No	No
Audit Opinion <i>"Unmodified" indicates the financial statements fairly represent the school's financial position in accordance with accounting standards. "Modified, qualified" opinion indicates a material issue or insufficient evidence in a specific area of the financial statements, while the remainder are considered reliable.</i>	Unmodified	Unmodified	Unmodified
Material Weakness(es) <i>A material weakness is a deficiency in internal controls that creates a reasonable possibility that a material error in the financial statements could occur and go uncorrected.</i>	Number of Findings	-	1
	Initial Year of Finding(s)	-	2023-24

²⁰ Financial Crisis and Management Assistance Team

²¹ Education Code 47605(m), 41020(h)

Significant Deficiency <i>A significant deficiency is a flaw in internal controls that is less severe than a material weakness, but still merits attention.</i>	Number of Findings	-	-	-
	Initial Year of Finding(s)	-	-	-
Statutory Compliance <i>Statutory compliance is adherence to specific state and federal laws and regulations that govern operations, funding, and program requirements within the scope of the audit.</i>	Number of Findings	2	3	2
	Initial Year of Finding(s)	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24

Source: 2021-22 through 2023-24 Annual Audit Reports

Attendance and Enrollment in Multi-Year Budget Projections

The enrollment and attendance rate assumptions underlying the Charter School’s multi-year budget projections (“MYP”) included with the renewal petition, as shown in the figure below, appear realistic and are aligned to the projected enrollment listed in Element 1 of the charter petition. As shown below:

- *The Charter School’s historical enrollment assumptions reflect Lodestar’s phasing in of grade levels and sections, with the most recent enrollment projections indicating that the school is now transitioning toward stable enrollment.*
- *The Charter School’s assumptions surrounding attendance are generally consistent with historical actuals.*

Figure 31: MYP Summary: Projected Enrollment and Attendance Rates

	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2027-28
Projected Enrollment	732	732	732	732
Projected Attendance Rate	92.0%	91.9%	93.6%	93.6%

Source: Multiyear Budget Projections submitted with renewal petition

C. Enrollment Demographics

Per California Education Code Section 47605(c)(5)(G), a charter school must include in the renewal petition a reasonably comprehensive description of “*the means by which the charter school will achieve a balance of racial and ethnic pupils, special education pupils, and English learner pupils, including redesignated fluent English proficient pupils, that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the school district to which the charter petition is submitted*”. This description is included on page 131 of the charter petition. The current section includes a summary of the school’s enrollment demographic data for further context.

Despite the plan outlined to achieve an enrollment balance, as of the 2025-26 school year, Lodestar **does not** participate in an Oakland-wide common charter enrollment system. OCS strongly encourages all OUSD-authorized charter schools to coordinate participation in an Oakland-wide common charter enrollment application system. OCS believes that a unified charter enrollment approach supports educational equity by reducing barriers that can disproportionately affect families whose primary language is not English, have limited technology access, or lack the time and resources to navigate many application processes with different deadlines, websites, and requirements.

Enrollment Demographics Comparison

Enrollment demographics for the 2024-25 school year are included in the table below. Although Education Code specifies that a charter school should aspire to achieve a demographic balance which is reflective of the *entire* District, the average enrollment demographics of the District schools which serve a similar grade span and are located in the High School Attendance Area (HSAA) in which the majority of the Charter School’s students reside, Castlemont/CCPA/Madison, is included for reference.

Figure 32: 2024-25 Enrollment Demographics

Student Group Type	Student Group	Charter School	OUSD schools in Comparison HSAA ²²	OUSD
Race/ Ethnicity	Hispanic/Latino	83.8%	72.9%	48.3%
	Black/African American	10.8%	17.3%	19.2%
	Asian	0.4%	1.5%	9.5%
	White	0.1%	2.6%	11.6%
	Two or More Races	1.1%	1.6%	6.8%
	Other Race/Ethnicity	1.1%	2.1%	1.9%
	Not Reported	2.6%	2.0%	2.9%
Other Student Groups	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	96.8%	98.4%	81.5%
	Homeless Youth	3.7%	8.0%	6.6%
	Foster Youth	0.1%	0.3%	0.4%
	English Learners	44.3%	51.4%	32.2%
	Special Education	13.8%	16.4%	17.2%

Source: Ethnicity/English Learners – CDE Downloadable Data Files (School Enrollment, English Learners); Socioeconomically Disadvantaged/Special Education – CDE DataQuest School Enrollment by Subgroup Report

English Learner Enrollment

As shown previously, during the 2024-25 school year, 44.3% of Lodestar’s total enrollment were English Learners. The following tables are included to further disaggregate this data to give a fuller context of the English Learners served at Lodestar and their level of need. As a note, this data does not provide any indication as to how well the Charter School is serving these students. The English Learner Progress Indicator on the California School Dashboard is a more appropriate metric for evaluating the strength of the English Learner program. As shown below:

- *The Charter School has a larger percentage of English Learner students who were placed in a higher ELPAC level compared with OUSD in the same grade span.*
- *Approximately 21% of English Learner students are considered Reclassified Fluent English students.*
- *The Charter School has less students who have been English learners between 0-3 years compared to OUSD, which may suggest fewer recent newcomer students. The Charter School does have a larger percentage of English Learners classified as Long-Term English Learners than OUSD.*

Figure 33: 2023-24 ELPAC Levels – Charter School vs. OUSD (Grades TK-12 only)

ELPAC Level	Charter School	OUSD
Level 4 – Well Developed	15.2%	8.8%
Level 3 – Moderately Developed	27.8%	23.4%
Level 2 – Somewhat Developed	37.0%	27.4%
Level 1 – Minimally Developed	20.0%	40.3%

Source: 2023-24 Summative ELPAC Results

²² Includes 19 OUSD-operated schools serving students in Grades TK-12 located in the Castlemont/CCPA/Madison HSAA. Specifically, ACORN Woodland, Brookfield, Burckhalter, Castlemont, Coliseum College Prep, East Oakland Pride, Elmhurst United, Encompass, Esperanza, Frick, Greenleaf, Highland Community, Korematsu, Lockwood STEAM, Madison Park Lower, Madison Park Upper, Markham, OAK, and Reach.

Figure 34: 2024-25 Enrollment by English Language Acquisition Status and Grade

Grade	English Only (EO)	Initial Fluent English Proficient (IFEP)	English Learner (EL)	Reclassified Fluent English (RFEP)	To Be Determined (TBD)
TK	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%
K	35.3%	2.9%	58.8%	0.0%	2.9%
1	41.9%	6.5%	51.6%	0.0%	0.0%
2	34.1%	9.1%	52.3%	2.3%	2.3%
3	36.4%	9.1%	52.7%	0.0%	1.8%
4	21.8%	10.9%	65.5%	0.0%	1.8%
5	34.7%	6.1%	57.1%	2.0%	0.0%
6	26.8%	7.1%	53.6%	12.5%	0.0%
7	27.6%	3.9%	40.8%	27.6%	0.0%
8	24.3%	2.7%	29.7%	41.9%	1.4%
9	20.9%	3.0%	35.8%	29.9%	10.4%
10	19.6%	2.0%	49.0%	25.5%	3.9%
11	9.8%	0.0%	39.3%	47.5%	3.3%
12	22.4%	2.0%	24.5%	51.0%	0.0%

Source: CDE Downloadable Data Files

Figure 35: 2024-25 English Learner Breakdown by Grade Span and Category

	EL 0-3 Years	At-Risk 4-5 Years	LTEL 6+ Years	EL 4+ Years Not At-Risk or LTEL
Charter School	33.1%	15.3%	31.9%	19.7%
OUSD	57.5%	14.1%	18.3%	10.1%

Source: CDE Downloadable Data Files

Special Education Enrollment

As shown previously, during the 2024-25 school year, 13.8% of Lodestar’s total enrollment were students with disabilities. The following figures are included to further disaggregate this data to give a fuller context of the students with disabilities served at Lodestar and their level of need. As shown below:

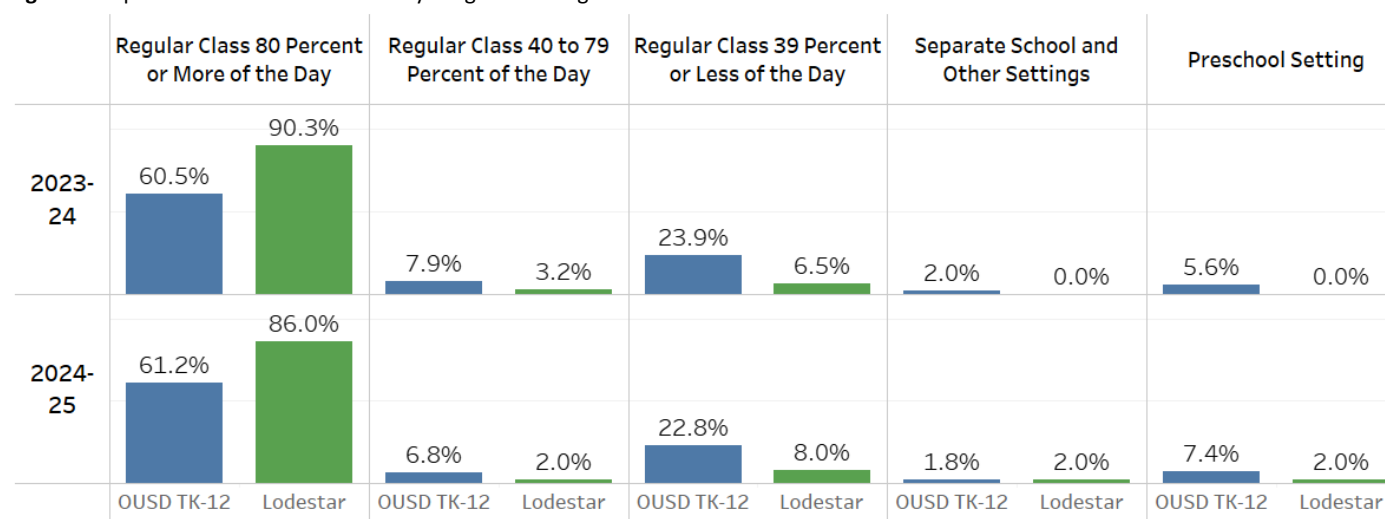
- Over the course of the charter term, the majority of Students with Disabilities at Lodestar had a specific learning disability, Speech or Language Impairment, or Other Health Impairment as the primary disability. The Charter School has also served an increasing percentage of students with Autism as their primary disability.
- Approximately 85-90% of students with disabilities at Lodestar are in a regular classroom setting for 80 percent or more of the school day, which is significantly higher than the District.
- Approximately 90% of students with disabilities at Lodestar are receiving less than 450 service minutes weekly.

Figure 36: Special Education Enrollment by Disability Type

Disability Type	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Autism	9%	7%	11%	13%
Deaf-Blindness	0%	0%	0%	0%
Deafness/Hearing Impairment	0%	0%	0%	0%
Emotional Disturbance	1%	2%	3%	3%
Established Medical Disability	0%	0%	0%	0%
Hard of Hearing	0%	0%	1%	1%
Intellectual Disability	4%	5%	4%	3%
Multiple Disabilities	0%	0%	0%	0%
Orthopedic Impairment	0%	1%	1%	1%
Other Health Impairment	20%	19%	17%	19%
Specific Learning Disability	43%	45%	41%	38%
Speech or Language Impairment	23%	21%	22%	21%
Traumatic Brain Injury	0%	0%	0%	1%
Visual Impairment	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: CALPADS End-of-Year SELPA 16.12 Report - Students with Disabilities – Education Plan by Primary Disability (EOY 4)

Figure 37: Special Education Enrollment by Program Setting



Source: CDE Downloadable Data Files

Figure 38: Special Education by Placement and Weekly Service Minutes

	2023-24	2024-25
Percentage of students with IEPs receiving fewer than 450 ²³ service minutes weekly	90.2%	88.9%
Percentage of students with IEPs receiving more than 450 service minutes weekly	9.8%	11.1%
Percentage of students with IEPs in nonpublic school (NPS) placement	1.5%	1.5%

Source: Charter School Performance Report

²³ The 450 minute threshold was chosen as a conservative estimate of the point at which a student may be considered to have moderate needs.

D. Notices of Concern and/or Notices to Cure and Correct

If credible evidence suggests that a charter school has violated state or federal law or the terms of its charter petition, the Office of Charter Schools will send the school, charter school board, or charter management organization a Notice of Concern regarding the issue, which includes remedies the charter school must implement to rectify the issue and resolve the Notice of Concern.²⁴ Lodestar and its CMO, Lighthouse Community Public Schools, have collectively been issued 3 Notices of Concern during the current charter term (1 issued to the Charter School and 2 issued to the CMO) as of August 15, 2025.

Figure 39: Notices of Concern and/or Notices to Cure and Correct

School Year	Notices of Concern	Area(s) of Concern	Remedy
2021-22	2	AB 361 Virtual Meeting Violation; Charter Admission Policies	CMO updated processes to abide by all AB 361 requirements; The Charter School resolved the SchoolMint software bug which impacted the efficacy of an admission priority and conducted personal family outreach and counseling
2022-23	0	-	-
2023-24	0	-	-
2024-25	1	23-24 Audit Finding	CMO acknowledged the Audit Finding “Material Weakness in Internal Controls over Closing Process” and complied with all remedies.

Source: OUSD Office of Charter Schools Notice of Concern documentation

E. Board Health and Effectiveness

A charter school governing board’s decisions have a significant impact on the health and viability of its schools, as well as the quality of education students receive. Governing boards are responsible for decisions on the operations, vision, and policies of the charter school. Most importantly, governing boards are also responsible for ensuring that the charter school and its charter management organization (if applicable) is serving the best interest of students. The below table provides an overview of the Lighthouse Community Public Schools Governing Board and its composition.

Figure 40: Charter School Governing Board Overview and Composition

Lighthouse Community Public Schools Governing Board Overview			
Schools Overseen	3	Total Enrollment of all Schools Overseen	1,553 students
Required Minimum # of Members	3	Current # of Members (as of August 15, 2025)	7
Regular Meeting Frequency	Monthly	Brown Act Committees	Academic, Finance, Audit
Virtual Meeting Access	No	Minutes and Board Packet Posted Publicly	Yes

²⁴ If, after sending a Notice of Concern, the Office of Charter Schools determines based on the school’s response that the violation listed in the notice did not occur, the notice may be rescinded.

Lighthouse Community Public Schools Governing Board Composition

Name, Role	Time on Board	Name, Role	Time on Board
Robbie Torney, Board Chair	2 years	Alberto Ocegueda, Board Member	4 years
Rodolfo Ornelas, Vice Chair	1 year	Billy Manning, Board Member	1 year
Jillian Kwan-Jacobs, Board Member	1 year	Eduardo Figueroa, Board Member	5 years
Jennifer Camus-Beebe, Board Member	1 year		

Source: Charter School Board Self-Evaluations submitted to OUSD, CDE Dataquest

As part of the renewal process, Staff evaluates the governing board’s overall health and effectiveness using the Charter School’s performance report, a governing board interview, governing board audits, a board self-evaluation tool, the governing board’s meeting agendas, minutes, and related documentation, and Element 4 of the charter renewal petition (along with any supporting documentation). These components are used as evidence in order to evaluate the Charter School governing board on the “Board Effectiveness Core Competencies” found below. The scale used for rating is aligned with the SQR Rubric Ratings, where the scores range from 1 (low) to 4 (high): 1 = Emerging, 2 = Developing, 3 = Implementing, and 4 = Sustaining.

Figure 41: Board Core Competency Ratings

Core Competency	Description	Score
Board Composition	Board members possess a diversity of backgrounds and an array of appropriate and relevant skills with which to oversee the school/CMO.	4.0
Mission Alignment	Board members have a shared understanding of and commitment to the school’s mission and vision.	3.0
School Familiarity	Board members are knowledgeable about the school’s operations, successes, and challenges.	2.7
Role Familiarity	Board members demonstrate an understanding of their role in providing oversight to the charter school.	3.3
Community Engagement	Board members actively engage with school staff, families, and community members in order to govern effectively.	2.3
Accessibility	All governing board meetings are accessible to the community and the decision-making process is clear and transparent.	2.0
Compliance	The board complies with (and has systems in place to ensure compliance with) its own board policies and bylaws as well as with applicable state and federal laws regarding governance. The board is free of real or perceived conflicts of interest.	4.0
Effectiveness	The governing board is an effective decision-making body which is active and meets its governance obligations.	3.0

Source: Staff evaluation of Charter School performance report, Charter School renewal petition, Charter School board member self-evaluations, Charter School board member interview, Charter School board observations

F. Staffing and Teacher Credentialing

Education Code sections 47605(l)(1) and 47605.4 require all charter school teachers to hold the credential required for their assignment. Pursuant to Education Code Section 44258.9, all charter schools must participate in annual teacher assignment monitoring through the California Statewide Assignment Accountability System (“CalSAAS”). The OUSD Office of Charter Schools acts as the “Monitoring Authority” for all charter schools authorized by OUSD, which requires the annual review of educator assignments. The figures below represent the CalSAAS results for educator in the 2023-24 school year, the most recent year for which data is available. As shown below:

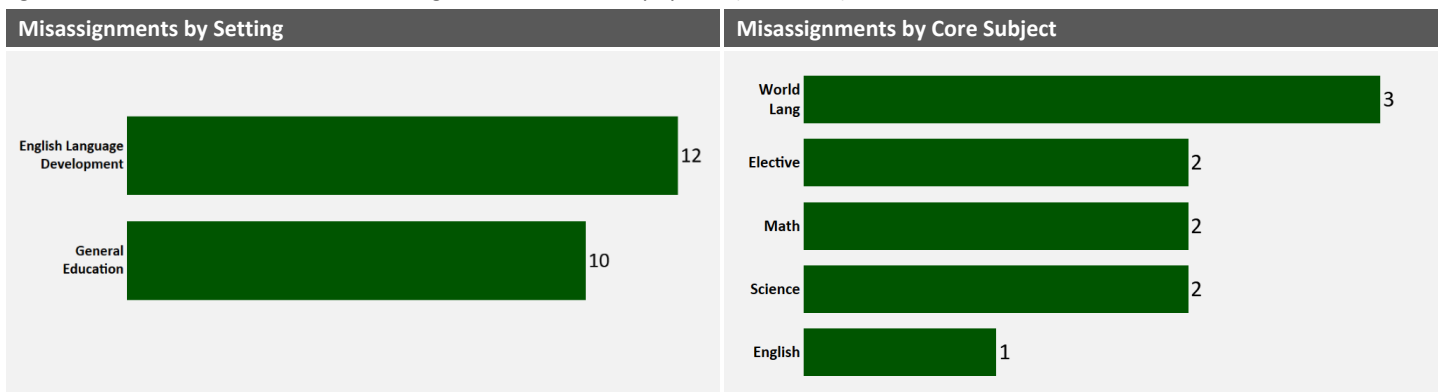
- During the 2023-24 school year, over 50% of assignments were considered “Ineffective”, or were authorized by an emergency credential, variable term waiver, or substitute permit, which is above the OUSD average.
- During the 2023-24 school year, there were only 22 total misassignments at Lodestar out of 178 total assignments.

Figure 42: 2023-24 Educator Credentials by Type

	Charter School	OUSD
Clear <i>Authorized by clear or preliminary credential or by local assignment option</i>	19.7%	52.8%
Intern <i>Authorized by intern credential</i>	12.3%	2.9%
Out-of-Field <i>Authorized by GELAP, SELAP, short-term waiver, emergency EL permit, or Local Assignment Option</i>	11.1%	2.5%
Ineffective <i>No legal authorization or authorized by emergency credential (PIP, STSP), variable term waivers, or substitute permits</i>	53.3%	39.6%
Incomplete <i>Missing or incorrect information was reported to CALPADS about the assignment</i>	3.1%	1.9%

Source: CDE Teaching Assignment Monitoring Outcomes by FTE Report

Figure 43: 2023-24 California Statewide Assignment Accountability System (“CalSAAS”) Results



Source: 2023-24 CalSAAS Monitoring Audit Report

In addition to the CalSAAS results, the Charter School submitted information regarding educator retention as part of its Renewal Performance Report. As shown below:

- Although the Charter School had a low retention rate in 2022-23, the Charter School had very high retention rates in the two most recent years.
- The Charter School had minimal early separations during the charter term.

Figure 44: Educator Retention Over Time (Self-Reported)

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Percent of Educators Retained from Prior Year	70%	51%	68%	92%	80%
Early Separations	4/41	3/41	2/50	3/50	N/A

Source: Charter School Renewal Performance Report

III. Renewal Criteria III: Is the Petition Reasonably Comprehensive?

In order for a charter school’s renewal petition to be approved, the petition must include all of the following, which are described in detail in this section:

- Reasonably comprehensive descriptions of all 15 required elements
- All other information required by the Ed Code
- All OUSD-specific requirements

Evidence considered for this criterion includes a review of the corresponding sections of the charter petition, including changes made from the prior petition, as well as checks for any additional requirements enacted since the charter was last approved.

A. The Required Fifteen Elements

All charter petitions must include a “reasonably comprehensive” description of 15 required elements related to the school’s operation.²⁵ The following table summarizes staff findings related to whether this standard was met for each element.

Figure 45: Petition Element Analysis

Element	Reasonably Comprehensive?
1. Description of the educational program of the school, including what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21st century and how learning best occurs.	Yes
2. Measurable student outcomes	Yes
3. Method by which student progress is to be measured	Yes
4. Governance structure	Yes
5. Qualifications to be met by individuals employed at the school	Yes
6. Procedures for ensuring health and safety of students	Yes
7. Means for achieving a balance of racial and ethnic, English learner, and special education students	Yes
8. Admission policies and procedures	Yes
9. Manner for conducting annual, independent financial audits and manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies will be resolved	Yes
10. Suspension and expulsion procedures	Yes
11. Manner for covering STRS, PERS, or Social Security	Yes
12. Attendance alternatives for students residing within the district	Yes
13. Employee rights of return, if any	Yes
14. Dispute resolution procedure for school-authorizer issues	Yes
15. Procedures for school closure	Yes

Source: Ed Code §47605(c)(5) subsection (A) thru (O) and staff analysis of the charter renewal petition

B. Other Required Information

In addition to the required 15 elements, the Education Code also requires all charter petitions to include the following information.

²⁵ EC §47605(c)(5)

Figure 46: Other Required Information

Required Information	Included in Petition?
An affirmation of each of the conditions described in EC §47605(h).	Yes
A declaration of whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of Government Code §3540 through 3540.2 (California's public school collective bargaining law).	Yes
Information regarding the proposed operation and potential effects of the charter school on the authorizer, including: • The facilities to be used by the charter school, including specifically where the charter school intends to locate. • The manner in which administrative services of the charter school are to be provided. • Potential civil liability effects, of the charter school on the authorizer.	Yes
Financial statements that include the annual operating budget and 3-year cashflow and financial projections, backup and supporting documents and budget assumptions (i.e. anticipated revenues and expenditures, including special education, and projected average daily attendance).	Yes
If the school is to be operated by, or as, a nonprofit public benefit corporation, the petitioner shall provide the names and relevant qualifications of all persons whom the petitioner nominates to serve on the governing body of the charter school.	Yes

Source: Ed Code §47605(c)(4), §47605(c)(6), and §47605(h); staff analysis of the charter renewal petition

C. OUSD-Specified Requirements

Figure 47: OUSD-Specified Requirements

OUSD-Specified Requirement	Included in Petition?
District Required Language	Yes

Source: Staff analysis of the charter renewal petition

IV. Renewal Criteria IV: Is the Charter School Serving All Students Who Wish to Attend?

In order for a charter school's renewal petition to be approved, the school must be serving all students who wish to attend.²⁶ By State law, evaluation of this criteria is limited to consideration of two sources of information (1) State-provided enrollment data and (2) any substantiated complaints related to noncompliance with suspension/expulsion requirements included in law and/or the charter school's procedures. Denial under this criterion may only occur if (1) there is sufficient evidence in the abovementioned information sources demonstrating that the charter school is not serving all students who wish to attend and (2) the school has been given a reasonable opportunity to cure the violation. Therefore, evidence considered for this criterion includes:

- State-provided enrollment data
- Substantiated complaints and notices of concern related to noncompliance with suspension/expulsion requirements

²⁶ EC §47607(e)

A. State-Provided Enrollment Data

State law mandates that, upon request, the State provide charter school authorizers with certain aggregate data, specified in the law, reflecting student enrollment patterns for authorized charter schools. The State does not provide any guidance regarding how this data should be interpreted. This data includes the following for each year of the charter term²⁷:

- **Data Set 1 (Mid-Year Exits):** The percentage of students enrolled at any time between the beginning of the school year and the census day who were not enrolled at the end of the same school year, and the average State test results for these students from the prior school year, if available.
- **Data Set 2 (Year-to-Year Exits):** The percentage of students enrolled during the prior school year who were not enrolled as of the census day of the school year in question (excluding students who completed the highest grade served by the school), and the average State test results for these students from the prior year, if available.

The tables below summarize the data provided by the State. Additionally, it is important to note the data provided is limited in that it can only show correlation, *not causation*. Therefore, while an analysis is included below, the data, on its own, cannot definitively show whether or not the school is serving all students who wish to attend. With this limitation in mind, the analysis is below:

- **Data Set 1 (Mid-Year Exits):** For the first set of data, students who left the Charter School performed similar to (within 10 points) or better than the Charter School's schoolwide average for all years and subjects except for 2022-23. The differences do not appear to be substantial or consistent enough to suggest that the school is not serving all students who wish to attend.
- **Data Set 2 (Year-to-Year Exits):** For the second set of data, students who left the Charter School performed above the schoolwide average pre-pandemic and below the schoolwide average post-pandemic. Although the difference was moderate in 2023-24, the differences across all years do not appear to be substantial or consistent enough to suggest that the school is not serving all students who wish to attend.

Figure 48: Charter School Enrollment Data – Education Code Section 47607(d)(1)(B)

Data Set 1: Mid-Year Exits	2018-19	2019-20	2022-23	2023-24
Percent of students enrolled at the Charter School between start of the school year and census day who were not enrolled at the end of the school year	20.36% (114 of 560)	12.02% (78 of 649)	8.42% (65 of 772)	9.10% (72 of 791)
Number of these students with State test results from the prior year	26	19	ELA: 26 Math: 25	33
ELA: Difference between average DFS of unretained students and schoolwide average	-0.44 Unretained = -36.54 School = -36.1	+5.10 Unretained = -42.00 School = -47.1	-32.24 Unretained = -149.04 School = -116.8	-5.06 Unretained = -85.76 School = -80.7
Math: Difference between average DFS of unretained students and schoolwide average	+8.76 Unretained = -65.54 School = -74.30	+23.65 Unretained = -48.95 School = -72.60	-11.32 Unretained = -154.72 School = -143.4	-5.79 Unretained = -121.09 School = -115.3

Source: Aggregate enrollment-pattern data provided by the State

²⁷ At the time of this report, the State provided data for 2016-17 through 2019-20 and 2022-23 through 2023-24. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was insufficient data available for the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years.

Figure 49: Charter School Enrollment Data – Education Code Section 47607(d)(1)(C)

Data Set 2: Year-to-Year Exits	2018-19	2019-20	2022-23	2023-24
Percent of students enrolled at the Charter School during the prior school year who were not enrolled as of the census day for the specified year (excluding graduating students)	17.62% (65 of 369)	16.79% (94 of 560)	18.14% (131 of 722)	21.63% (167 of 772)
Number of these students with State test results from the prior year	23	45	ELA: 70 Math: 69	ELA: 84 Math: 85
ELA: Difference between average DFS of unretained students and schoolwide average	+12.75 Unretained = -23.35 School = -36.1	+6.3 Unretained = -40.80 School = -47.10	-9.63 Unretained = -126.43 School = -116.8	-17.59 Unretained = -98.29 School = -80.7
Math: Difference between average DFS of unretained students and schoolwide average	+26.08 Unretained = -48.22 School = -74.30	+29.87 Unretained = -42.73 School = -72.6	-2.38 Unretained = -145.78 School = -143.4	-19.74 Unretained = -135.04 School = -115.3

Source: Aggregate enrollment-pattern data provided by the State

B. Substantiated Complaints and Notices of Concern Related to Noncompliance with Suspension / Expulsion Requirements

During the current charter term, the Office of Charter Schools did not receive any substantiated complaints related to noncompliance with suspension and/or expulsion requirements for the charter school.

V. Recommendation Summary

To determine if the Charter School has adequately met each renewal criteria, Staff considered evidence gathered from the school's petition and supporting documentation, the site visit, and the school's performance during its previous charter term. The following section outlines the Charter School's identified strengths and challenges related to each renewal criteria, as well as a determination of whether the Charter School adequately met the criteria for purposes of renewal.

A. Renewal Criteria I: Has the Charter School Presented a Sound Educational Program?

Strengths	Challenges
- Average ELA Proficiency rates increased for all grade spans except K-5. In 2023-24, the High school grade span had above average ELA CORE Growth. - Average Math proficiency rates increased for all grade spans. In 2023-24, the High school grade span had above average Math CORE Growth. - Average DFS increased for all student groups in both ELA and Math. - The 2023-24 graduation rate and A-G completion rate were both high. - As of Year 3 (2023-24), the school met the following Year 1 goals from the previous renewal's PIP: ELA CORE growth for high school, Math CORE growth for both middle school and high school. - Verified Data submitted by Lodestar indicate that a majority of Lodestar's grade levels and student groups made at least one year's progress as defined by NWEA MAP.	- In 2023-24, average ELA proficiency rates were below the OUSD average for all grade spans except 9-12. Both the Elementary and Middle school had below average ELA CORE growth and the school received a Red indicator on the Dashboard. - In 2023-24, Math proficiency rates were below the OUSD average for all grade spans except 6-8. - The percentage of English Learners making progress declined significantly in 2023-24, resulting in Red status on the ELPI Dashboard indicator, despite being Green in the prior year. - High school Math proficiency was 0% in 2021-22 and 2022-23, improving only to 6% in 2023-24. - As of Year 3 (2023-24), the school did not meet the following Year 1 goals from the previous renewal's PIP: ELA proficiency, ELA DFS, ELA CORE growth for both elementary school and middle school, Math proficiency, Math DFS, Math CORE growth for elementary school, chronic absenteeism, and suspension rate.

Determination: Based on this analysis, Lodestar has presented a sound educational program.

B. Renewal Criteria II: Is the Charter School Demonstrably Likely to Successfully Implement the Proposed Educational Program?

Strengths	Challenges
- Enrollment has stabilized after the Charter School's phase in period, with sustainable current enrollment and realistic projections. - Chronic absenteeism declined over last three years - Finances are adequate, with a positive ending fund balance and reasonable enrollment and budget projections.	- Recent audit findings identified a material weakness. - High and increasing percentage of "Ineffective" teaching assignments (53.3%). - The school does not participate in an Oakland-wide common charter enrollment system.

Determination: Based on this analysis, Lodestar is demonstrably likely to successfully implement the proposed educational program.

C. Renewal Criteria III: Is the Petition Reasonably Comprehensive?

Strengths	Challenges
- Charter petition contains reasonably comprehensive descriptions of the required 15 elements. - OUSD-specified requirements are included in the petition.	N/A

Determination: Based on this analysis, the petition for Lodestar is reasonably comprehensive.

D. Renewal Criteria IV: Is the School Serving All Students Who Wish to Attend?

Strengths	Challenges
- No evidence in State-provided enrollment data that suggests the school is failing to serve all students who wish to attend. - There have been no substantiated complaints or Notices of Concern related to noncompliance with suspension/expulsion requirements.	N/A

Determination: Based on this analysis, Lodestar is serving all students who wish to attend.

E. Analysis of Other Public School Options if Renewal is Denied

When determining whether to recommend denial, OCS Staff consider other public-school options available to the Charter School’s current students, and denial findings for a Middle Tier school must demonstrate, in part, that closure is in the best interest of students²⁸. The following provides an overview of the attendance areas where Lodestar students live, where students who have transferred from the school enroll in the subsequent year, and how nearby schools serving elementary, middle, and high school students perform relative to Lodestar.

Lodestar Students Attendance Areas

Students attending Lodestar in 2024-25 lived in 44 different OUSD attendance areas. Additionally, 60 of its students reside outside of Oakland. The table below shows all elementary, middle school, high school attendance areas where at least 5% Lodestar of students lived.

Figure 50: 2024-25 Charter School Enrollment by Attendance Area and Grade Span

Attendance Area Grade Level	Attendance Area	Number of Lodestar Students Living in Attendance Area (Percent of Total Enrollment)
Elementary	BROOKFIELD	52 (7.3%)
	MADISON PRIMARY	45 (6.3%)
	ESPERANZA/KOREMATSU	38 (5.3%)
Middle	MADISON UPPER	74 (10.4%)
	ELMHURST UNITED	64 (9.0%)
High	CASTLEMONT/CCPA/MADISON	193 (27.0%)

Source: OUSD Department of Research, Assessment, and Data Live/Go Dashboard

²⁸ Ed Code 47607.2(b)(6)

Performance Comparison with Nearby Schools/Target Student Population Area

In order to evaluate the performance of Lodestar relative to other public-school options available to the Charter School's current students, the following list of comparison schools was created to include (A) any schools serving similar grade spans within the Elementary School Attendance Area(s) ("ESAA"), Middle School Attendance Area(s) ("MSAA"), and High School Attendance Area(s) ("HSAA") for which at least 5% of students currently live and (B) any schools serving similar grade spans within the Attendance Area(s) for which the school is located. The figure below summarizes 2023-24 State test outcomes (in terms of Distance from Standard (DFS)) and 2023-24 Four-Year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rates for these schools, comparing outcomes to Lodestar. The figure also includes some demographic information from that same year for additional context. Although demographics can substantially impact schools' DFS outcomes, making school-to-school comparisons less useful, CORE growth controls for some of these differences by comparing individual student's performance relative to a set of similar students. As shown in Figure 51:

- **Elementary Performance**
 - **ELA:** Lodestar had a DFS which was greater than 3 of 5 comparison schools. Lodestar had a higher CORE growth percentile than 2 of 5 comparison schools.
 - **Math:** Lodestar had a DFS which was greater than 3 of 5 comparison schools. Lodestar had a higher CORE growth percentile than 2 of 5 comparison schools.
- **Middle School Performance**
 - **ELA:** Lodestar had a DFS which was greater than 3 of 5 comparison schools. Lodestar had a higher CORE growth percentile than 0 out of 3 comparison schools.
 - **Math:** Lodestar had a DFS which was greater than 4 of 5 comparison schools. Lodestar had a higher CORE growth percentile than 2 of 3 comparison schools.
- **High School Performance**
 - **ELA:** Lodestar had a DFS which was greater than 6 of 11 comparison schools. Lodestar had a higher CORE growth percentile than 2 of 5 comparison schools.
 - **Math:** Lodestar had a DFS which was greater than 10 of 11 comparison schools. Lodestar had a higher CORE growth percentile than 3 of 4 comparison schools.
 - **Graduation Rate:** Lodestar had a higher graduation rate than 5 of 11 comparison schools.

Figure 51: 2023-24 Performance Comparison of Nearby Schools for schools serving grades TK-5

ESAA (Percent of Total Enrollment)	School	Grade Span	% SED	% EL	% SWD	ELA DFS	ELA CORE Growth	Math DFS	Math CORE Growth
Madison Primary (7.3%)	Lodestar	K-12	90%	45%	13%	-83.9	29%	-99.9	42%
	Madison Park Academy Elementary	K-5	98%	53%	14%	-53.1	92%	-59.8	84%
Esperanza /Korematsu (6.3%)	Esperanza Elementary	K-5	99%	79%	17%	-96.9	19%	-91.4	55%
	Fred T. Korematsu Discovery Academy Elementary	K-5	98%	44%	24%	-130.4	0%	-107.8	13%
Brookfield (5.3%)	Brookfield Elementary	K-5	99%	45%	4%	-88.2	81%	-107.4	75%
	Lighthouse Community Charter	K-8	93%	48%	15%	-76.9	71%	-107.3	25%

Source: English Learners – CDE Downloadable Data Files (School Enrollment, English Learners); Socioeconomically Disadvantaged/Special Education – CDE DataQuest School Enrollment by Subgroup Report; OUSD Special Education/Distance From Standard/CORE Growth Percentile – OUSD Department of Research, Assessment, and Data

Figure 52: 2023-24 Performance Comparison of Nearby Schools for schools servings grades 6-8

MSAA (Percent of Total Enrollment)	School	Grade Span	% SED	% EL	% SWD	ELA DFS	ELA CORE Growth	Math DFS	Math CORE Growth
Madison Upper (10.4%)	Lodestar	K-12	90%	45%	13%	-83.9	17%	-99.9	54%
	Aspire Lionel Wilson	6-12	87%	21%	16%	-94.7		-126	
	Lighthouse Community Charter	K-8	93%	48%	15%	-26.8	27%	-107.8	44%
	Madison Park Academy 6-12	6-12	100%	40%	16%	-93.9	49%	-162.3	73%
Elmhurst United (9.0%)	East Bay Innovation Academy	6-12	38%	10%	19%	9.2		-45.4	
	Elmhurst United Middle	6-8	98%	44%	16%	-76.9	41%	-148.7	53%

Source: English Learners – CDE Downloadable Data Files (School Enrollment, English Learners); Socioeconomically Disadvantaged/Special Education – CDE DataQuest School Enrollment by Subgroup Report; OUSD Special Education/Distance From Standard/CORE Growth Percentile – OUSD Department of Research, Assessment, and Data

Figure 53: 2023-24 Performance Comparison of Nearby Schools for schools servings grades 9-12

HSAA (Percent of Total Enrollment)	School	Grade Span	% SED	% EL	% SWD	ELA DFS	ELA CORE Growth	Math DFS	Math CORE Growth	Grad Rate
CASTLEMONT/CCPA/MADISON (27%)	Lodestar	K-12	90%	45%	13%	-83.9	77%	-99.9	94%	89%
	Alternatives in Action	9-12	95%	54%	17%	-107.6		-183.1		67%
	Aspire Golden State	6-12	95%	28%	16%	-69.8		-144.6		99%
	Aspire Lionel Wilson	6-12	87%	21%	16%	-26.8		-126		92%
	Castlemont High	9-12	99%	47%	18%	-188.1	25%	-193.9	100%	68%
	Coliseum College Prep Academy	6-12	98%	43%	21%	-68.9	95%	-133.6	89%	92%
	Sojourner Truth	K-12	98%	26%	22%	-204.9	82%	-234.4		58%
	Lighthouse High	9-12	93%	29%	15%	-44.7	78%	-154.1	41%	90%
	LPS Oakland R & D	9-12	71%	37%	15%	-89.1		-191.1		94%
	Madison Park Academy 6-12	6-12	100%	40%	16%	-93.9	69%	-162.3	55%	89%
	Oakland Unity High	9-12	98%	32%	16%	50.3		-48.9		94%
	Rudsdale	9-12	99%	71%	9%	-326.3		-344.3		66%

Source: English Learners – CDE Downloadable Data Files (School Enrollment, English Learners); Socioeconomically Disadvantaged/Special Education – CDE DataQuest School Enrollment by Subgroup Report; OUSD Special Education/Distance From Standard/CORE Growth Percentile – OUSD Department of Research, Assessment, and Data

F. Recommendation

Based on the analysis outlined therein, **Staff recommend Option A, approving the renewal petition for Lodestar for 5 years, beginning July 1, 2025, until June 30, 2031, to serve students in Grades TK-12, with the benchmarks detailed below.** However, Staff has determined that there are multiple legally compliant options.

Option A:

If the Board, after considering both the schoolwide and subgroup performance on the state and local indicators of the Dashboard, providing greater weight to performance on measurements of academic performance, and considering any verified data submitted by the charter school, determines that the Charter School's renewal petition has met all renewal criteria and should be renewed, the Board may adopt the resolution to approve the Charter School's renewal petition for five years, beginning July 1, 2025, with each of the following benchmarks:

1. **Performance Benchmark:** In each year of the charter term, the Charter School shall demonstrate academic growth in English Language Arts (ELA) for All Students, English Learners, Hispanic students, Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students, and Students with Disabilities as reported on the California School Dashboard ELA Performance Indicator by achieving a Distance from Standard (DFS) that has Increased or Increased Significantly from the prior year as measured by Change Level; or achieved a performance level 4 or 5 on the California Dashboard ELA Growth Indicator; or achieved "High" CORE student growth percentile of 70% or above .

As part of ongoing oversight, if the Charter School fails to meet any of the above benchmarks beginning with the 2026 Dashboard, the Charter School is expected to provide a written report to the OUSD Board within 2 months of the release of the Dashboard, and a verbal report scheduled at the discretion of Board leadership. Furthermore, the Charter School's progress towards meeting the Benchmarks will be considered upon submission of a renewal petition at the end of the term of the charter as part of the "performance of all subgroups of pupils served by the charter school in the state and local indicators," and whether "the Charter School has achieved measurable increases in academic achievement."

2. **Fiscal Benchmark:** If any Material Weakness, exception, or deficiency is identified in Lodestar's or Lighthouse's annual audit report during the new charter term, the Charter School's governing board shall: a) provide a written remediation plan to the OUSD Board addressing the root cause of the finding, b) Upon completing the remediation plan, provide a written report to the OUSD Board documenting the implementation. At the discretion of OUSD Board leadership, verbal reports on these items may be scheduled to the OUSD Board.

Option B

If the Board, after considering both the schoolwide and subgroup performance on the state and local indicators of the Dashboard, providing greater weight to performance on measurements of academic performance, and considering any verified data submitted by the charter school, denies the charter renewal petition, the Board must make written findings, setting forth specific facts to support the findings, that determine the following:

1. The charter school has failed to meet or make sufficient progress toward meeting standards that provide a benefit to the pupils of the school; **and**
2. Closure of the charter school is in the best interest of students; **and**
3. The Board's decision provided greater weight to performance on measurements of academic performance.

The Board may use the data and conclusions in this Staff Report as its findings in support of either of the above options.

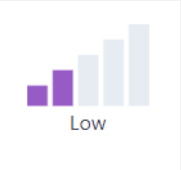
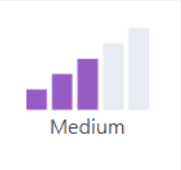
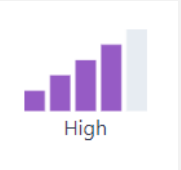
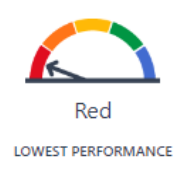
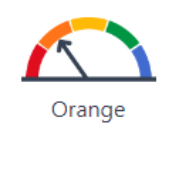
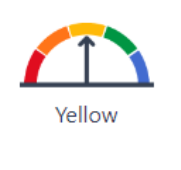
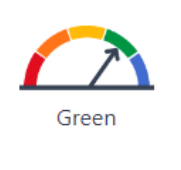
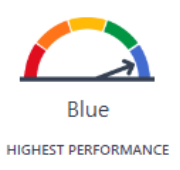
VI. Appendices

Appendix A. Additional California School Dashboard Analyses – including Local Indicators

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on California School Dashboard Indicators

Typically, the California School Dashboard displays colors for each indicator (see below) which are assigned based on two factors: the current year’s data and the difference between the current year’s data and the prior year’s data, or “Change”. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on statewide testing and accountability systems, there was insufficient data to calculate “Change” for the 2022 California School Dashboard, and thus the 2022 California School Dashboard displayed “Status levels” (Very High, High, Medium, Low, and Very Low) in place of colors. For purposes of the Renewal Tier Analysis and the School Performance Analysis, these Status Levels were used as proxies for color as shown below.

Figure 54: 2022 and 2023 California School Dashboard Indicator Levels

Year	Dashboard Indicator Levels				
2022	 Very Low LOWEST PERFORMANCE	 Low	 Medium	 High	 Very High HIGHEST PERFORMANCE
2023	 Red LOWEST PERFORMANCE	 Orange	 Yellow	 Green	 Blue HIGHEST PERFORMANCE

Source: California School Dashboard

The only exceptions to the categorization rules above are the Chronic Absenteeism and Suspension Indicators for which the 2022 scale is reversed such that “Very High” corresponds to the lowest performance, or the “Red” color.

Additionally, there was insufficient data to assign a status level to the College and Career Readiness indicator for the 2022 California School Dashboard, so the indicator is not available for the 2022 California School Dashboard and is categorized using a status level, not a color, for the 2023 California School Dashboard. For more information about the California School Dashboard, please visit the CDE’s support page at www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/index.asp.

California School Dashboard Local Indicators

Charter schools are required to report annually on five State Board of Education (SBE)-approved local indicators aligned to State priority areas where other State data is not available. In order to meet each local indicator, the SBE requires charter schools to (1) annually measure their progress based on locally available data, (2) report the results at a public charter school board meeting, and (3) report the results to the public through the California School Dashboard. The school uses self-reflection tools included within the California School Dashboard to report its progress on the local indicators. If a charter school does not submit results to the California School Dashboard by the given deadline, including completing the self-reflection tool, the school's California School Dashboard will reflect *Not Met* for the indicator by default. Earning a performance level of *Not Met* for two or more years for a given local indicator may be a factor in being identified for differentiated assistance, provided by an outside agency (typically the county office of education) as required by State law.²⁹

Figure 55: California School Dashboard Local Indicators

Local Indicator	2022	2023	2024
Basics: Teachers, Instructional Materials, Facilities	Met	Met	Met
Implementation of Academic Standards	Met	Met	Met
Parent and Family Engagement	Met	Met	Met
Local Climate Survey	Met	Met	Met
Access to a Broad Course of Study	Met	Met	Met

Source: California School Dashboard

2023-24 California School Dashboard Indicators Determined for “Informational Purposes Only”

The 2023-24 California School Dashboard included three additional Indicators which are to be used for “*informational purposes only*”. While OCS Staff did not consider these indicators as part of the analysis to determine the renewal recommendation included in this report, the results have been included below for informational purposes only.

Figure 56: California School Dashboard Indicators – “Informational Purposes Only”

ELA Growth	Math Growth	Science
 Students at Lodestar generally scored 17 points below the typical growth of students with similar test scores in the previous grade level.	 Students at Lodestar generally scored 2 points below the typical growth of students with similar test scores in the previous grade level.	 Students at Lodestar had an average DFS of 25.8 points below standard, a 0.1 point increase from the prior year, on the California Science Test.

Source: California School Dashboard

²⁹ Detailed criteria for differentiated assistance can be found at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/leaproposedcrit.asp>.

Appendix B. Additional Program Implementation Information

Proposed Charter School Projected Student Enrollment and Grade Levels Served (as outlined in petition)

In its renewal petition (pg. 24), Lodestar is proposing to serve a projected student enrollment at each grade level, and at all grade levels combined, in each of the years of the term of the Charter as follows:

Figure 57: Projected Enrollment

Projected Student Enrollment for Each Year by Grade Level and Total Enrollment					
Grade Level	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
TK	20	30	30	40	40
K	30	30	38	38	40
1	28	30	30	38	38
2	28	28	30	30	38
3	40	28	28	30	30
4	50	40	30	28	30
5	55	50	42	30	28
6	78	75	70	65	55
7	75	75	75	70	65
8	60	70	75	72	70
9	78	70	80	80	80
10	75	76	70	78	78
11	65	70	70	68	75
12	50	60	64	65	65
Total	732	732	732	732	732

Source: Lodestar renewal petition

Admissions Preferences

In the event of a public random drawing, the Lodestar admissions preferences are as shown below:

Figure 58: Lodestar Admissions Preferences

#	Admissions Preference
1	Siblings of students admitted or attending the Charter School: to keep families together.
2	Children of Lodestar staff and LCPS board members (not to exceed 2.5% of the total enrollment): to honor those committed to public education.
3	Students who are homeless/unsheltered during the time of enrollment or who become unsheltered while on the waiting list.
4	Students who are currently enrolled in or who reside within the elementary school attendance area of the District's public elementary school(s) in which Lodestar is located.
5	Students living in the 94621 or 94603 zip code.
6	Students zoned to attend underperforming schools within OUSD in which 70% or more of students qualify for free or reduced price meals: to provide an equitable, high-quality public school option to Oakland students and families.
7	Other prospective students residing within OUSD boundaries: as required by Education Code Section 47605(e)(2)(B) and to serve as a public school option for students and families of Oakland.
8	All other applicants.

Source: Lodestar renewal petition

Charter School Enrollment Demographics Over Time

Figure 59: Lodestar Enrollment Demographics

Student Group Type	Student Group	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Ethnicity	Hispanic/Latino	74%	79%	80%	84%
	Black/African American	21%	18%	12%	11%
	Asian	0%	0%	0%	0%
	White	1%	0%	0%	0%
	Two or More Races	3%	2%	2%	1%
	Other Race/Ethnicity	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Not Reported	1%	0%	4%	3%
Other Student Groups	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	87%	92%	90%	97%
	Homeless Youth	1%	3%	2%	4%
	Foster Youth	0%	0%	0%	0%
	English Learners	44%	45%	45%	44%
	Special Education	12%	12%	13%	14%

Source: ETHNICITY/SOCIOECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED/ENGLISH LEARNERS/SPECIAL EDUCATION – CDE Dataquest (School Enrollment by Subgroup Report)

Stability Rate

The figure below shows the Charter School’s stability rate as reported by the California Department of Education. For this metric, students are determined to have a “stable” enrollment during the academic year if the enrollment record is a minimum of 245 consecutive calendar days at the same school without a disqualifying exit.

Figure 60: Annual Student Stability Rate

	2021-22		2022-23		2023-24	
	Stability Count	Stability Rate	Stability Count	Stability Rate	Stability Count	Stability Rate
Schoolwide	606	83.9%	667	86.4%	673	85.2%
African American	122	85.3%	109	76.2%	89	74.8%
Hispanic or Latino	454	85.3%	533	89.4%	553	88.2%
Two or More Races	15	53.6%	13	72.2%	10	58.8%
English Learners	281	90.1%	309	87.5%	313	87.7%
Homeless Youth	14	70.0%	17	73.9%	13	56.5%
Students with Disabilities	78	84.8%	85	86.7%	89	84.8%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	566	86.4%	636	87.7%	615	86.0%

Source: CDE DataQuest

Charter School Educator Credentials

Figure 61: Educator Credentials by Type Over Time

	2021-22	2022-23
Clear <i>Authorized by clear or preliminary credential or by local assignment option</i>	44.1%	25.9%
Intern <i>Authorized by intern credential</i>	9.3%	10.3%
Out-of-Field <i>Authorized by GELAP, SELAP, short-term waiver, emergency EL permit, or Local Assignment Option</i>	16.6%	19.0%
Ineffective <i>No legal authorization or authorized by emergency credential (PIP, STSP), variable term waivers, or substitute permits</i>	23.0%	39.7%
Incomplete <i>Missing or incorrect information was reported to CALPADS about the assignment</i>	7.0%	5.1%

Source: CDE DataQuest

2025-26 Charter School Educator Demographics

Figure 62: 2025-26 Educator Demographics

Race / Ethnicity	2025-26
Hispanic/Latino	27%
Black/African American	21%
Asian	17%
White	27%
Other Race/Ethnicity	8%

Source: Charter School Performance Report

Charter School Complaints to OUSD

The OUSD Office of Charter Schools logs the complaints it receives for OUSD-authorized charter schools. However, unless the allegations identify a potential violation of their charter petition or of local, state, or federal law, the Office of Charter Schools typically refers the complainant to school leadership, who is ultimately responsible for addressing the complaint in compliance with its adopted complaint policy. Therefore, complaints included in the table below may not necessarily have been substantiated. Instead, the table is a record of what has been reported to the Office of Charter Schools staff. Additionally, some complainants may not know that they can submit complaints to the Office of Charter Schools. Therefore, the absence (or a low number) of complaints does not necessarily mean that other complaints were not reported directly to the school or charter management organization.

During the current 5-year charter term, the Office of Charter Schools received 11 complaints regarding Lodestar and 0 complaints regarding the Charter School's CMO.

Figure 63: Lodestar Complaints to OUSD

School Year	Complaints	Areas of Concern
2021-22	3	Student Health and Safety, Teacher Safety, Sexual Harassment, Staff Conduct, Academic Policies, Retaliation, Credentialing, Communication, Student Discipline
2022-23	5	Bullying, Discrimination, Student Discipline, Student Health and Safety, Sexual Harassment, Communication, Staff Conduct, Conflict Resolution
2023-24	3	Staff Conduct, Special Education, Student Health and Safety
2024-25	0	-
2025-26	0	-

Source: OUSD Office of Charter Schools Complaint Records as of August

*Complaint was substantiated by the Office of Charter Schools and led to the issuance of a Notice of Concern

Charter School English Learners by Language

Figure 64: 2024-25 Language Group Data

Language	English Learners (EL)	Fluent English Proficient (FEP) Students	Percent of Total Enrollment that is EL and FEP
Spanish; Castilian	315	181	68.60%
Uncoded languages	2	1	0.41%
Yoruba	2	0	0.28%
Vietnamese	1	0	0.14%

Source: CDE Dataquest

Appendix C. Charter Management Organization's Key Fiscal Indicators

Financial Indicator	2021-22 Audited	2022-23 Audited	2023-24 Audited
Annual Net Surplus or (Deficit) <i>Indicates whether the school spent more or less than it received in revenue during the year. Deficits are shown in parentheses.</i>	440,050	(330,583)	(209,319)
Ending Fund Balance <i>Typically represents unrestricted funds, although in some cases, restricted funds that were not fully spent in previous years may be included.</i>	11,758,056	11,427,473	11,218,154
Debt Ratio <i>A ratio less than 1 indicates the school has lower debts than assets, representing a lower level of financial risk.</i>	0.21	0.89	0.89
Budgetary Reserve <i>Given the school's ADA, FCMAT prescribes a minimum 4% reserve (calculated as Unrestricted Net Assets / Total Expenditures) as a set aside to prepare for potential liabilities. Reserve rates below this rate indicates poor financial condition.</i>	39%	34%	29%
Cash Reserve <i>FCMAT recommends 5%+ cash reserve of the total of all budgeted expenditures (calculated as Unrestricted Cash / Total Expenditures). Below 5% is indicative of a poor financial condition.</i>	16%	38%	29%

Source: 2021-22 through 2023-24 Annual Audit Reports

Appendix D. Charter School Response to Performance Improvement Plan Inquiry

Please see following page.



September 26, 2025

Via Email
kelly.krag-arnold@ousd.org

Kelly Krag-Arnold, Director, Office of Charter Schools
Oakland Unified School District
1011 Union Street #947
Oakland, CA 94607

RE: LCPS Follow-Up Response to OCS Inquiry regarding Lodestar's Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) in the 2020 Renewal Cycle

Dear Executive Director Krag-Arnold and the Office of Charter Schools:

Thank you for the opportunity for Lodestar: A Lighthouse Community Public Charter ("Lodestar" or the "Charter School") and Lighthouse Community Public Schools ("LCPS") to address the inquiry raised by your office regarding Lodestar's [Performance Improvement Plan \(PIP\) in the 2020 Renewal Cycle](#). As this response will be shared with the Oakland Unified School Board as part of Lodestar's charter renewal process, we have organized our response around the four questions posed in the [Inquiry](#):

This response is structured in three parts:

- **Part I:** In part one, for clarity and transparency for LCPS and Lodestar leadership, OUSD Charter School Office staff and Board Members, and the community at large, we will lay out **the context and executive summary** of our response to the inquiry.
- **Part II:** In part two, we will specifically share detailed **data and actions taken during the charter term** (2020-2025) for each of the four areas of our PIP.
 - ELA
 - Math
 - Chronic Absenteeism
 - Suspensions
- **Part III:** In part three, we will share the analysis that the Lodestar staff and administrators, LCPS Leadership, and LCPS Board did in our strategic/LCAP planning work in the spring of 2024, which included a review of our post-pandemic academic performance in ELA and Math, Chronic Absenteeism, and Suspensions aligned to the AB 1505 renewal criteria. This section outlines and articulates **our measurable goals for Lodestar and LCPS that are set in our LCAP/Strategic Plan**, as well as the priorities, initiatives, and timelines for continued progress. While this strategic plan concludes at the end of the 27-28 school year, we envision this structure for the remainder of the charter term if renewal is granted.

Part I: Context and Executive Summary:

Context: There are some key context points around Lodestar's PIP in the 2020-21 Charter Renewal cycle:

- Lodestar, in the Summer of 2020, was in the "Low Track" per the renewal tiers in the first year of implementation of AB 1505. Given the newness of this process, there was email correspondence between LCPS leadership and the Office of Charter Schools around the metrics and assessments, given the uncertainty of CAASSP testing at the time, verified data, and the SQR (School Quality Review) framework alignment. That correspondence is linked [here](#):
- Under EC Section 47607.2(a)(1), " a chartering authority may renew a charter school that has been identified as low performing by composing written factual findings specifying evidence of the following:"
 - (A) The charter school is making meaningful steps to address the underlying cause or causes of low performance, and those steps are reflected, or will be reflected, in a written plan adopted by the governing body of the charter school, pursuant to EC Section 47607.2(a)(3)(4).
 - (B) There is clear and convincing evidence that the charter school achieved measurable increases in academic achievement, pursuant to EC Section 47607.2(a)(3)(B).
- Hence, as part of Lodestar's renewal, a "written plan" (the PIP) addressed the underlying causes of low performance in ELA, Math, Chronic absenteeism, and Suspensions, alongside steps we would take over a multi-year period in these areas. The OUSD Board approved Lodestar's charter on December 2nd, 2020, with a vote of 6 - 1.

Executive Summary: Lodestar's 2020 PIP served as a foundation for schoolwide improvement. The PIP's structure and focus on academic improvement set the conditions for the school to persevere through the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic and subsequent learning loss, as well as the significant increase in unduplicated pupils served. **This plan paved the way for Lodestar to move from "low track" to "middle track" in 2025 to shape our academics, school culture, and data priorities over the charter term.**

This growth is emblematic of why the Legislature, in AB 1505, provided for a path to approval of low-performing charter schools: the chance that they could turn things around in a short period of time. Lodestar's accomplishments should be lauded, and they show that the District Board's bet on the Charter School's success was a wise one.

- **The PIP's Focus and Intention - Move Lodestar from Low to Middle Track:** The intention and design of the PIP, including the inputs (strategies) and outputs (data-based goals), was to move Lodestar from the "low track" to the "middle track." Hence, the PIP focused on 4 goal areas tied to the California Dashboard and renewal criteria:
 - ELA
 - Math
 - Chronic Absenteeism
 - Suspensions
- **External Factor #1 - COVID Pandemic and Learning Loss:** The inputs (strategies) and outputs (data-based goals) of Lodestar's PIP were drafted and submitted to the OUSD Office of Charter Schools in September 2020, at a time when all schools were closed to in-person instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At that time, no one knew how much longer school closures would last, and no one could have conceived of the extent of learning loss and social disconnection that would

impact students for years to come. In the dark, Lodestar established goals that seemed reasonable at the time, but have proven out of step, with the benefit of current views on the public educational landscape. We offer this not as an excuse, but as an explanation.

- The data-based goals were based on the pre-pandemic trends and performance from the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years.
- The goals of the PIP were not adjusted to reflect the impact of learning loss that we saw in our community and state; on the California State Dashboard, overall and by student subgroup, Distance From Standard (DFS) showed double-digit drops during this period.

That said, the PIP's inputs/strategies have been consistently implemented over the past five years, and that is reflected in the last two years of AB 1505 renewal tier calculations, Lodestar's LCAP documents, and LCPS board meeting materials that are available publicly.

- **External Factor #2- Dramatic Shifts in Lodestar's Demographics:** The data-based goals in the PIP were based on the demographic composition of the Charter School (from 2017-2020), when Lodestar had lower unduplicated student percentages. From the 2018-19 school year (last year of state testing that determined AB 1505 renewal tiers) to 2024-25 school year, the student composition of Lodestar shifted dramatically, largely due to a change in location (Lodestar started in the Fruitvale neighborhood and moved to Sobrante Park), students and families moving out of Oakland, and steady demand for open seats through our enrollment lottery from families in the neighboring community.

	2018-19 School Year	2024-25 School Year	Change
Enrollment	522	719 students	+198
Unduplicated Percentage	303 students 58.04%	702 students 97.64%	+401 students +39.6%
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged	246 students 47.13%	677 students 94.16%	+432 students +47.03%
English Learners	185 students 35.44%	320 students 44.5%	+135 students +9.06%
Newcomers	7 students 1.34%	52 students 9.96%	+45 students +8.62%
Students with Disabilities	59 students 11.30%	94 students 13.07%	+35 students +2.04%
Unhoused / McKinney Vento	1 student 0.2%	27 students 3.76%	+26 students +3.74%
African American Students	112 students 21.46%	78 students 10.85%	-34 students -10.61%
Hispanic / Latino Students	358 students 68.58%	606 students 84.28%	+248 students +15.7%

- **100% of Inputs/Strategies were implemented -** The PIP outlines specific strategies aligned to the OUSD School Quality Review framework (SQR). All strategies around ELA, Math, Chronic Absenteeism, and Suspensions were implemented with fidelity during the charter term.

Goal Area	Inputs/Strategies • SQR Alignment	Implemented / Not Implemented
English Language Arts	Implementation of Interim Assessments in partnership with ANET: • 3B.3 Data-Driven Instructional Decision-Making:	Implemented
	Consistent Instructional Rounds grounded in leadership professional development and coaching in partnership with Instruction Partners: • 2B.1 Consistent Tier One Instruction:	Implemented
	Implementation of EL Literacy Curriculum Modules: • 5A.1 Essential Content:	Implemented
Math	Implementation of Interim Assessments in partnership with ANET: • 3B.3 Data-Driven Instructional Decision-Making:	Implemented
	Consistent Instructional Rounds grounded in leadership professional development and coaching in partnership with Instruction Partners: • 2B.1 Consistent Tier One Instruction:	Implemented
	Implementation of EL Literacy Curriculum Modules: • 5A.1 Essential Content:	Implemented
Chronic Absenteeism	Continue Implementation of our Attendance Playbook with fidelity with regular communication with chronically absent students and families: • 1B.3 Communication Structures: Design and implement engagement strategies for chronically absent students and families • 2A.4 Families Engaged in Students' Education:	Implemented
Suspensions	Focused professional learning on relationship building and equitable and responsive practices through joyful classroom learning environments: • 2A.1 Joyful Environment: Continue Implementation and systematize Restorative Justice practices across all grades: • 2B.2 Intervention Systems:	Implemented

- **Outputs/Goals Met:**
 - ELA: 1 of 3
 - Math: 1 of 3
 - Chronic Absenteeism: 0 of 1

- Suspensions: 1 of 2

Goal Area	Year 4 goal (Spring 2025)	Met / Nearly Met / Not Met
English Language Arts (meet 2 of 3 goals)	All students: 38% Proficient - 10% improvement from baseline*	Nearly Met - 23% proficient in 2025
	All students: 42.1 Distance from Standard - 10 point improvement from baseline*	Not Met - 79 Distance from Standard
	All students: Above 50th percentile on CORE comparison of non-charter schools in student's attendance area in the Live/Go dashboard	Met - will confirm with the October release of the CORE dashboard
Math (meet 2 of 3 goals)	All students: 29% Proficient - 10% improvement from baseline	Not Met - 24% proficient in 2025
	All students: 62.6 Distance from Standard - 10 point improvement from baseline	Not Met - 85 Distance from Standard
	All students: Above 50th percentile on CORE comparison of non-charter schools in student's attendance area in the Live/Go dashboard	Met - will confirm with the October release of the CORE dashboard
Chronic Absenteeism	13% Chronically Absent across all student subgroups (4% improvement from baseline):	Not Met - 34.35% Overall
Suspensions	2% Suspended at least once across all student subgroups (2.6% improvement from baseline)	Met overall
		Met for three student subgroups
		Not Met for two student subgroups

Part II: Data and Actions taken during the Charter Term in the goal areas

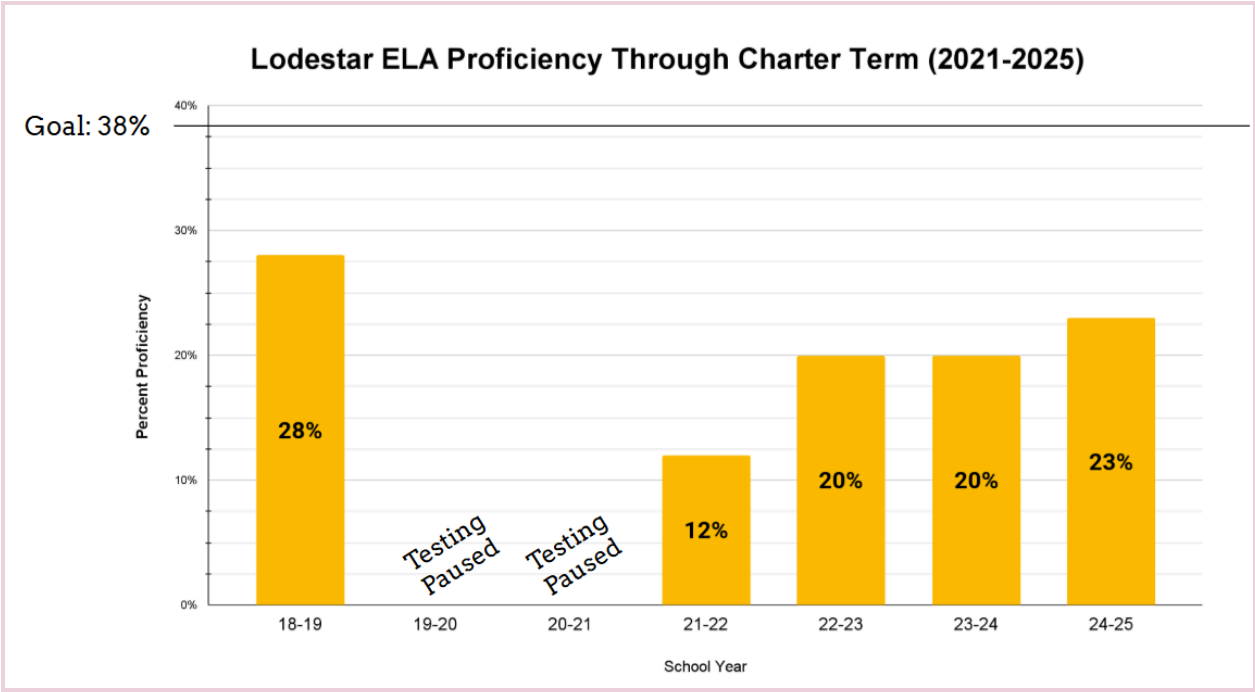
Goal Area 1: ELA

Summary: ELA is our biggest area of growth and opportunity in Lodestar's upcoming charter term. Given the increase in newcomers and consistent levels of ELD students (despite strong reclassification rates), we need to increase our proficiency and distance from standard (DFS). We are proud to have moved from 12% proficiency to 23% over the last four state testing cycles.

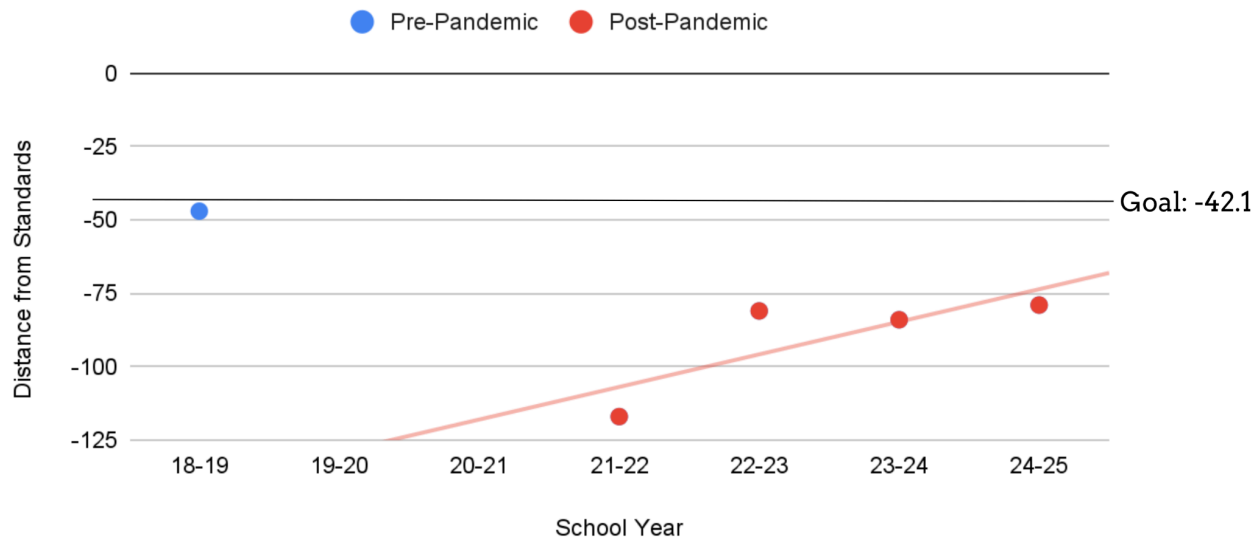
Reason for goals met / not met and Challenges, and External Factors	Aside from the aforementioned challenges / external factors in our executive summary: • Teacher Retention varied during the charter term: • Variability in Grade Level Performance: • Promotion of HS ELA teacher to Assistant Principal during charter term • Increase in English Language Learners and Newcomer Students served over the charter term • Increase in students with disabilities served over the charter term
Corrective actions (specific programmatic, staffing, instructional, or operational modifications)	• Assessment: We used ANET Interim assessments from 2020-22, and we made the strategic shift to use the SBAC ICA and IAB assessments for a few strategic reasons: ◦ The questions / format mirrors the actual CAASPP assessment given shared platform and publisher; ◦ Data from assessments were much more aligned to specific ELA standards, which allowed for stronger vertical and horizontal professional development and intentional analysis to capture campus trends. ◦ Data from the assessments for both ICA and IAB assessments report using a student scale score format that mirrors the reporting format for CAASPP, allowing for goal setting around proficiency and scale score growth vs. charter renewal criteria. • Instruction: Lodestar worked with Instruction Partners for two full school years (2020-21 and 2021-22); this work helped inform of coaching, feedback, and observation frameworks that our campus leadership and Academic team at LCPS's shared services office were able to sustain through the charter term. • Staffing: For the majority of the charter term, Principals have had responsibilities for ELA teachers in our elementary and secondary grades; in this last year of the charter term, those coaching responsibilities have now been shared with select Assistant Principals. • Staffing: We have had 4 different Directors of Elementary Academics - this has been a highly sought-after and competitive role, which has made it challenging to have continuity in our early literacy and elementary ELA practices. • Staffing: We made a change from having a campus ELD

	coordinator (who had some teaching responsibilities across our TK-12) to a more focused Language and Literacy Intervention role focused on early literacy; coordination of ELD instruction and assessments shifted to the four Assistant Principals of Instruction. • Elementary and Middle School Curriculum: Earlier in the charter term, Lodestar’s leadership and LCPS Academic found that we needed stronger fidelity to the EL curriculum in the 3rd to 8th grade. Throughout the charter term, Lodestar maintained its work with EL Education, and PD around the ELA modules was provided to both administrators and teachers. • Literacy Intervention curriculum and programs - over the charter term, we have used various programs/platforms with varying success, and have not articulated our tier 2 and 3 math approaches. This is an area of focus in 2025-26.
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Lodestar’s current performance and analysis of progress toward the five-year goals originally targeted for spring 2025, and how current performance data compares to these longer-term benchmarks.



Lodestar ELA Distance From Standards (DFS) Through Charter Term (2021-2025)



Year 4 goal (Spring 2025)	Met / Nearly Met / Not Met by Grade	Met / Nearly Met / Not Met by Student Group
All students: 38% Proficient - 10% improvement from baseline*	3rd Grade: Not Met 15% Met, 23% Nearly Met, 62% Not Met	All Students: Not Met 23% Met, 26% Nearly Met, 51% Not Met
	4th Grade: Not Met 11% Met, 26% Nearly Met, 63% Not Met	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: Not Met 23% Met, 25% Nearly Met, 51% Not Met
	5th Grade: Not Met 6% Met, 18% Nearly Met, 75% Not Met	English Language Learners: Not Met 3% Met, 23% Nearly Met, 74% Not met
	6th Grade: Not Met 14% Met, 34% Nearly Met, 52% Not Met	LTELs: Not Met 5% Met, 35% Nearly Met, 60% Not Met
	7th Grade: Not Met 27% Met, 23% Nearly Met, 49% Not Met	Students with Disabilities: Not Met 4% Met, 23% Nearly Met, 73% Not Met
	8th Grade: Met 44% Met, 24% Nearly Met, 33% Not Met	African American Students: Not Met 22% Met, 24% Nearly Met, 54% Not Met
	11th Grade: Met 31% Met, 32% Nearly	Hispanic / Latino Students: Not Met

	Met, 37% Not Met	23% Met, 26% Nearly Met, 51% Not Met
All students: 42.1 Distance from Standard - 5 point improvement from baseline*	3rd Grade: -90 (Not Met)	All Students¹: -79 (Not Met)
	4th Grade: -97 (Not Met)	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: -78 (Not Met)
	5th Grade: -120 (Not Met)	English Language Learners: -131 (Not Met)
	6th Grade: -100 (Not Met)	LTELs: -98 (Not Met)
	7th Grade: -72 (Not Met)	Students with Disabilities: -112 (Not Met)
	8th Grade: -43 (Nearly Met)	African American Students: -79 (Not Met)
	11th Grade: -51 (Not Met)	Hispanic / Latino Students: -80 (Not Met)
All students: Above 50th percentile on CORE comparison of non-charter schools in student's attendance area in the Live/Go dashboard	Met - will confirm with the October release of the CORE dashboard	

¹ Estimate based on 2024-2025 [ETS](#) weighted average by grades.

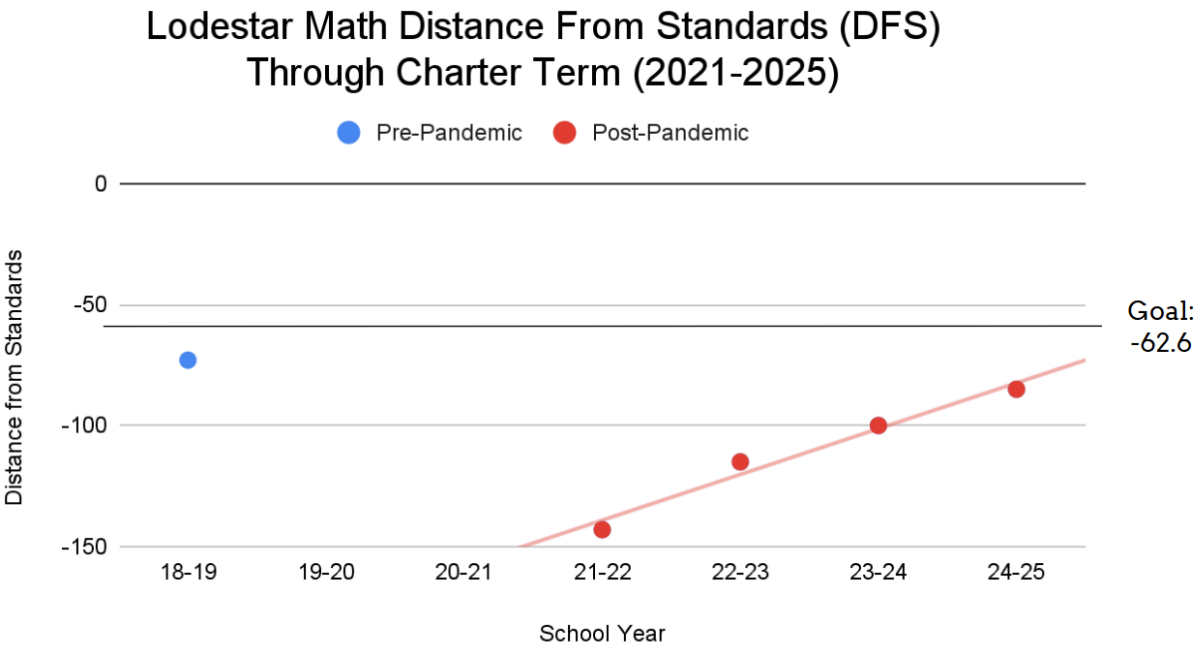
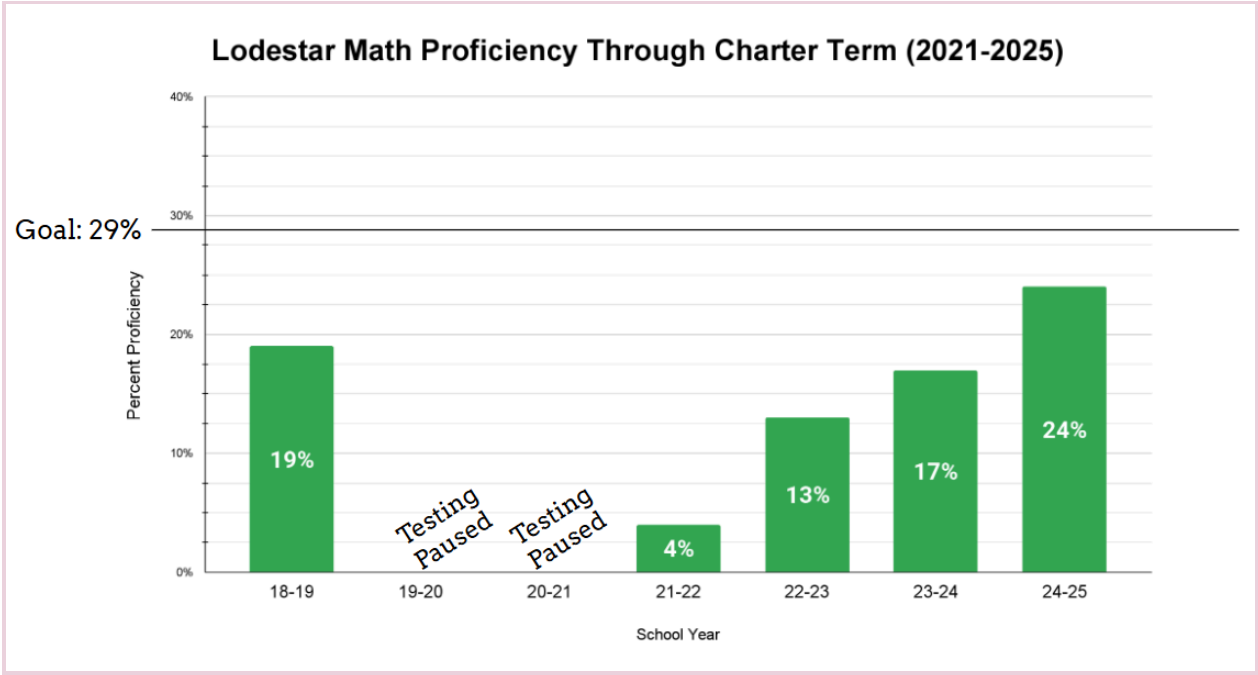
Goal Area 2: Math

Summary: Math has been an area of strength and consistent growth over the charter term. We are proud to have increased in proficiency by 5-6% yearly over the last four years of state testing, and in particular, proud of our performance and growth in key grades, particularly in 3rd grade, 8th grade, and most recently in 11th grade. We hope to continue this upward trajectory over the next charter term.

Reason for goals met / not met and Challenges, and External Factors	Aside from the aforementioned challenges / external factors in our executive summary: • Teacher Retention varied during the charter term: • Variability in Grade Level Performance: • Staffing: Early in the charter term, hiring credentialed math teachers was a challenge; hence, we have grown our own, as well as leveraged J-1 visa-eligible teachers.
Corrective actions (specific programmatic, staffing, instructional, or operational modifications)	• Assessment: We used ANET Interim assessments from 2020-22, and we made the strategic shift to use the SBAC ICA and IAB assessments for a few strategic reasons: ◦ The questions/format mirrors the actual CAASPP assessment given on the shared platform and publisher. ◦ Data from assessments were much more aligned to specific Math standards. ◦ Data from the assessments for both ICA and IAB assessments report using a student scale score format that mirrors the reporting format for CAASPP, allowing for goal setting around proficiency and scale score growth vs. charter renewal criteria. • Instruction: Lodestar worked with Instruction Partners for two full school years (2020-21 and 2021-22); this work helped inform of coaching, feedback, and observation frameworks that our campus leadership and Academic team at LCPS's shared services office were able to sustain through the charter term. • Staffing: For the majority of the charter term, our Assistant Principals of Instruction have had responsibilities for math teachers in our elementary and secondary grades; in this last year of the charter term, those coaching responsibilities have now been shared with select Assistant Principals. • Elementary Curriculum: We have consistently used Eureka, and have moved toward Eureka 2.0. • Middle and High School Curriculum: Earlier in the charter term, Lodestar used the Illustrative Math curriculum for middle school and College Preparatory Math (CPM) curriculum for high school. We had a curriculum evaluation and adoption process to align the secondary math curriculum and currently use Illustrative Math for our 6-12 grade math sequence. • Supplemental and Intervention math curriculum and programs - over the charter term, we have used various

	programs/platforms with varying success, and have not articulated our tier 2 and 3 math approaches.
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Lodestar’s Current performance and analysis of progress toward the five-year goals originally targeted for spring 2025, and how current performance data compares to these longer-term benchmarks.



Goal Area	Year 4 goal (Spring 2025)	Met / Nearly Met / Not Met by Grade	Met / Nearly Met / Not Met by Student Group
Math	All students: 29% Proficient - 10% improvement from baseline*	3rd Grade: Met 42% Met, 21% Nearly Met, 38% Not Met	All Students: Not Met 24% Met, 20% Nearly Met, 56% Not Met
		4th Grade: Not Met 22% Met, 28% Nearly Met, 50% Not Met	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: Not Met 24% Met, 20% Nearly Met, 56% Not Met
		5th Grade: Not Met 10% Met, 16% Nearly Met, 73% Not Met	English Language Learners: Not Met 9% Met, 18% Nearly Met, 73% Not Met
		6th Grade: Not Met 5% Met, 18% Nearly Met, 77% Not Met	LTEs: Not Met 6% Met, 14% Nearly Met, 97% Not Met
		7th Grade: Not Met 18% Met, 22% Nearly Met, 60% Not Met	Students with Disabilities: Not Met 10% Met, 13% Nearly Met, 77% Not Met
		8th Grade: Met 54% Met, 20% Nearly Met, 27% Not Met	African American Students: Not Met 22% Met, 17% Nearly Met, 61% Not Met
		11th Grade: Not Met 13% Met, 16% Nearly Met, 71% Not Met	Hispanic / Latino Students: Not Met 25% Met, 20% Nearly Met, 55% Not Met
	All students: 62.6. Distance from Standard - 10 point improvement from baseline*	3rd Grade: -35 (Met)	All Students: -85 (Not Met)
		4th Grade: -72 (Not Met)	Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: -86 (Not Met)
		5th Grade: -111 (Not Met)	English Language Learners: -128 (Not Met)
		6th Grade: -135 (Not Met)	LTEs: -158 (Not Met)

		7th Grade: -105 (Not Met)	Students with Disabilities: -136 (Not Met)
		8th Grade: -14 (Met)	African American Students: -89 (Not Met)
		11th Grade: -132 (Not Met)	Hispanic / Latino Students: -85 (Not Met)
	All students: Above 50th percentile on CORE comparison of non-charter schools in student's attendance area in the Live/Go dashboard	Met - will confirm with the October release of the CORE dashboard	

Goal Area 3: Chronic Absenteeism

Summary: Chronic Absenteeism has been a real challenge for our organization and for Lodestar in particular. Two years ago, we partnered with Oakland Natives Gives Back through a CDE Learning Communities for Student Success Program Grant to fund a three-year partnership to address this critical issue. 2024-25 was year 1 of the partnership, and we did a [detailed case study](#) where we interviewed students, parents, staff, teachers, and administrators to get a strong, comprehensive understanding of chronic absenteeism vs. our specific context. We are now in year 2 of the grant and partnership, and we have plans for stronger case management, follow-through, and incentives, and data collection as we seek to improve in this area.

Reason for goals met / not met and Challenges, and External Factors	Reasons why Chronic Absenteeism has been such a challenge since 2020: • Effects from pandemic closures and disengagement from school, changes in attitude about attendance. Chronic Absenteeism city-wide, and particularly in East Oakland schools, has been a challenge. While we have improved, we have a long way to go to pre-pandemic levels. • Transportation to and from School: Families have reported that they have experienced instability and hardship coming/getting students to school, and other systemic barriers. • Specific grade levels that are more impacted than others: We have found that early grades - TK, K and 1 - and upper grades - 11th and 12th grade, have had higher rates of Chronic Absences. • Student mental health: This has been an area of investment with our school counselors and our contracted team from Seneca Family of Services.
Corrective actions (specific programmatic, staffing, instructional, or operational modifications)	To address Chronic Absenteeism, we have made the following corrective actions: • Learning Communities for Student Success Program Grant (LCSSP): Funding a three-year partnership with Oakland Natives Gives Back, a non-profit organization with significant programmatic expertise in Oakland in addressing chronic absenteeism and disconnected youth. • Staffing: A LCPS-wide Health and Attendance coordinator (previously was the health coordinator the two years post-COVID school closure), and A LCPS-wide MTSS coordinator focused on attendance (previously, each school had MTSS coordinators focused on general interventions) funded through the California Community Schools Partnership Program. • Attendance Playbook: In each year of the charter term, we have received and made strategic changes to our attendance playbook. Additionally, we recently restructured our MTSS model to have one dedicated staff member at the coordinator level who manages attendance solely with a focus on both

	positive incentives for strong and consistent attendance and also greater adherence to our attendance policy and the SART process. Additionally, this person is our contact person with Alameda County Office of Education and Oakland Natives Give Back.
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Lodestar's Current performance and analysis of progress toward the five-year goals originally targeted for spring 2025, and how current performance data compares to these longer-term benchmarks.

Goal Area	Year 4 goal (Spring 2025)	Met / Nearly Met / Not Met by Student Group (2025 End of year CALPADS)
Chronic Absenteeism	13% Chronically Absent across all student subgroups (4% improvement from baseline)	All Students: 34.35% (258/751)
		Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: 37% (251/677)
		English Language Learners: 31.25% (100/320)
		Students with Disabilities: 48.93% (46/94)
		African American Students: 41% (32/78)
		Hispanic / Latino Students: 34.6% (210/606)

Goal Area 4: Suspension Rates

Summary: Lodestar is known for its strong school culture, sense of student belonging, and restorative justice practices. Upon returning to in-person learning after the COVID pandemic, Lodestar experienced some challenges with both student behaviors and teacher classroom management, and both the administrative and teacher leadership teams worked hard to norm on culture practices and strong learning conditions. Additionally, Lodestar high school worked in partnership with Youth Alive! to support a group of boys who were dealing with group/gang violence in the surrounding community.

Reason for goals met / not met, Challenges, and External Factors	Reasons Lodestar was able to meet the Suspension Rate goal school-wide. • Articulation of our Discipline / Suspension approval processes: Over the charter term, LCPS and Lodestar administrators calibrate on discipline, using a matrix and consider a range of alternatives to suspension. • Leadership and Staff Training on School Culture / Crew (advisory) structures focused on belonging: Both Lodestar administrators and staff have received training on school and class culture, crew facilitation, and woven this through the arc of professional development in each year of the charter term. • Leadership and Staff Training on Restorative Justice: Lodestar administrators have received “train the trainer” type professional development around Restorative Justice over the course of the charter term. • Increase in crime statistics, specifically Gang / Group Violence, in Sobrante Park and East Oakland post-pandemic: The East Oakland community experienced a significant uptick in general crime and gang/group violence. Lodestar High School students experienced a loss related to this in 2023, as well as worked with Oakland’s Department of Violence Prevention to support a group of ~12 students related to the incident. Their support led to a grant articulation to provide additional community-based organization support for Lodestar. Reasons Lodestar did not meet two specific student groups (African American students and Special Education students): • Disproportionality: While the number of suspended students in 2024-25 was low - 11 students, there was disproportionality in the rate with which African American students and Special Education students were suspended vs. schoolwide percentages (5% vs. 2%). We still have work to do to support our students.
Corrective actions (specific programmatic, staffing, instructional, or operational modifications)	To address Chronic Absenteeism, we have made the following corrective actions: • Federal Bipartisan School Community Safety Grant: Lodestar secured three years of funding through this grant to work with Higher Ground (restorative justice practices in Middle School) and Youth Alive! (Restorative justice practices

	and case management in High School). These supports have been implemented during the last two years of the charter term. LCPS Membership in Oakland Violence Prevention Coalition: Three years ago, LCPS joined the Oakland Violence Prevention Coalition, a network of Community-Based Organizations and Non-Profit Organizations that work to focus on violence prevention measures in coordination with the City of Oakland's Department of Violence Prevention. Lodestar and LCPS Leadership have benefited from the professional expertise and support from area leaders, specifically on how to better support our violence-impacted youth and their families.
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Lodestar's Current performance and analysis of progress toward the five-year goals originally targeted for spring 2025, and how current performance data compares to these longer-term benchmarks.

Goal Area	Year 4 goal (Spring 2025)	Met / Nearly Met / Not Met by Student Group (2024-25 SY)
Suspension Rates	2% Suspended at least once across all student subgroups (2.6% improvement from baseline)	All Students: Met 1.5% 11/719
		Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: 1.49% (10/677)
		English Language Learners: 1.56% (5/320)
		Students with Disabilities: 5.3% (5/94)
		African American Students: 5.1% (4/78)
		Hispanic / Latino Students: 1.16% (7/606)

Part III: Analysis and Articulation of Measurable Goals for Lodestar and LCPS

Beginning in the 2024-25 school year, Lighthouse Community Public Schools began an ambitious 4-year strategic plan, aligned to our LCAP, that affirmed that by 2028, Lighthouse Community Public Schools will be a beacon of academic excellence in East Oakland and beyond, serving as a model of community-centered educational justice for 1700+ Black and Brown TK-12 students and families, including the students at Lodestar.

As part of this process, we partnered with Bellweather Education and conducted a review of our academic data, as well as multi-step stakeholder interviews including leadership, teachers and staff, students, and parents. Additionally, given that LCPS has three charter renewals during this four year period starting with our Lodestar campus, we aligned the questions, synthesis and analysis to the criteria of our OUSD's charter renewal process and the state's tiering process based on AB 1505.

Through this process, we identified and analyzed the following strengths and growth areas in key areas connected to the four goal areas of the PIP.

Analysis of Strengths: High-Level Summary of Findings from our Bellweather Study (from the spring of 2024)

Overall Organization	• Students at both campuses spoke highly of relationships with peers, specifically noting that the K-12 environment results in students "feeling like family" • Teachers and staff recognized the sense of community amongst the team, referring to colleagues as "close-knit"
Academics, specifically ELA and Math	Teacher Talent Management: • Talent strategy has been developed with priority emphasis on people development, performance management, retention, and career pathways • LCPS has demonstrated a commitment to hiring a large, diverse staff at both teacher and leader levels, and an effort to promote from within • LCPS is implementing a grow-your-own program to support local talent to become teachers Academics: • LCPS has adopted curricula that are rigorous and reputable, equity-centered, and include high-quality instructional materials • Research-based phonics instruction is embedded into LCPS's early literacy approach • Interim assessments (e.g. CAASPP interims) are implemented with a high degree of fidelity across the organization
Culture, specifically, Chronic Absenteeism and Suspensions	• Many students referenced relationships with teachers as a highlight that makes LCPS different from other schools • Teachers also named staff knowledge of students and families as a strength of the organization

Analysis of Growth Areas:

Overall Organization	• Organizational Priorities: Organizational goals and priorities were not consistently evident in observations or conversations with staff • Vertical Decision Making Structures: There was no evidence of a clear decision-making structure that defines and balances the need for network-wide consistency with school-specific needs; leaders described decision-making as “top down” and “one-size-fits-all”, in some cases leading to a breakdown of trust • Horizontal Decision Making Structures: Conversations revealed limited structures to support departmental collaboration for making inclusive organizational decisions, particularly regarding academic matters; for example, the academics team may have little to no input in other departmental decisions or in initiatives that directly impact academic programming
Academics, specifically ELA and Math	• Curriculum Implementation: While strong curricular materials have been selected for the network, campuses were inconsistent with the usage, understanding, and internalization of the curriculum; leaders and teachers cited the need for training on curricular materials • Instructional Quality: Varying degrees of instructional quality were observed, specifically in the effectiveness of lesson facilitation and implementation of focal instructional strategies (e.g., time-saving procedures, checks for understanding, and academic monitoring) • Instructional Strategies: Leaders named classroom discourse as a stated instructional priority; however, only 25% of classrooms were observed implementing classroom discourse strategies • Development Structures: While development structures are in place (e.g., PD, PLCs, coaching), school leaders described a lack of cohesiveness in collectively driving towards organizational priorities • Development Effectiveness: Varying degrees of quality and fidelity to implementation of the structures were observed; many referenced the deprioritization of development structures due to crisis management, insufficient time to accommodate the high demand for coaching, and/or a lack of effectiveness in the execution of development structures
Culture, specifically, Chronic Absenteeism and Suspensions	• Crew (Advisory) Implementation: Missed opportunities to align culture and instruction were observed; school leaders identified the inconsistencies of Crew implementation as a contributing factor • Internal Communication: Leaders cited untimely and fragmented communication stemming from ineffective decision-making structures

Impact Goals: Through this process, we set multiple Impact Goals - goals we aspire to achieve by the 2027-28 school year and beyond. We are doing this by

- ensuring rigorous, student-centered learning in all classrooms, for all students,
- strengthening multi-generational opportunities as a model community school, and
- deeply investing in our educators and leaders.

To accompany this qualitative picture of success, LCPS developed a set of quantitative intended impact goals to be achieved by 2028. We list the goals directly and indirectly connected to the goal areas of the PIP and the AB 1505 criteria in the table below:

Strategic Priorities / Impact Goal Category	Impact Goals - to achieve by 2028)
Strategic Priority 1: Ensure rigorous, student-centered learning in all classrooms, for all students	• In grades 3-8 and 11, LCPS students' ELA and math proficiency rates meet or exceed the CA state average, both in the aggregate and across all student groups • 60% of Emerging Bilingual students advance at least 1 EPLI level or maintain a level 4 • 85% of 2nd-grade students are in the 25th percentile or higher on the Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) portion of mClassDIBELs (equivalent to 6% growth annually off of 2024 baseline) • Students with disabilities, on average, exceed the CA SWD average on CAASPP scale score growth
Strategic Priority 2: Strengthen multi-generational opportunities as a model community school	• 95% of LCPS graduates either enroll in a 2- or 4-yr college/university or are employed within a technical career/pathway upon graduation • Reduce chronic absenteeism rates to less than 15% by 2028. • Reduce suspension rates across all student groups to <1.5% for at least 2 consecutive years
Strategic Priority 3: Deeply invest in our educators and leaders - our greatest asset	• On average, retain 85%+ educators and leaders YoY with <10% variance across sites • Maintain >75% of LCPS staff identifying as BIPOC • LCPS career pathways account for 30-40% of teacher, leader, and student support staff • Across all demographic groups, 80% of staff are "engaged" according to LCPS internal survey

Initiatives and Implementation Goals for each Strategic Priority: As part of this process,

Strategic Priorities	Initiatives:	Yearly Implementation Goals:
Strategic Priority 1: Ensure rigorous, student-centered learning in all classrooms, for all students	• Initiative 1A: Our team will create an environment in which all feel safe, respected, and bring their authentic selves through consistent implementation of the Crew framework	• 90% of teachers effectively implement curriculum (Crew + content) with fidelity as measured by a classroom walkthrough tool (1A) • X% of students per grade are

	- Initiative 1B: Our teachers, leaders, and families are united in a vision for academic excellence for all students in all classrooms - Initiative 1C: Our teachers leverage research-based, content-specific instructional visions & aligned practices - Initiative 1D: Our teachers authentically internalize high-quality instructional materials daily and our leaders ensure equity in student experiences across all classrooms through systems of support and accountability	meeting/exceeding standards on CAASSP interims for Math (1B, 1C, 1D); varies by grade 80% of students demonstrate scale score improvement (50 points+) on interims for ELA and Math (1B, 1C, 1D) 90% of teachers are effective relative to target indicators in Domain 1 and 2; 70% in Domain 3, 4, and 5 for Q1, Q2, Q4 and Q4 as measured by instructional excellence rubric (TDEF/LDEF) (1B, 1C, 1D)
Strategic Priority 2: Strengthen multi-generational opportunities as a model community school	- Initiative 2A: Our leaders codify a collaborative leadership approach with a clear network model, meeting structure, and inclusive decision-making process - Initiative 2B: Our leaders establish a timely and inclusive communications strategy that empowers diverse stakeholders and leads to collective action - Initiative 2C: Our students and families experience multiple and varied opportunities to shape key decisions and see evidence that their voice is heard and valued - Initiative 2D: Our community partners provide services and supports, and opportunities aligned to the needs of our students and families, with a particular focus on Chronic absenteeism	85% staff agree that decision-making process is done in a timely and inclusive manner as measured by a biannual staff survey (2A) 90%+ of staff participate in LCPS biannual survey and 75% agree that communication is timely and inclusive (2A, 2B) 50 families participate in decision making groups (ELAC, SSC) per school (2C) 90% of students return to LCPS YoY as measured by annual student retention data (2C) 80% of students/families who have received services from community partners agree the support was effective (2D)

Strategic Priority 3: Deeply invest in our educators and leaders - our greatest asset	• Initiative 3A: Our team is unified in a clear and coherent purpose and theory of action for professional development and coaching structures • Initiative 3B: Our team experiences professional development in a manner that aligns to our organizational priorities and honors the diverse needs of our students and our team • Initiative 3C: Our team participates in a clear and consistent org-wide coaching structure that balances coaching capacity with development needs • Initiative 3D: Our team experiences high quality coaching through research-based coaching protocols and emerging technologies to develop and sustain educators	• 70% of teachers and instructional leaders are rated skillful or higher on the TDEF / LDEF, respectively (3A, 3B, 3C) • 90% of staff participate in 90% of PD structures (PD, PLCs, coaching, etc.) (3B, 3C) • 85% of staff agree each PD structure (PD, PLCs, coaching, etc.) is effective and purposeful in driving academic progress as measured by biannual staff survey (3B) • 80% of coaches and managers are effective as measured by a coaching rubric or the People Management domain of the Leader Effectiveness tool (3D)
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Reporting of Progress on our LCAP/Strategic Plan impact and implementation goals, priorities, and initiatives: Over the previous charter term, and if granted a five-year renewal, LCPS and Lodestar will continue their practice of making all documents related to progress vs. our LCAP/Strategic Plan public on our board governance website located here: <https://app2.boardontrack.com/public/LjMIYw/year>

Teacher and Leader facing tools and resources, yearlong management documents and timelines, and artifacts connected to our LCAP/Strategic Plan are also available by request.

Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns, or follow-up items related to our PIP from the 2020 Charter Renewal for Lodestar.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Harrison
CEO, Lighthouse Community Public Schools
rich.harrison@lighthousecharter.org
303.472.6124

Appendix E. Charter School Response to Notice of Concern re: 2023-24 Audit Findings

Please see following page.



March 12, 2025

Via Email
minh.co@ousd.org

Minh Co, Accounting Manager
Office of Charter Schools
Oakland Unified School District
1011 Union Street #947
Oakland, CA 94607

RE: Notice of Concern Regarding Audit Finding #2024-001 Internal Controls over the Closing Process

Dear Mr. Co,

Lighthouse Community Public Schools ("Lighthouse") is in receipt of a Notice of Concern (the "Notice") from the Oakland Unified School District's Office of Charter Schools ("OCS") dated February 14, 2025, regarding Lighthouse's audit finding of a "Material Weakness in Internal Controls over the Closing Process." We take these findings very seriously and appreciate OCS's oversight as we work toward strengthening our internal controls and ensuring compliance with all applicable financial reporting standards. We write in response to the allegations and demanded remedy contained in the Notice.

Response to Allegations in Notice

The Notice alleges that in reviewing Lighthouse's 2023-24 audit report, OCS noted an audit finding that was identified as "Material Weakness in Internal Controls over the Closing Process," particularly Finding 2024-001 Internal Controls Relating to Closing Process, which states the following:

Condition: *During the course of the audit, material adjustments were identified to correct asset accounts, liability accounts and revenue accounts.*

Effect: *Account receivable were overstated by \$539,988, property, plant and equipment was understated by \$795,538, accounts payable were understated by \$795,538, deferred revenues was overstated by \$990,876 and revenue was understated by \$512,918.*

Cause: *Staffing Shortages.*

The Notice directs Lighthouse to provide a narrative detailing the Charter Management Organization's ("CMO") plan of actions to remedy these concerns and to clear the audit finding for the 2024-25 audit. At the outset, please be advised that there is no evidence of financial dysfunction in the CMO and the 2023-24 audit was returned with an "unmodified" audit opinion, which is the best possible opinion to be issued from an auditing firm. By definition, an unmodified opinion is "a statement from an auditor that the financial statements of a company are accurate and comply with the relevant financial reporting framework. This means that the auditor believes the financial statements provide a true and fair representation of the company's affairs and its profit or loss."

Lighthouse responds to the directive in the Notice as follows:

1. Audit Timeline

For the 2023-24 audit cycle, Lighthouse was required to submit financial documentation on an expedited timeline to accommodate our auditor's availability, leading to the submission of draft reports before our normal year-end reconciliation and closing process could be completed. Our audit window was unexpectedly moved up to early August 2024, one to two months ahead of the typical schedule employed in past years. Historically, Lighthouse has conducted a preliminary audit process in June prior to finalizing its financials over the course of August. As a result, at the time of submission, our finance team had not finished reconciling accounting records including the construction-related transactions which were the root cause of the "effect" identified in the cited audit finding. After submitting the draft materials to the auditor, our team independently continued its usual reconciliation process. As the auditor continued to review our draft and we continued to reconcile our books, both

parties recognized adjustments that needed to be made for the accuracy of our final year-end books.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Lighthouse is aligning its financial closing timelines with the 2024-25 audit schedule to ensure timely finalization of its books and advance preparation of all necessary documentation to prevent similar issues in the future.

In response to the challenges encountered during the 2023-24 audit process, Lighthouse is also evaluating the potential engagement of a new audit firm. Lighthouse is currently in discussions with several firms to assess their ability to meet the CMO's needs and deadlines. At minimum Lighthouse expects to receive a proposal from a comparable auditing firm, with a final selection and decision to be made by the required March 2025 deadline.

2. Staffing Challenges

Between August 2023 and January 2024, Lighthouse experienced a critical staffing gap in the Senior Director of Finance ("SDF") position. With an already lean team, this vacancy required shifting resources to maintain daily finance operations, consequently limiting capacity for audit preparation. Once the position was filled, the SDF had to quickly address outstanding financial tasks, making it challenging to compile audit documentation, especially within the constraints of the accelerated timeline the auditors were now requiring. Additionally, the combination of this staffing gap and the increased complexity of Lighthouse's financials – due to new facility acquisition and bond-funded projects – contributed to the material weaknesses identified in the 2023-24 audit.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Lighthouse has strengthened its finance team by increasing staffing and support for the upcoming year, ensuring the capacity needed for accurate and timely financial reporting. Recognizing the critical role of a well-trained and fully staffed team, we have implemented strategies to mitigate future staffing shortages and maintain leadership continuity during transitions.

Additionally, Lighthouse is reorganizing its financial processes to improve tracking and accounting for bond-related revenue and expenditures. The CMO has engaged legal counsel to ensure full compliance with accounting standards for bond funds and construction costs. As part of this effort, Lighthouse's Director of Operations (currently enrolled in the Charter School Development Center Certified Business Officer program), along with other key staff, will receive targeted training to strengthen financial oversight. Having now navigated the process of securing CSFA conduit bond funds for capital expenditures and construction, Lighthouse has further refined its accounting practices and workflows. These enhancements ensure that the Charter School is meeting generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) while maintaining rigorous financial controls within the context of bond funding.

3. Managing Program-Specific Funds

Lighthouse acknowledges that some of the identified "effects" in closing the books for the 2023-24 fiscal year were related to the reconciliation of grant funds and program-specific funding sources. These discrepancies stemmed from the challenges of reconciling those funds alongside the CMO's regular operational accounts, highlighting the need for enhanced financial tracking and reporting processes.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Lighthouse has strengthened its internal procedures for managing and tracking program funds, implementing a more structured system for grant planning, reporting, and expense allocation. This includes ensuring that all expenditures are accurately allocated to the appropriate funding sources. Lighthouse will also continue working with its finance lead on grants to ensure that all program funds are managed with the highest standards of accuracy and accountability. The CMO team is actively working to improve tracking and reporting procedures for these specialized funding sources.

* * *

Lighthouse is committed to addressing the audit findings and implementing the corrective actions outlined above, to ensure a clean 2024-25 audit. Lighthouse values transparency and understands the importance of maintaining strong internal controls to safeguard its financial health and the trust of its stakeholders.

The Charter School looks forward to working closely with OCS to ensure our continued compliance with all regulations and standards. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at: robbie.torney@lighthousecharter.org or (505) 310-9160.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "RTorney". The letters are cursive and fluid, with the "R" and "T" being particularly prominent.

Robbie Torney, Board Chair

CC: Rich Harrison, Chief Executive Officer, Lighthouse
Linda Wu, Senior Director of Finance, Lighthouse
Kelly Krag-Arnold, Director, Office of Charter Schools
Madison Thomas, Deputy Director of Office of Charter Schools
Marwa Doost, Compliance Specialist of the Office of Charter Schools



July 10, 2025

Via Email
timothy.ryan@ousd.org

Timothy Ryan, Accounting Manager
Office of Charter Schools
Oakland Unified School District
1011 Union Street #947
Oakland, CA 94607

**RE: OUSD OCS Follow-Up Response to LCPS Notice of Concern Regarding Audit Finding
#2024-001 Internal Controls over the Closing Process**

Dear Mr. Ryan,

Lighthouse Community Public Schools ("Lighthouse" or "LCPS") is in receipt of a Request for Follow-Up (dated May 20, 2025 and linked [here](#)) to the written response Lighthouse sent on March 12, 2025 (linked [here](#)) to the Notice of Concern (the "Notice") from the Oakland Unified School District's Office of Charter Schools ("OCS") dated February 14, 2025, regarding Lighthouse's audit finding of a "Material Weakness in Internal Controls over the Closing Process."

To reiterate, Lighthouse takes these findings very seriously and appreciates OCS's oversight as we work toward strengthening our internal controls and ensuring compliance with all applicable financial reporting standards. We write in response to the follow-up questions contained in your request.

We are also documenting [the email correspondence](#) about this request between you, Ms. Krag-Arnold, and our CEO (from May 29 to June 13), as these emails document Lighthouse's concerns about this request from OCS. These concerns include, but are not limited to:

- **The number of questions (14 in total) and the duplicative nature of questions** related to an unmodified audit opinion Lighthouse received for the 2023-24 fiscal year.

LCPS Response to OCS re: Audit Finding 07102025

- **The potential use of such inquiries to discredit unmodified audit opinions.** Lighthouse noted that the OCS staff report for a Material Revision for another CMO referenced a similar written statement, namely: "material weaknesses in Aspire's financial reporting close processes were identified in the 2021-22 and 2023-24 audit reports. Findings of this nature casts doubt over the reliability of unaudited financial information produced by the Charter School." If such a statement were made about Lighthouse, we believe that this would misrepresent our finance and accounting processes when we have received an unmodified audit opinion.
- **The lack of precedent in OUSD or anywhere else in the state in cases related to Unmodified Audit opinions of Charter Schools.** OCS has acknowledged in writing that "this type of follow up is new" (June 12, 2025 email). Similarly, our auditors from CliftonLarsonAllen, who work with many charter schools and their audits, shared that they have not seen a follow-up response like this from any of their statewide charter authorizers in response to unmodified audit opinions.
- **The lack of feedback Lighthouse received from the original response** from March 12 as to which parts met/did not meet OCS criteria for NOC responses, given the input, time, and effort from Lighthouse's board, finance team, and legal counsel (who has worked with many OUSD authorized charters and prepared such responses to Notices of Concern).

As we prepare for another school year where we each live out our mission to serve Oakland's youth, Lighthouse respectfully asks that OCS consider its approach to notices related to oversight.

* * *

LCPS Response to OCS re: Audit Finding - July 10, 2025

On May 20th, 2025, Lighthouse received the following inquiries (14 questions), reproduced in italics below, to concerns about Lighthouse's Audit Opinion and Audit Evidence. Per Ms. Krag-Arnold's direction to "simply answer each question completely with relevant information" about our controls and processes, Lighthouse has responded to each of the 14 questions.

These responses have been reviewed by Lighthouse's Board, CEO, and staff; Lighthouse's independent financial auditor (CliftonLarsonAllen); and Lighthouse's legal counsel.

LCPS Board guidance to staff:

1. Has the LCPS Board provided guidance to LCPS staff regarding what kind of information or evidence they are expected to give to auditors? If so, please share this guidance.

LCPS Response to OCS re: Audit Finding 07102025

Yes. The LCPS Board, through its Audit Committee, has provided guidance to staff outlining expectations for transparency, completeness, and timeliness in response to all auditor communications. Staff are expected to deliver finalized, reconciled documentation. A checklist of required audit deliverables aligned with the audit timeline has been created to ensure this is happening and training sessions for finance staff on audit readiness and evidence quality is in process (or was completed).

LCPS Board actions related to Audit process:

2. What actions has the Board taken to establish and maintain communication channels between LCPS' audit committee and the audit partner?

The Audit Committee Chair meets with the audit partner throughout the audit cycle to discuss progress, address questions, and review key findings. In addition, the full Board receives regular updates on the status of the audit during committee or Board meetings.

LCPS Audit Policies and Processes:

3. What policies and processes has LCPS implemented to ensure financial reporting management completes close and finalizes the financial statement before conveying evidence to the audit team?

LCPS has developed the 2024–25 audit calendar and a timeline protocol that requires internal sign-offs from both the Senior Director of Finance (SDF) and the Chief Executive Officer before any documentation is shared with auditors. This process ensures alignment and supports the accurate and timely completion of the audit.

LCPS Policies, Processes, and Control Activities for Account Reconciliations:

4. What policies, processes, and control activities has LCPS implemented to ensure account reconciliations are prepared in a timely manner and any adjusting entries identified through their performance are recorded?

LCPS has implemented monthly reconciliation schedules for all key balance sheet accounts and requires supervisory review and documentation of adjusting journal entries within five business days of reconciliation completion. These practices are monitored by the SDF.

LCPS Contingency Plans and Redundancies for Anticipated Staff Turnover

5. What contingency plans and redundancies has LCPS developed in anticipation of future staff turnover?

LCPS Response to OCS re: Audit Finding 07102025

We have developed cross-training plans and documentation protocols for key roles. Additionally, we are establishing contracts with third-party consultants who can provide support during leadership transitions or gaps.

LCPS Policies, Processes, and Control Activities for Interim and Month-End Close:

6. What policies, processes, and control activities has LCPS implemented to ensure interim and month-end close processes are completed in a timely manner so that there is no lapse in the accounting for daily and routine activities?

We have adopted a standardized monthly close checklist with internal deadlines and responsibilities. Our Controller and SDF are responsible for the final review. This process ensures consistent review, reconciliations, and documentation of all transactions within 15 business days of the month-end.

LCPS Policies, Processes, and Control Activities to Conform with U.S. GAAP:

7. What policies, processes, and control activities has LCPS implemented to ensure the recommendations provided by your legal counsel are incorporated into the reporting of such activities in the financial statements and conform with U.S. GAAP?

LCPS's finance team collaborates with external legal counsel and auditors to ensure that our accounting practices comply with U.S. GAAP. We have implemented internal checklists to help ensure the accuracy of our financial statement reporting.

LCPS Policies, Processes, and Control Activities for the Accounting of Funding Sources:

8. What policies, processes, and control activities has LCPS designed and implemented to ensure that funding sources are accounted for appropriately?

LCPS's finance team has implemented the following policies, processes, and control activities:

- Assigned specific resource codes to each grant and program
- Conducts monthly reviews of expenditures versus budgets by fund
- Maintains grant-specific allocation logs, reviewed by Lighthouse's Controller
- Provides enhanced staff training on allowable costs and required documentation for all restricted funding streams

LCPS Control Activities for Qualified Personnel review :

LCPS Response to OCS re: Audit Finding 07102025

9. What control activities have you designed and implemented or modified to ensure that: Qualified personnel review the financial statements for conformity with U.S. GAAP and verify that the face of the financials and footnotes reconcile with the general ledger and are mathematically accurate?

All draft financial statements and footnotes undergo a formal review by the Senior Director of Finance and the Chief Executive Officer, followed by a review by the Audit Committee prior to finalization. We have also implemented reconciliations between the footnotes and the general ledger to ensure internal consistency.

LCPS Control Activities for Unapplied Cash / Accounts Receivable:

10. What control activities have you designed and implemented or modified to ensure Unapplied cash appropriate offsets accounts receivable?

We now conduct weekly reviews of unapplied cash and Accounts Receivable subledger transactions to ensure proper offsets. Any discrepancies are resolved before month-end. Timely investigation and accurate application are essential to maintaining clean and accurate financials.

LCPS Control Activities for capitalization pursuant to ASC 360—Property, Plant, and Equipment:

11. What control activities have you designed and implemented or modified to ensure Expenses that qualify for capitalization pursuant to ASC 360—Property, Plant, and Equipment are identified and capitalized?

The finance team has implemented an internal Capital Expenditure Policy aligned with ASC 360 guidelines. All construction-related expenses are tracked in a centralized worksheet and reviewed by the Senior Director of Finance to determine their eligibility for capitalization. Additionally, disbursements over our capitalization threshold are reviewed to determine if capitalization is appropriate.

LCPS Control Activities for Unrecorded liabilities

12. What control activities have you designed and implemented or modified to ensure Unrecorded liabilities are identified and accrued?

LCPS's Finance team conducts a comprehensive review of outstanding invoices, vendor communications, and purchase orders at each quarter-end. At year-end, a formal accrued liabilities schedule is prepared to ensure accuracy and completeness. We will also call

vendors with significant open purchase orders at year-end to ensure they have billed us through June 30.

LCPS Control Activities for Deferred Revenue

13. What control activities have you designed and implemented or modified to ensure Earned revenue that was deferred, is identified and recognized?

We conduct monthly reviews of deferred revenue balances to ensure earned revenue is recognized appropriately, based on the timing of service delivery and related expenditures. Our Revenue Recognition Policy is aligned with ASC 958-605.

LCPS Control Activities for Earned Revenue

14. What control activities have you designed and implemented or modified to ensure all earned revenue is properly recognized in the correct accounting period?

We ensure all earned revenue is properly recognized in the correct accounting period by maintaining detailed records of the specific conditions tied to each grant and the timing and nature of qualifying expenses or other conditions, as applicable. This includes coordinated timelines between the development, program, and finance teams to align supporting records.

* * *

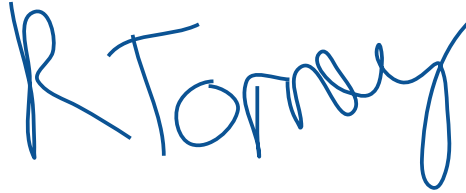
As we shared in our original response on March 12, 2025, Lighthouse is committed to addressing the audit findings and implementing the corrective actions outlined above, to ensure a clean 2024-25 audit. Lighthouse values transparency and understands the importance of maintaining strong internal controls to safeguard its financial health and the trust of its stakeholders.

Lighthouse looks forward to working closely with OCS to ensure our continued compliance with all regulations and standards. We also would like to understand OCS's new standard related to unqualified audit opinions, how OCS plans to share this with OUSD authorized charter schools and organizations, and how this will impact staff reports for future Material Revisions and Charter Renewals.

LCPS Response to OCS re: Audit Finding 07102025

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at:
robbie.torney@lighthousecharter.org or (505) 310-9160.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R Torney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "R" being a simple vertical line and the last name "Torney" written in a more elaborate, connected script.

Robbie Torney, Board Chair

CC: Rich Harrison, Chief Executive Officer, Lighthouse
Hung Mai, Senior Director of Finance, Lighthouse
Jill Kwan-Jacobs, Finance Committee Chair, Lighthouse Board of Directors

Kelly Krag-Arnold, Director, Office of Charter Schools
Madison Thomas, Deputy Director, Office of Charter Schools
Marwa Doost, Compliance Specialist of the Office of Charter Schools