



AGENDA

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

2601 Bransford Avenue, Nashville, TN 37204

Regular Meeting – April 23, 2024 – 5:00 p.m.

Rachael Anne Elrod, Chair

I. CONVENE and ACTION

- A. Call to Order
- B. Establish Quorum
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Adoption of Agenda
- E. Election of TSBA Legislative Liaison

II. AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

- A. Dr. Dorothy Gunn – Recognition of Distinguished Service
- B. Class of 2024 Valedictorians and Salutatorians
- C. Percy Priest/Paragon Mills/Lakeview Partnership

III. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Brick Church School Transition Update
- B. Vanderbilt Collaboration

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Board will hear from those persons who have requested to appear at this Board meeting. In the interest of time, speakers are requested to limit remarks to two minutes or less. Comments will be timed.

V. GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- A. Actions
 - 1. Consent
 - a. Minutes – 04.09.2024 – Regular Meeting
 - b. Awarding of Purchases and Contracts
 - 1. A-Z Office Resource, Inc.
 - 2. Allegis Group Holdings, Inc. dba TEKsystems, Inc.
 - 3. Apple, Inc.
 - 4. Carlos Lewis and Sons Housemovers
 - 5. Imagine Learning, LLC
 - 6. Millrose Ventures, Inc. dba Southern Kitchen Services, Inc.
 - 7. Paxton Patterson, LLC
 - 8. Sedia Systems
 - 9. SRI International (SRI)
 - 10. W.P. Camp & Sons

- c. A Resolution Recognizing Earth Day 2024
- d. Nutrition Services Fund – *Recommendation of Budget and Finance Committee*
- e. Strategic Investments: Federal Programs and Grants Fund – *Recommendation of Budget and Finance Committee*

2. Certification Charges of Dismissal

3. Charter School Applications

VI. BOARD REPORTS

VII. WRITTEN INFORMATION TO THE BOARD
A. Sales Tax Collections as of April 20, 2024

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

If any accommodations are needed for individuals with disabilities who wish to be present at this meeting, please request the accommodation through hubNashville at <https://nashville.gov/hub-ADA-boards> or by calling (615) 862-5000. Requests should be made as soon as possible, but 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting is recommended.

METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD MEETING –

April 9, 2024

Members Present: Rachael Anne Elrod, Chair, Freda Player, Vice-chair, Erin O’Hara Block, Cheryl Mayes, Berthena Nabaa-McKinney, TK Fayne, Abigail Tylor, Emily Masters and Sharon Gentry

Student Members Absent: Alayna Mitchell and Christine Tran

Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBER SWEARING IN

A. TK Fayne was sworn as the new District 5 Board Member.

CONVENE AND ACTION

- A. Call to Order – Rachael Anne Elrod called the meeting to order.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance - Led by Alayna Michell, Senior Student Board Member.
- C. Adoption of Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda with the removal of Item IV-1-e-Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget – Recommendation from Budget and Finance Committee

By Cheryl Mayes, seconded Sharon Gentry

Vote: 9-0 – unanimous

A. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- A. Susie Wilcox – Addressed the Board concerning the proposed changes to the Public Participation Policy.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- a. Minutes – 03.26.2024 – Regular Meeting
- b. Awarding of Purchases and Contracts
 - 1. 808Education, LLC
 - 2. ~~ABM Industry Groups, LLC (2 contracts)~~
 - 3. Advanced Mechanical Contractors, Inc.
 - 4. Barge Design Solutions, Inc.
 - 5. Bark Technologies, Inc.
 - 6. ETA Hand2Mind
 - 7. ~~HES Facilities, LLC~~
 - 8. Lamar Dunn & Associates, Inc. dba LDA Engineering
 - 9. Magnet Schools of America, Inc.
 - 10. Ragan-Smith-Associates, LLC
 - 11. Varsity Brands Holdings Company, Inc. dba BSN Sports, LLC
- c. Advanced Academics Textbooks
- d. 1.404 Public Participation Policy
- e. ~~Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget – Recommendation from Budget and Finance Committee~~

Abigail Tylor pulled Item 1-b-2-ABM Industry Groups, LLC (2 contracts) and Item 1-b-7-HES Facilities, LLC.

The Board adopted the agenda as amended.

By Cheryl Mayes, seconded Freda Player

Vote: 9-0 Unanimous

Motion to approve Item 1-b-2-ABM Industry Groups, LLC (2 contracts) and Item 1-b-7-HES Facilities, LLC.

By Freda Player, seconded Cheryl Mayes

Vote: 9-0 Unanimous

Motion to approve Fiscal Year 2024-25 Budget –

Recommendation from Budget and Finance Committee

By Freda Player, seconded Rachael Anne Elrod

Vote: 9-0 Unanimous

BOARD REPORTS

- A. Emily Masters - Gave a brief update on the Governance Committee Meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Cheryl Mayes announced that the deadline for Student Board Member applications is April 30th. Application details are available at mnps.org.

Ms. Elrod adjourned the meeting at 5:38 p.m.



Chris M. Henson
Board Secretary

Rachael Anne Elrod
Board Chair

Date

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(1) VENDOR: A-Z Office Resource, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Amendment #2 increases the contract value. The contract is for the purchase of office supplies and services on an as-needed basis.

SOURCING METHOD Amendment of Previously Board Approved Contract

TERM: April 24, 2024 through May 30, 2025

FOR WHOM: All MNPS Schools and Departments

COMPENSATION: This amendment increases the contract value by \$3,500,000.

Total compensation for this contract is not to exceed \$11,000,000.

Total compensation is based on an estimated yearly amount of \$3,500,000.

OVERSIGHT: Procurement

EVALUATION: Based on the quality of the products and timeliness of delivery.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 7537339

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Various Operating and Federal Funds

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(2) VENDOR: Allegis Group Holdings, Inc. dba TEKsystems, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Amendment #3 increases the contract value. The contract is for the provision of temporary staffing for Technology Services. This may include temporarily filling a variety of different positions including contract-to-hire, temporary contractor services, and recruitment for hard-to-fill Information Technology positions. The available funds to cover the contracting costs will come from vacant positions that would not be filled until the contractor is approved to move into the full-time position.

SOURCING METHOD: Amendment of a Previously Board Approved Contract

TERM: April 24, 2024 through June 10, 2026

FOR WHOM: Technology Services

COMPENSATION: This amendment increases the contract value by \$3,000,000.

Total compensation for this contract is not to exceed \$6,400,000.

Total compensation is based on an estimated yearly amount of \$1,500,000.

OVERSIGHT: Technology Services

EVALUATION: Based on the quality and timeliness of the services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 7515285

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Various Operating and Federal Funds

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(3) VENDOR: Apple, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Amendment #4 extends the contract term and increases the contract value. The contract is for the purchase of Apple hardware and software.

SOURCING METHOD: Amendment of a Previously Board Approved Contract

TERM: April 24, 2024 through December 31, 2024

FOR WHOM: All MNPS Students and Staff

COMPENSATION: This amendment increases the contract value by \$2,800,000

Total compensation for this contract is not to exceed \$8,800,000.

Total compensation is based on an estimated yearly amount of \$2,800,000.

OVERSIGHT: Technology Services

EVALUATION: Based on the quality of the products and timeliness of delivery.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 7515152

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Various Operating and Federal Funds

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(4) VENDOR: Carlos Lewis and Sons Housemovers

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Provision of portable moving services.

SOURCING METHOD: RFP 370416

TERM: April 24, 2024 through April 23, 2029

FOR WHOM: Facilities

COMPENSATION: Contractor will be compensated in accordance with Exhibit A.

Total compensation for this contract is not to exceed \$5,000,000.

Total compensation is based on an estimated yearly amount of \$1,000,000.

OVERSIGHT: Facilities

EVALUATION: Based on the quality and timeliness of the portable moving services.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 7585814

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget and Capital Funds

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(5) VENDOR: Imagine Learning, LLC

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Amendment #2 extends the contract term, increases the contract value, revises the Criminal Background Checks clause, and adds the Boycott of Israel Act clause. The contract is for the provision of academic credit recovery services.

SOURCING METHOD: Amendment of a Previously Board Approved Contract

TERM: April 24, 2024 through June 30, 2025

FOR WHOM: MNPS High School Students Needing Credit Recovery and some Middle School Students Enrolled in Credit Bearing 9-12 Courses

COMPENSATION: This amendment increases the contract value by \$9,000.

Total compensation for this contract is not to exceed \$1,009,000.

Total compensation is based on an estimated yearly amount of \$200,000.

OVERSIGHT: Learning Technology

EVALUATION: Based on the system performance, ease of use, customer service, support, and other deliverables as outlined in the contract.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 7532357

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(6) VENDOR: Millrose Ventures, Inc. dba Southern Kitchen Services, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Amendment #1 extends the contract term, increases the contract value, revises Exhibit A pricing, and updates the price index utilized for future price escalations. The contract is for kitchen hoods and exhaust cleaning in MNPS schools on an as-needed basis.

SOURCING METHOD: Amendment of a Previously Board Approved Contract

TERM: April 24, 2024 through April 13, 2026

FOR WHOM: All MNPS Schools

COMPENSATION: This amendment increases the contract value by \$200,000.

Total compensation for this contract is not to exceed \$470,000.

Total compensation is based on an estimated yearly amount of \$100,000.

OVERSIGHT: Nutrition Services

EVALUATION: Based on the quality and timeliness of the services provided in accordance with the contractor's scope of work.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 7503730

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Nutrition Services Fund

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(7) VENDOR: Paxton Patterson, LLC

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Provision of college readiness interactive modules at Goodlettsville Middle School.

SOURCING METHOD: RFP 367394

TERM: April 24, 2024 through April 23, 2029

FOR WHOM: Goodlettsville Middle School

COMPENSATION: Contractor will be compensated in accordance with Exhibit A.

Total compensation for this contract is not to exceed \$125,000.

Total compensation is based on an estimated yearly amount of \$90,000 in year one and then \$8,750 for each of the following years.

OVERSIGHT: Teaching & Learning

EVALUATION: Based on the quality of the provided modules, ongoing service and support, and training.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 7584904

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Federal Funds – Innovative School Models (ISM) Grant

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(8) VENDOR: Sedia Systems

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): For the replacement of auditorium seating at Stratford STEM Magnet High School.

SOURCING METHOD: OMNIA Partners Cooperative Contract #07-116

TERM: Immediate Purchase

FOR WHOM: Stratford STEM Magnet High School

COMPENSATION: Contractor will be compensated in accordance with Quote #Q-08814-2.

Total compensation for this purchase is not to exceed \$159,238.08.

OVERSIGHT: Facilities

EVALUATION: Based on the quality of the products and timeliness of delivery.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: OMNIA Partners Cooperative Contract #07-116

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Capital Funds

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(9) VENDOR: SRI International (SRI)

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): MNPS will serve as a subcontractor to SRI for the Stop School Violence grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Office of Justice Programs, at the U.S. Department of Justice. The purpose of the grant is for SRI, MNPS, and the West Virginia Center for Children's Justice (WVCC) to collaborate to implement Handle With Care (HWC) 2.1 - a newly-enhanced version of the original Handle With Care Program, which is both (1) a model for how community organizations and schools can collaborate to reduce school violence; and (2) for how all school staff can improve school climate by improving supports for students potentially experiencing trauma.

SOURCING METHOD: Grant (MNPS as subcontractor)

TERM: April 24, 2024 through September 30, 2026

FOR WHOM: All MNPS Schools

COMPENSATION: MNPS will be compensated in accordance with Exhibit A to cover funding for one (1) new Trauma-Informed Specialist position to execute the grant activities and for the provision of the Handle With Care notification system for all MNPS schools, including charter schools.

Total revenue for this contract is not to exceed \$233,401.

Total revenue is based on an estimated yearly amount of \$93,823.

OVERSIGHT: Counseling Services

EVALUATION: In addition to continuing internal evaluation procedures for Handle With Care, MNPS will contribute to semi-annual reporting to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (submitted by SRI). Information required from MNPS for this report include, but are not limited to: 1) quarterly meeting attendance data; 2) copies of original and updated agreements; 3) documentation of all technical assistance requests and coaching meeting with local agencies, 4) the number of HWC notices; and 5) key outcome summary data such as number of students receiving HWC notices who are referred to counseling and other external mental health providers, student attendance, and behavior incidents. SRI may request additional data, as needed, to provide evidence of meeting BJA's performance measures.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: TBD

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Revenue

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

b. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(10) VENDOR: W.P. Camp & Sons

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Provision of portable moving services.

SOURCING METHOD: RFP 370416

TERM: April 24, 2024 through April 23, 2029

FOR WHOM: Facilities

COMPENSATION: Contractor will be compensated in accordance with Exhibit A.

Total compensation for this contract is not to exceed \$5,000,000.

Total compensation is based on an estimated yearly amount of \$1,000,000.

OVERSIGHT: Facilities

EVALUATION: Based on the quality and timeliness of the portable moving services.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 7585813

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget and Capital Funds

A RESOLUTION, RECOGNIZING EARTH DAY 2024, CELEBRATING PROGRESS
BEING MADE FOR CLIMATE SUSTAINABILITY IN METRO NASHVILLE PUBLIC
SCHOOLS, AND IDENTIFYING ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES

WHEREAS, April 22, 2024 celebrates Earth Day across the globe; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day was first celebrated on April 22, 1970; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day is an annual event promoting environmental citizenship year-round; and

WHEREAS, Earth Day encourages environmental action around the world, reminding people to find ways to protect the environment and live sustainably, including managing their own environmental impact; and

WHEREAS, schools have a tremendous opportunity to support students to become leaders in making the Earth and their own community a healthier and more ecologically sustainable place;

WHEREAS, Sunrise Hillsboro is a leader in the movement for a more sustainable Nashville and an organization of student leaders who are actively engaging in their school, district, and community to promote climate awareness; and

WHEREAS, over the past three years, Metro Nashville Public Schools has taken an aggressive approach to energy, conservation, and sustainability, with an initial focus related to energy waste and conservation including the formation of MNPS Energy - a collaboration of district staff and community energy experts; and

WHEREAS, to date, the combined efforts of MNPS Energy have resulted in an annual reduction of 20% in energy consumption which equates to 260,000 metric tons of annual carbon emission reduction into the environment; and

WHEREAS, MNPS Energy has focused all new construction and major renovations designed and built to a minimum LEED Silver or Gold Standard; ensured all HVAC and other capital improvements are designed and installed to meet current ASHREA and Energy Standards; installed Solar Energy Production at Lawson High School, Whites Creek High School, McMurray Middle School, Geothermal HVAC Systems installations at Cane Ridge High School, Goodlettsville Elementary School, Lawson High School, and a Green Roof at Lawson High School; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Environmental Council (TEC) has worked with school administrators to install 20 pollinator gardens using solely native plants at 15 MNPS schools since Fall 2020, (including Stratford High School, Martin Luther King Jr. Magnet, Hillsboro High School and more), and there is growing interest from more and more MNPS schools to install pollinator gardens on their campuses; and

WHEREAS, several schools including Westmeade Elementary, Buena Vista Elementary, Whitsitt Elementary, Crieve Hall Elementary, Lockeland Design Center have installed gardens and/or outdoor classrooms that support STEM learning and expose students to sustainability concepts at an earlier age; and

WHEREAS, MNPS has begun including sustainability-focused classes and pathways across the district including: I.B. Environmental Systems and Societies, AP Environmental Science, Environmental Science, with growing interest among students both in high school and earlier, and

WHEREAS, according to the Environmental Defense Fund, the demand for sustainability-minded professionals is growing exponentially in almost all industries and expanding sustainability concepts taught in both science and non-science MNPS core classes; as well as augmenting the number of green career options represented in district-wide and school-specific career fairs, would prepare students for a variety of careers focused on climate, justice, and equity

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION recognize April 22 as Earth Day each school year; and

FURTHERMORE, pledge to support student leaders in an equitable transition to a sustainable Metro Nashville Public School District; support and encourage the continued work of MNPS Energy to reduce the carbon footprint of the district through green building and transportation efforts; support and encourage the continuation of existing pollinator gardens and composting initiatives; encourage connections between student leaders, parents, faculty, school PTSOs, and knowledgeable local environmental organizations, such as the TN Environmental Council and the Compost Company, to best take care of these valued pollinator gardens and composting initiatives; encourage efforts at our schools and other facilities to reduce food waste in landfills and increase diversion of paper and cardboard recyclables; support the incorporation of sustainability concepts for student learning by making meaningful connections to existing curriculum, and pushing for more sustainability curriculum to be included in state standards, when possible; and urge our staff and schools to continue to recognize the importance of environmental stewardship and education year-round.

ADOPTED BY THE ELECTED METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE BOARD OF
EDUCATION, on the **23rd of April, 2024**, with this Resolution to take immediate
effect, the public welfare requiring it.



METRO
NASHVILLE
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Fiscal Year 2024 - 2025
Nutrition Services Fund

April 23, 2024

**Metro Nashville Public Schools
Nutrition Services Fund
2024-2025 Fiscal Year**

	FY2024-2025
Estimated Fund Balance July 1, 2024	\$ 1,574,200
Revenue	
USDA Meal Reimbursements (Breakfast and Lunch)	\$ 39,856,000
USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Grant	668,100
After School Supper	1,335,900
DHS - Summer Feeding (Promising Scholars)	950,000
Bridge Funding - Summer Feeding (Promising Scholars)	100,000
Bridge Funding - Enriching Scholars (Saturday Meals)	40,000
A la Carte Sales	2,300,000
State Matching	296,000
Interest & Miscellaneous	300,000
Estimated Commodities	3,454,300
General Fund Transfer (No Cost Meals Subsidy & Pay Scale Upgrade)	12,516,600
Nutrition Services Cost of Steps 1.5%	408,500
Nutrition Services Cost of 1% COLA	322,600
Total Budgeted Revenue	\$ 62,548,000
Expenses	
Salaries	\$ 21,873,000
Salaries - Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Grant	104,800
Salaries - After School Supper	600,200
Salaries - Summer Feeding (Promising Scholars)	640,000
Social Security Employer Match	1,320,900
Medicare Employer Match	308,900
Employee Insurance Match	5,220,300
Retirement / Pension Match	2,510,300
Total Labor Expenses	\$ 32,578,400
Food Purchases	\$ 21,140,700
Food Purchases - Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Grant	563,300
Food Purchases - After School Supper	624,900
Food Purchases - Summer Feeding (Promising Scholars)	375,000
Estimated Commodities	2,763,400
Food Supplies (Disposable & Chemical)	1,639,200
Food Supplies (Disposable & Chemical) - Summer Feeding	35,000
Food Supplies (Disposable & Chemical) - After School Supper	110,800
Equipment Repair & Maintenance	1,028,500
Equipment Purchases (Appliances & Smallwares)	344,500
Uniforms	123,400
Fuel & Mileage	88,000
Advertising and Promotion	26,300
Telephone Expenses	12,000
Commodity Storage & Shipment Costs	400,000
Other Expenses	694,600
Total Non-Labor Expenses	\$ 29,969,600
Total Budgeted Expenses	\$ 62,548,000
Net Surplus / Loss	0
Estimated Cash Reserves June 30, 2025	\$ 1,574,200



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SCHOOLS

Fiscal Year 2024 - 2025
Strategic Investments: Federal
Programs and Grants Fund

April 23, 2024

MNPS Strategic Investments (Federal Programs and Grants)	FY25	
	July 2024-June 2025	
<u>Grant Name</u>	Projected	
Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER 3)	\$15,000,000	
Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation & Student Acceleration Act	9,435,984	
Title I: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged	31,790,000	*
Title IIA: Teacher & Principal Training & Recruiting	4,250,000	*
Title III: English Language Acquisition/Enhancement/Academic	2,100,000	*
Title IV: Student Support & Academic Enrichment Act	2,300,000	*
Title IV, B: Twenty-First Century Community Learning Centers	500,000	*
Title IX: Education of the Homeless/McKinney-Vento	498,580	*
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA Part B & Preschool)	22,250,000	*
Carl Perkins Career & Technical Education	1,500,000	
Turnaround Action Grant (TAG 3.0 and 4.0)	5,850,000	
State School Improvement Grant	1,000,000	
Additional Targeted Support & Improvement	960,000	
Lottery for Education After School Programs (LEAPS)	1,030,350	
Voluntary PreK State Grant	3,560,000	
Magnet School Assistance Program (Cohort 3, 2023- 2024)	3,000,000	
Magnet School Assistance Program (Cohort 2, 2021- 2026)	6,000,000	
GEAR Up Federal Competitive (ends Oct. 2025)	1,923,530	
R.O.T.C. Teaching Programs	325,000	
Centers for Disease Control	1,000,000	
Innovative Schools Model (ISM)	11,900,000	
Connected Literacy	800,000	
Contingency (in anticipation of new and additional grant awards)	5,000,000	
GRAND TOTAL ALL PROJECTED GRANTS	\$131,973,444	
(*) TDOE allocations not released as of 4/17/24. Estimates based on FY24 allocations.		



**METRO
NASHVILLE
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

Dr. Adrienne Battle
Director of Schools
Adrienne.Battle@mnps.org
615-259-8421 office
615-214-8850 fax

April 5, 2024

Members of the Board
Metropolitan Board of Education
2601 Bransford Avenue
Nashville, TN 37204

Re: Charges Supporting the Dismissal of Andronicus Hawkins

Dear Board Members:

I am writing to recommend the dismissal of Andronicus Hawkins from employment as a tenured teacher with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-5-511.

I have charged him with neglect of duty, insubordination and conduct unbecoming to a member of the teaching profession (unprofessional conduct). MNPS's investigation substantiated that Mr. Hawkins continually used unsafe containment techniques with special needs students, jeopardizing the safety of students at Murrell School.

Mr. Hawkins was recently trained on the approved Satori Alternatives for Managing Aggression (SAMA) techniques on July 5, 2023, October 16, 2023 and January 4, 2024. SAMA training also occurs during the professional development training at the beginning of each school year at Murrell. Mr. Hawkins has been part of the teaching staff at Murrell School for more than 13 years, yet, he fails to follow direction and performs improper containments with students by laying himself on their backs, while they are laying on their stomachs, jeopardizing the students' safety. Mr. Hawkins' actions constitute neglect of duty, insubordination and unprofessional conduct (conduct unbecoming to a member of the teaching profession).

Evidence supporting these charges was set forth in my April 5, 2024 letter to Mr. Hawkins, a copy of which is attached. I am asking you to certify these charges by voting that, if proven true, these charges warrant Mr. Hawkins's dismissal. Should you certify these charges, I will inform Mr. Hawkins of your action and formally advise him of his right to request a hearing before an impartial hearing officer.

2601 Bransford Avenue, Nashville, TN 37204

At the present, I am asking you to certify the charges. I am not asking you to weigh evidence either for or against dismissal. I am merely asking you to vote that the charges, if proven true, warrant dismissal. If Mr. Hawkins requests a hearing, it will occur at some point in the future.

Accordingly, I recommend that Andronicus Hawkins be dismissed from employment with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

Sincerely, .



Dr. Adrienne Battle
Director of Schools

Attachment - Notice of Charges for Dismissal

cc: Kristopher Winfrey, Executive Director of Schools
Lisa Spencer, Chief Human Resources Officer
Susan Siegel, Executive Principal, Murrell School
Personnel file (Certificated)

Charter School New Start Charter Applications

Presented by the MNPS Charter Schools
Office

April 23, 2024



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Presentation Overview

New Start Charter Application	Proposed Grade Span	Proposed Enrollment
Encompass Community School	K-8	468
Nashville School of Excellence	6-12	750
*LEAD Cameron ES	K-5	360
*LEAD Southeast ES	K-5	360
Nurses Middle College	9-12	500

**Existing charter operator under the LEA of Metro Nashville Public Schools*

Board Action Options

Approve or deny new start charter applications.

Note: T.C.A. 49-13-108(3)B states upon receipt of the grounds for denial, the sponsor has thirty days from receipt to submit an amended application to correct the deficiencies.

The LEA will have 60 days from receipt of an amended application to deny or to approve the amended application.

MNPS Office of Charter Schools

Provides oversight of 27 charter schools authorized by the LEA

Leads the authorization and new start application process

Coordinates internal and external experts to review each new start application and presents evidence findings to the MNPS Board of Education

New Start Application Review Process Objectives



Evaluate the new start application using the published evaluation criteria from TDOE



Incorporate capacity interview responses within the rating determination

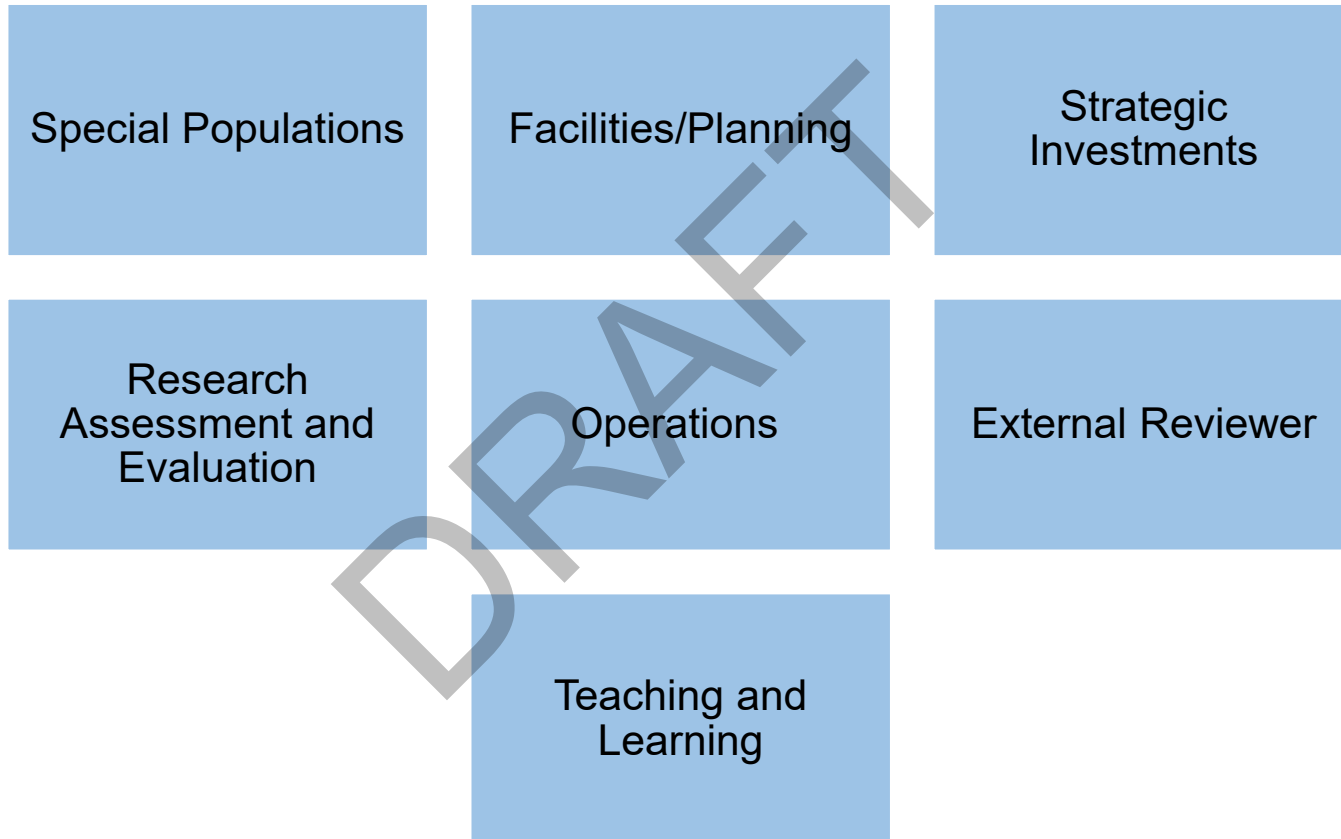


Rate each section using the TDOE rating standards of **Meets or Exceeds**, **Partially Meets**, and **Does Not Meet Standard**



Reach a consensus among the review team regarding the rating of each section in the new start application

Review Team Members



TDOE New Start Application Sections

Academic Plan
and Design

Operations Plan
and Capacity

Financial Plan
and Capacity

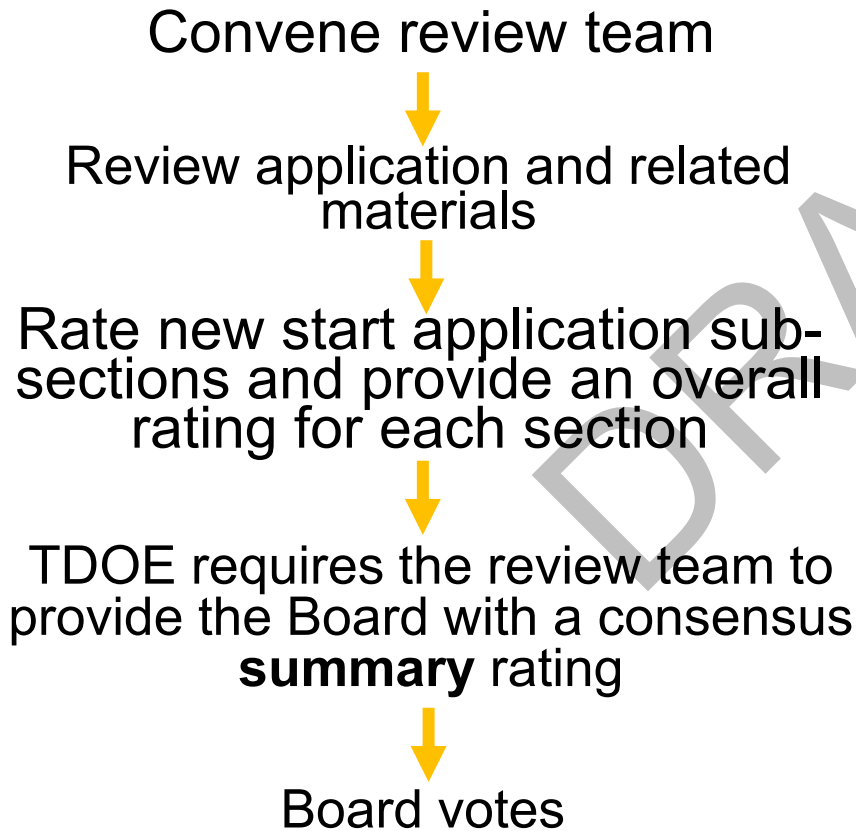
Portfolio Review
and
Performance
Record

TDOE Rating Guidance for New Start Applications

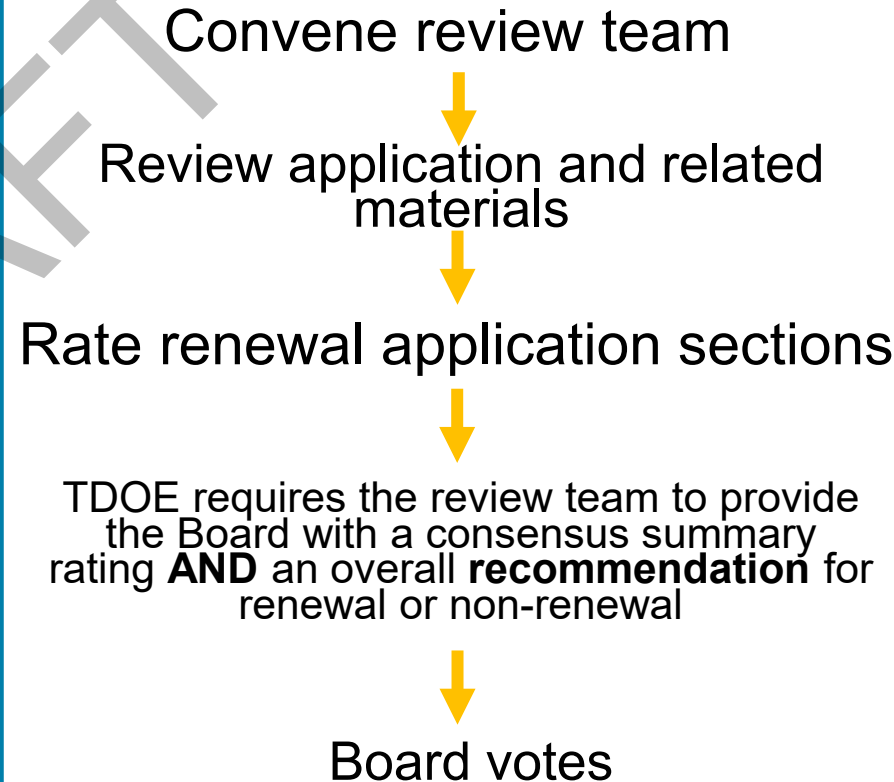
Rating	Characteristics
Meets or Exceeds Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It clearly aligns with the mission and vision of the school. The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation.
Partially Meets Standard	The response meets the criteria in some respects but lacks sufficient detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Does Not Meet Standard	The response is incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; does not align with the mission and vision of the school; or otherwise raises significant concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

Charter Applications Review Process

NEW START



RENEWAL



Encompass Community School Proposal

Grades	K-8
Enrollment	468
Location/Zone	Whites Creek and Pearl-Cohn clusters

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Academic Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 1.2. Enrollment Summary: *The applicant provides a sound rationale for selecting the community where the school will be located.*

Application Deficiency: The applicant does not provide sufficient evidence about how it will enroll and maintain 468 students, since, currently, the Whites Creek and Pearl-Cohn clusters have lower enrollment numbers compared to other MNPS clusters.

Rubric Section 1.3 Academic Focus and Plan: *The curriculum is robust, supports the growth of all students, and is aligned with Tennessee State Standards.*

Application Deficiency: Not all identified curricular materials are aligned to TN State Standards and some proposed materials are aligned to Common Core which is prohibited as outlined in T.C.A. 49-6-2206.

Rubric Section 1.4 Academic Performance Standards: *Academic goals are aligned with the proposed community the school intends to serve.*

Application Deficiency: The academic goals are not aligned to the historical data trends of the targeted cluster.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Operations Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 2.2 Start-Up Plan: *The applicant adequately address potential challenges.*

Application Deficiency: The applicant provides a table of anticipated challenges and action plans but does not adequately address the potential challenges of meeting enrollment targets.

Rubric Section 2.3 Facilities: *The applicant has identified a realistic facility contingency plan.*

Application Deficiency: The applicant included an unrealistic contingency plan that includes co-locating with a non-profit organization or daycare.

Rubric Section 2.5 Professional Development: *The applicant proposes a thoughtful plan for professional development to address special and diverse populations.*

Application Deficiency: The professional development plan is provided; the plan does not adequately address special and diverse populations related to accommodations and modifications.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 3.2 Budget Narrative: *There is a high level of financial expertise amongst the applicant's internal and external team members.*

Application Deficiency: The applicant does not have a high level of financial expertise on the network-based staff.

Rubric Section 3.2 Budget Narrative: *The start-up and five-year operating budgets are complete, realistic and viable.*

Application Deficiency: The applicant appears to only forecast for 1% inflationary growth which is below the recommended 2.0-3.5%.

Rubric Section 3.2 Budget Narrative: *The applicant identifies financial procedures, policies, systems and processes for accounting, payroll, and independent annual audits.*

Application Deficiency: The applicant intends to outsource many of its financial responsibilities, which can lead to limited organizational oversight.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Portfolio Review & Performance Record	N/A

Encompass Community School Ratings

Review Team Findings	Meets or Exceeds	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	N/A
Academic Plan and Design		X		
Operations Plan and Capacity		X		
Financial Plan and Capacity		X		
Portfolio Review & Performance Record				X

Board Vote

Nashville School of Excellence

Grades	6-12
Enrollment	750
Location/Zone	Nolensville Road area

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Academic Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 1.1 School Mission and Vision: *The mission statement is clear, concise, compelling and measurable.*

Application Deficiency: The mission statement is not measurable, and the STEM education focus is not compelling as this model is common in numerous MNPS schools.

Rubric Section 1.6 School Calendar and Schedule: *The school calendar (Attachment B) and school schedules (Attachment C) meet Tennessee minimum requirements of the equivalent of 180 days of instruction.*

Application Deficiency: The schedule shows early release days every Wednesday, which does not meet the required 6.5 hours minimum hours of attendance as outlined in T.C.A 49-6-3004 (e)(1).

Rubric Section 1.12 High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness: *The applicant clearly and persuasively explains how the school's graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college or other postsecondary opportunities.*

Application Deficiency: The applicant neither clearly nor persuasively explain how the school's graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college/career or other postsecondary opportunities, especially to STEM-related fields.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Operations Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 2.1 Governance: *The proposed board structure is likely to ensure effective governance and meaningful oversight of school performance, operations, and financials.*

Application Deficiency: Although the applicant notes a consideration of adding a Nashville parent, none of the board will be governing in Nashville, which could affect meaningful governance and oversight of school performance, operations, and financials.

Rubric Section 2.2 Start-Up Plan: *The applicant provides a detailed and realistic timeline for starting the school that aligns with the start-up budget.*

Application Deficiency: The renovation timeline is unrealistic given the applicant only 5 months total to design and execute renovations.

Rubric 2.7 Transportation: *The applicant has a plan for transporting special needs students where necessary.*

Application Deficiency: The applicant intends to procure one school bus for years 1 and 2. The proposal does not include transportation for special needs, homeless or foster transportation.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 3.1 Planning and Budget Worksheet/3.2 Budget Narrative: *The budget worksheet (Attachment AA) contains reasonable assumptions and budget numbers that reflect all start-up expenses.*

Application Deficiency: The enrollment projections for year 1 of 330 students are unreasonable based on the high concentration of middle and high schools within the community in the targeted area.

Application Deficiency: The amounts budgeted for health insurance, equipment, and supplies are unreasonable for opening a school.

Application Deficiency: The application projects 52% of its population (approximately 170 students) will be English Learner students. The staffing assumptions are unreasonable to meet the required ratio with only 1 budgeted position for Year 1 for this subgroup.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Portfolio Review & Performance Record	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 4.1 Portfolio Summary/4.2 Performance Record: Academics: Applicant provides clear, compelling evidence of raising student achievement levels at each school in the network and evidence that the applicant's schools are high performing and successful (Attachment EE and FF)

Application Deficiency: The overall achievement percentages for the existing schools in the portfolio are below proficiency. In addition, the current ACT scores are underperforming the MNPS average.

Application Deficiency: Memphis School of Excellence received a Letter D and TVAAS score of 1 in 2023.

Nashville School of Excellence Ratings

Review Team Findings	Meets or Exceeds	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	N/A
Academic Plan and Design		X		
Operations Plan and Capacity		X		
Financial Plan and Capacity		X		
Portfolio Review & Performance Record		X		

Board Vote

LEAD Cameron Elementary

Grades	K-5
Enrollment	360
Location/Zone	LEAD Cameron Community (Southeast Nashville)

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Academic Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 1.1 School Mission and Vision: When achieving its mission, the school, as describes by the applicant, will offer a strong curriculum and range of opportunities to all students and will close achievement gaps.

Application Deficiency: The curriculum and range of opportunities lack details related to at-risk learners, students with disabilities, and English Learners.

Rubric 1.6 School Calendar and Schedule: Tiered interventions, tutoring, enrichment and extra-curricular activities are built into the school schedule.

Application Deficiency: The school calendar and student schedules for ELA instruction in K-2 have a maximum of 120 minutes, while the state recommends 150 minutes in the RTI² manual.

Rubric 1.10 Parent and Community Engagement and Support: There are sufficient letters of support, including those within the local community, evidence of outreach to parents, MOUs, or contracts with community partners (Attachment G) that demonstrate support from the community, in which includes compelling support from community members intending to enroll in the school.

Application Deficiency: There are no letters of support from prospective parents.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Operations Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 2.3 Facilities: Facilities plans provide sufficient space for the educational program and anticipated student population and reasonably align with the budget.

Application Deficiency: The core classrooms, art room, and kitchen do not have sufficient space for the anticipated student population based on the square footage provided.

Rubric Section 2.4 Personnel/Human Capital: Staffing projections for each year are robust, align with the educational program and conducive to the school's success.

Application Deficiency: Year 1 staff assumptions and projections indicate one teacher to meet the needs of all students with IEPs, EL students, and students with 504 plans.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 3.1 Planning and Budget Worksheets/3.2 Budget Narrative

The budget worksheet contains reasonable assumptions and budget numbers that reflect all start-up expenses.

Application Deficiency: The application notes unreasonable funding for insurance costs, textbooks, software, laptops, and other non-salary start-up costs as outlined in the applicant's budget worksheet.

Application Deficiency: Transportation for year 1 is for one bus which leaves no margin for inflationary increases and no provision for students with special transportation needs.

Rubric Section 3.3 Network Financial Plan

The applicant articulates a sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are lower than estimated.

Application Deficiency: With the closing of LEAD Brick Church and the proposed opening of LEAD Cameron ES and LEAD Southeast ES, the applicant is at risk of expenses exceeding revenue in FY25.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Portfolio Review & Performance Record	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 4.1 Portfolio Summary/4.2 Performance Record: Academics

Applicant provides clear, compelling evidence of raising student achievement levels at each school in the network and evidence that the applicant's schools are high performing and successful (Attachment EE and FF)

Application Deficiency: The application highlighted the historical academic context for LEAD Cameron; however, LEAD Cameron also received a bottom 10% designation letter from TDOE for school year 2021-2022. In addition, the application to the TPSCC for LEAD Brick Church was denied due to academic performance.

4.3 Performance Record: Operations/Performance Record: Fiscal

The organization is in good standing wherever its schools are located, and there have been revocation, litigation that has resulted in negative outcomes, non-renewals, or financial, organizational, or academic deficiencies (if applicable, Attachment KK)

Application Deficiency: The agreement with the ASD with LEAD Brick Church is being non-renewed due to academic performance and enrollment issues.

LEAD Cameron Elementary Ratings

Review Team Findings	Meets or Exceeds	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	N/A
Academic Plan and Design		X		
Operations Plan and Capacity		X		
Financial Plan and Capacity		X		
Portfolio Review & Performance Record		X		

Board Vote

LEAD Southeast Elementary

Grades	K-5
Enrollment	360
Location/Zone	LEAD Southeast Community

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Academic Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 1.1 School Mission and Vision: When achieving its mission, the school, as describes by the applicant, will offer a strong curriculum and range of opportunities to all students and will close achievement gaps.

Application Deficiency: The curriculum and range of opportunities lack details related to at-risk learners, students with disabilities, and English Learners.

Rubric 1.6 School Calendar and Schedule: Tiered interventions, tutoring, enrichment and extra-curricular activities are built into the school schedule.

Application Deficiency: The school calendar and student schedules in ELA instruction in K-2 have a maximum of 120 minutes, while the state recommends 150 minutes in the RTI² manual.

Rubric 1.10 Parent and Community Engagement and Support: There are sufficient letters of support, including those within the local community, evidence of outreach to parents, MOUs, or contracts with community partners (Attachment G) that demonstrate support from the community, in which includes compelling support from community members intending to enroll in the school.

Application Deficiency: There are no letters of support from prospective parents.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Operations Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 2.3 Facilities: Facilities plans provide sufficient space for the educational program and anticipated student population and reasonably align with the budget.

Application Deficiency: The core classrooms, art room, and kitchen do not have sufficient space for the anticipated student population based on the square footage provided.

Rubric Section 2.4 Personnel/Human Capital: Staffing projections for each year are robust, align with the educational program and conducive to the school's success.

Application Deficiency: Year 1 staff assumptions and projections are not sufficient, as they indicate one teacher to meet the needs of all students with IEPs, EL students, and students with 504 plans.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 3.1 Planning and Budget Worksheets/3.2 Budget Narrative: *The budget worksheet contains reasonable assumptions and budget numbers that reflect all start-up expenses.*

Application Deficiency: The application notes inadequate funding for insurance costs, textbooks, software, laptops, and other non-salary start-up costs as outlined in the applicant's budget worksheet.

Rubric Section 3.1 Planning and Budget Worksheets/3.2 Budget Narrative

The budget worksheet contains reasonable assumptions and budget numbers that reflect all start-up expenses.

Application Deficiency: Transportation for year 1 is for one bus which leaves no margin for inflationary increases and no provision for students with special transportation needs.

Rubric Section 3.3 Network Financial Plan: *The applicant articulates a sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are lower than estimated.*

Application Deficiency: With the closing of LEAD Brick Church and the proposed opening of LEAD Cameron ES and LEAD Southeast ES, the applicant is at risk of expenses exceeding revenue in FY25.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Portfolio Review & Performance Record	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 4.1 Portfolio Summary/4.2 Performance Record: Academics: Applicant provides clear, compelling evidence of raising student achievement levels at each school in the network and evidence that the applicant's schools are high performing and successful (Attachment EE and FF)

Application Deficiency: The application highlighted the historical academic context for LEAD Cameron; however, LEAD Cameron also received a bottom 10% designation letter from TDOE for school year 2021-2022. In addition, the application to the TPSCC for LEAD Brick Church was denied due to academic performance.

4.3 Performance Record: Operations/Performance Record: Fiscal: The organization is in good standing wherever its schools are located, and there have been revocation, litigation that has resulted in negative outcomes, non-renewals, or financial, organizational, or academic deficiencies (if applicable, Attachment KK)

Application Deficiency: The agreement with the ASD with LEAD Brick Church is being non-renewed due to academic performance and enrollment issues.

LEAD Southeast Ratings

Review Team Findings	Meets or Exceeds	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	N/A
Academic Plan and Design		X		
Operations Plan and Capacity		X		
Financial Plan and Capacity		X		
Portfolio Review & Performance Record		X		

Board Vote

Nurses Middle College

Grades	9-12
Enrollment	500
Location/Zone	Nashville, TN

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Academic Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 1.1 School Mission and Vision: *When achieving its mission, the school, as described by the applicant, will offer a strong curriculum and a range of opportunities to all students and will close achievement gaps.*

Application Deficiency: Limiting career academy pathways to one school is not the research-based career academy model. There is only a single pathway at this school, where MNPS academy schools offer multiple pathways for student choice and the ability to switch without having to change schools. MNPS currently offers similar health career models in existing high school academies, and concerns are noted regarding the lack of coordination of business and university stakeholders.

Rubric Section 1.6 School Calendar and Schedule: *The school calendar (Attachment B) and student schedules (Attachment C) meet Tennessee minimum requirements of the equivalent of 180 days of instruction.*

Application Deficiency: The schedules provided include an early release day every Wednesday which does not meet the required 6.5 hours minimum hours of attendance as outlined in T.C.A. 49-6-3004(e)(1).

Rubric Section 1.9 Recruitment and Enrollment: *The applicant outlines a sound and compelling plan for engaging parents and community partners prior to the school's opening and throughout the life of the school.*

Application Deficiency: The application does not include compelling evidence from parents interested in enrolling their student in the school.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Operations Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 2.1 Governance: *The proposed board structure is likely to ensure effective governance and meaningful oversight of school performance, operations, and financials.*

Application Deficiency: The board has limited experience in the operation of schools in Tennessee.

Rubric Section 2.2 Start-Up Plan: *The applicant provides a detailed and realistic timeline for starting the school that aligns with the start-up budget.*

Application Deficiency: The facility timeline is unrealistic based on the scope of renovations needed.

Rubric Section 2.3 Facilities: *Facility plans provide sufficient space for the educational program and anticipated student population and reasonably align with the budget.*

Application Deficiency: The proposed gymnasium is unreasonable with only 2,000 SF and details are not provided about how the state-required 90 minutes per week of physical activity can be achieved in a school for 500 students.

Rubric Section 2.5 Professional Development: *Professional development opportunities and scheduling effectively support the education program and are likely to maximize success in improving student achievement.*

Application Deficiency: Components of the professional development plan will not be possible since the early release days for students do not meet the state minimum requirements outlined in T.C.A. 49-6-3004(e)(1).

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Rubric Section 3.1 Planning and Budget Worksheet/3.2 Budget Narrative: *The start-up and five-year operating budgets are complete, realistic and viable.*

Application Deficiency: The budget for Year 1 displays a sole reliance on a Bloomberg grant of approximately 2.1 million and a CSP start-up grant of \$750,000 as the only sources of revenue.

Rubric Section 3.1 Planning and Budget Worksheet/3.2 Budget Narrative: *There is a high level of financial expertise amongst the applicants internal and external team members.*

Application Deficiency: The applicant did not demonstrate a high level of financial expertise and only has a plan to hire a qualified candidate.

Evidence Findings

CATEGORY	REVIEW TEAM RATING
Portfolio Review & Performance Record	N/A

Examples of evidence noted by the review team:

Nurses Middle College

Review Team Findings	Meets or Exceeds	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	N/A
Academic Plan and Design		X		
Operations Plan and Capacity		X		
Financial Plan and Capacity		X		
Portfolio Review & Performance Record				X

Board Vote



Charter New Start Application Review Team Findings

Encompass Community School

**Spring 2024| MNPS Office of Charter
Schools**



**METRO
NASHVILLE
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
SECTION 1: REPORT SUMMARY	3
About the State Law	3
About the Proposed School	3
Summary Rating	4
SECTION 2: THE EVALUATION PROCESS	4
The Review Committee	4
Ratings and Criteria	5
Evaluation Process for New Start Applications	5
Evaluation Categories	6
SECTION 3: THE RATINGS	6
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	6
The Criteria	6
Evidence Findings	6
Operational Plan and Capacity	12
The Criteria	12
Evidence Findings	13
Financial Plan and Capacity	16
The Criteria	16
Evidence Findings	16
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	16
The Criteria	16
Evidence Findings	17

Section 1: Report Summary

ABOUT THE STATE LAW

On or before February 1 of the year preceding the year in which the proposed public charter school plans to begin operation, the sponsor seeking to establish a public charter school shall prepare and file with the authorizer and the department of education an application using the application template developed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

T.C.A. 49-13-108 - Approval or denial of public charter school application by public charter school authorizer.

Evidence Findings presented to the board to consider in the recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and, if offered by the authorizer, applicant interviews.

Reviewers will score each of the subsections under the four categories (Academic Plan Design and Capacity, Operational Plan and Capacity, Financial Plan and Capacity, Portfolio Review and Performance Record). A reviewer’s subsection scores for a category shall be considered collectively to determine the summary rating for that category.

For an application to be deemed eligible for approval, the summary ratings for all applicable categories must be “Meets or Exceeds the Standard.” Thus, a single score of a “Does Not Meet Standard” or “Partially Meets Standard” on a subsection of a category does not necessarily prevent an otherwise satisfactory category from being scored a “Meets or Exceeds the Standard” overall. The totality of evidence reviewed should determine the overall score for each category.

ABOUT THE PROPOSED SCHOOL

Proposed Model: Mastery-based learning, whole-child development, community school model	
Grades	K-8
Enrollment	468
Location/Zone	Whites Creek and Pearl-Cohn Clusters

SUMMARY RATING

There are three ratings (Meets or Exceeds, Partially Meets, or Does Not Meet). The committee’s evidence findings are outlined on the following pages.

THE MNPS REVIEW COMMITTEE RATINGS ENCOMPASS COMMUNITY SCHOOL	
CATEGORY	OVERALL RATING
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Operational Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	Not Applicable

Section 2: The Evaluation Process

THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

To ensure our review team consisted of cross departmental experts, MNPS appointed a core team specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. Individuals with specific expertise in Special Education, English Language Learners, Business and Finance, Curriculum, Facilities, Strategic Investments and Operations review each application to provide the needed expertise in those areas. Finally, the review team includes an external consultant who has experience and expertise in specialized areas.

A team of 10 people reviewed the new start applications and produced the evidence findings. The review committee members included:

- Director of Exceptional Education
- Coordinator of English Learners
- Executive Officer of Resource Strategy
- Executive Officer Operations
- Executive Officer of Teaching and Learning
- Data Coach of Research Assessment and Evaluation
- Director of Boundary and Planning
- Director of Facilities and Planning and Construction
- Partner School Budget Strategy
- External Consultant

RATINGS AND CRITERIA

State law and regulation require the Tennessee Department of Education to provide “a standard application format” (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-116), and “scoring criteria addressing the elements of the charter school application” (State Board of Education Rule 0520-14-01-.01(1)).

Additionally, the State Board of Education has adopted Quality Charter Authorizing Standards in Policy 6.111. Standard 2(c) addresses rigorous approval criteria for the application process and decision making. This Standard provides that a quality authorizer “[r]equires all applicants to present a clear and compelling mission, a quality educational program, a demonstration of community support, a solvent and sustainable budget and contingency financial plans, a clear demonstration of the effectiveness of the model for the target student population, effective governance and management structures and systems, founding team members demonstrating diverse and necessary capabilities in all phases of the school’s development, and clear evidence of the applicant’s capacity to execute its plan successfully.” An application that merits a recommendation for approval should satisfy each of these criteria.

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR NEW START APPLICATIONS

The MNPS Charter Schools Office evaluation process is based off the National Association of Charter School Authorizers standards, which adhere to best practices from authorizers across the country and have also gained statewide and national recognition as rigorous, thorough, fair and impartial practices. A review committee is specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. The MNPS Charter Schools Office oversees the review process and supports the committee. The review committee evaluates the new start application utilizing the published evaluation criteria from TDOE. The evaluation team reaches consensus regarding each section of the new start application, which comprises the final report produced by the Office of Charter Schools. Each section is given a rating of Meets or Exceeds Standard, Partially Meets Standard, or Does Not Meet Standard. The specific criterion for each standard is indicated below.

RATING CHARACTERISTICS	
RATING	CHARACTERISTICS
Meets or Exceeds the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It clearly aligns with the mission and vision of the school. The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation.
Partially Meets Standard	The response meets the criteria in some respects but lacks sufficient detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Does Not Meet Standard	The response is incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; does not align with the mission and vision of

the school; or otherwise raises significant concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

EVALUATION CATEGORIES

The analysis of the new start application is based in four categories:

- Academic Plan Design and Capacity
- Operational Plan and Capacity
- Financial Plan and Capacity
- Portfolio Review and Performance Record

This report includes a summary of evidence justifying the review team's scores and the applicant's responses to the capacity interview. The report indicates the review team's consensus rating for each evaluation category in Section 3.

Section 3: The Ratings

ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. School Mission and Vision
2. Enrollment Summary
3. Academic Focus and Plan
4. Academic Performance Standards
5. Assessments
6. School Calendar and Schedule
7. Special Populations
8. School Culture and Discipline
9. Recruitment and Enrollment
10. Parent and Community Engagement and Support
11. Phase in Turnaround Planning (if applicable)
12. High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the Academic Plan Design and Capacity section **Partially Meets Standard**.

School Mission and Vision: The stated mission of the applicant is leveraging a mastery-based, student-centric approach to ensure all students thrive academically and personally. National and local proficiency data are provided to support the mission and vision. Research is cited to support each of the four key design elements that comprise the approach outlined in the application:

- Individualized Mastery-based Learning
- Whole Child Development and Learning
- Community School Model
- Professional Culture

The applicant links the mission and vision to at least 3 of the purposes for charter schools found in Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA)§ 49-13- 102(a): using the multi-age approach within the larger classroom, improving learning for all students to close the achievement gap, and providing options for parents. The approach is grounded in individualized, mastery-based learning with a two-educator classroom model with a mixed group approach and 1:1 tutoring; whole child development to provide individual wraparound services; community school model; professional culture focused on teacher development; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; and inclusive coaching structures. The application outlines a Year 1, Year 5, and Year 10 vision for what the school will look like when achieving its mission. Each vision includes quantitative and qualitative measures of success. The Year 1 budget includes a full-time social worker and part-time director of community to enhance partnerships with families. The applicant provides this will be accomplished through innovative methods and greater autonomy for teachers in exchange for greater responsibility. The innovations described by the applicant are supported by research of a similar program called Morningside Model of Generative Instruction (MMGI) used at Morningside Academy. The applicant cites research to support students at Morningside Academy grow at 2.5 to 4 grade levels in one academic year on p. 24 of the application. Instructional methods are based in John Hattie’s research cited on page 14 using a school-wide mastery based learning and whole child development.

While the mission statement was clear, the applicant did not include a metric to ensure it was measurable. Other than the success of Morningside Academy, the applicant does not provide other outside research or examples to support the use of Morningside Model of Generative Instruction.

Enrollment Summary: The applicant identifies the community from which it intends to draw students as the Whites Creek and Pearl Cohn clusters. Demographics, school zones, and academic performances of some of the schools in the zones are provided. The applicant also provides parents’ input regarding the opening of the new school. The reasons for choosing this area are a history of low achievement, limited high-quality options, and parent and community demand. Data used to support this decision from the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) Report Card are included. The enrollment summary is shows the anticipated enrollment in Year 1 for K-3 is 105 students and at Full Capacity for K-8 is 468 students. The anticipated demographics are 75% Economically Disadvantaged, 18% Students with Disabilities, and 13% English Learners. The applicant states they will leverage enrollment preference guidelines to rank students who are economically disadvantaged as their top priority aligned to TCA 49-13-113d.

While the applicant provides data for some traditional MNPS elementary and middle schools in the targeted clusters, they do not include all MNPS schools or the charter schools. The applicant does not

provide sufficient evidence about how it will enroll and maintain 468 students since currently the Whites Creek and Pearl Cohn clusters have lower enrollment numbers compared to other MNPS clusters, especially in middle schools. The rationale for maintaining enrollment targets of 52 students at each grade level is not provided to understand why there is not any built-in attrition. Some of the research and academic data used to support some of the applicant's decisions is dated so some of the enrollment projections are not reasonable. The class sizes provided in the chart on page 48 do not meet state requirements since they would exceed the maximum class size for kindergarten. The applicant intends to leverage enrollment preference guidelines to rank students who are economically disadvantaged, which does not align with MNPS lottery processes, so they would need to operate their own enrollment.

Academic Focus and Plan: The school's academic focus aligns with the school's mission and vision which is to leverage a Mastery-Based Learning (MBL) and Whole-Child Development, Learning, and Thriving (WCD). In this approach time becomes the variable instead of fixed so that students are allowed to move forward once they reach mastery, while other students who need longer have additional time. The applicant describes how they will accomplish this through multi-age groupings to focus on mastering foundational skills. The applicant cites research for Morningside Model, neuroscientific research, and meta-analysis on page 62. Additionally, the applicant provides case studies from the Seattle School District and a small-scale pilot study (Attachment R) conducted in Nashville by the applicant that includes data showing academic growth results using this academic plan. The applicant states they will use benchmarks to assess progress toward Tennessee State Academic Standards. There is an evidence-based plan to remediate academic underperformance which includes recursive instructional sequence, co-teaching, and flexible grouping. The applicant describes 60-minute personalized learning blocks and a 20-minute fluency block during which students will receive RTI, SPED, or EL support.

While the applicant provides research to support their academic focus and plan, the pilot study conducted by the applicant on pages 63-64 and Attachment R ranges from 3-7 students so this data is not statistically reliable to support claims that its instructional methods will close achievement gaps between subgroups of students. Additionally, not all the curricular materials to support the academic plan and focus are aligned with Tennessee State Standards. For example, Fish Tank ELA, the potential curriculum for elementary ELA and writing (table 21, page 66) is aligned to Common Core State Standards, which is prohibited in TN as outlined in TCA 49-6-2206. Very few of the listed potential curricula in table 21 on page 66 are on the state board-approved list for the various content areas. While the applicant may seek a waiver for curriculum choices, this prevents the review team from making a crosswalk between the curricula and the state standards. Moreover, the applicant noted potential related arts courses such as "physical education, art, foreign language, STEAM (coding, robotics, etc.), problem-solving" table on page 245, and during the capacity interview stated students will have "access" to these courses. However, TCA 49-6-1025, states the "course of instruction in all public schools for kindergarten through grade eight (K-8) shall include art and music education." Also, elementary students must participate in at least 2 PE classes each week for no less than 60 minutes each full school week, according to TCA 49-6-1021. This means students must have more than just access and the offerings must be more than a potential consideration; PE, art and music are required to be incorporated into instruction according to statute. Additionally, all students in elementary school must receive computer science beginning in the fall of 2024 according to TCA 49-6-1010, but computer science was not mentioned in the application. The curricular choices should be more than "potential" as part of the submission for the review team and school board to ensure alignment to state standards.

Academic Performance Standards: The academic achievement goals are identified across four domains: academics, social-emotional learning, community engagement, and parent engagement. Success rates and achievement gaps are addressed through annual and long-term achievement and set a standard of the achievement gap between any at-risk subgroup and the overall school average at <10% and <6% for chronic absenteeism. The academic goals align with the achievement goals within the authorizer/state model performance framework and are also aligned with the proposed community the school intends to serve. The applicant states they surveyed 280 families and received feedback that is aligned to the school model they are proposing. A process for measuring, monitoring, and revising academic achievement goals is described, including an annual review of available data sources to establish annual goals. The plan for Response to Instruction and Intervention that aligns with Tennessee guidelines is outlined on page 79 Table 24. Behavior/Social Emotional interventions for each tier are provided. The daily attendance goal is 95% and the chronic absenteeism goal is 6% with attendance interventions at different levels. Multiple stakeholders are included in the school's plan to provide wraparound supports for families. The applicant's promotion/retention and exit policies and standards are aligned to MNPS policies and state rules. Students who score Below or Approaching will receive free additional support through in-class interventions, tutoring, and summer school program. The applicant outlines the components for 3rd graders to receive following support:

- Embedded daily intervention blocks through personalized learning and fluency building blocks
- Evidence-based instruction
- MBL
- Multi-age groupings
- Five layers of assessments
- Summer school/tutoring if needed

The academic goals are not aligned to the historical data trends of the targeted cluster since their achievement goals are aligned to Williamson County. There is not a timeline provided to show incremental change to show realistic progress toward academic achievement goals. An appropriate, well-defined corrective action plan to be implemented if the school falls below state, district and/or its own academic achievement goals is not provided. The applicant only states that in the unlikely event that Encompass falls below the state, district, and/or internal academic goals that a corrective action plan will be designed.

Assessments: The applicant describes they will employ five layers of assessments:

- Fluency and classroom data
- CBMs and progress monitoring
- Survey level and diagnostic assessments
- Norm-referenced assessment
- Universal screeners

The assessments range between daily assessments and norm-referenced assessments and universal screeners three to four times a year. A detailed plan for collecting, analyzing, and using data to support instruction. The plan includes these key details:

- Clear division of responsibility to administrative and data use
- Training for teachers and school leaders
- Data analysis integration within school systems and coaching structures
- Quarterly stepbacks

- Annual strategic planning to continually monitor students' growth

The applicant articulated problem-solving cycles based on this data review. The applicant will use aimswebPlus as the universal screener to be administered three times per year, which is approved by TDOE. The specific measures and probes are included. A description of how families will receive ongoing progress updates with strengths, growth, skills gaps, and fluency targets is provided.

Internal assessments are focused on growth and skills with the only potential measure to monitor progress on state standards in table 29 is “teacher created materials” or “diagnostics” which are not measures of learning. If relying on teacher-created materials for informal formative assessments based on curricular materials not aligned to TN state standards as noted in section 1.3, even this assessment measure cannot ensure alignment to TN state standards and won’t provide information about the overall school’s progress to end-of-year achievement goals. The data analysis platform is addressed, but the final decision was left to the Executive Director and Director of Operations, so the monitoring plan is not finalized.

School Calendar and Schedule: The school calendar provided in Attachment B and student schedules in Attachment C provide an equivalent of 180 days of instruction. The yearly calendar closely correlates with MNPS. The daily schedule allows for multi-age student groupings, embedded interventions and enrichment, small group instruction, and related arts. Each grade will have one class staffed with two licensed teachers and the other staffed with one licensed teacher and an instructional assistant. In the first class the applicant states they will have a general education teacher and another that is licensed in either special education or teaching English Learners. The other class with one general education teacher and one instructional assistant will be for students who are above grade level and might not require interventions through specialized certification. This design supports the school’s instructional philosophy, mission, and vision. The applicant plans to have multi-age groupings. Sample schedules are provided by the applicant to reflect opportunities for intervention, tutoring, enrichment, and extra-curricular activities, such as clubs. There are plans to join a local sports team in Year 8. The applicant plans to provide summer school at no cost to students. Extended School Year will be provided for students with an IEP in accordance with IDEA and a mandatory summer program for rising 4th graders who score Below and Approaching. They plan to partner with a local organization to offer before and after care.

The school calendar on page 226 shows 14 stockpiled professional development days before school starts but does not address where those days are earned since days cannot be stockpiled before they are earned. There are risks that the multi-age grouping model can lead to some issues like bullying and social emotional issues. Details are not provided about how this model will be communicated to parents. Additionally, it is not clearly explained how this model where students work at their own pace will allow for mastery of grade level standards.

Special Populations: The proposed executive director has credentials and experience serving Students with Disabilities, English Learners, and intellectually gifted. The staffing plans include staffing for special populations. The number of teachers and instructional assistants increases over nine years. There are plans to hire a full-time social worker and a Director of Personalized Learning and a part-time Behavior Analyst to support special populations. Pull-outs are also available for those students as needed. There is a process for identifying students with disabilities, English Learners, at-risk students and gifted students following the RTI² process guidance and IDEA and state board policy 3.207. The applicant will use a Support Team (S-Team) Referral process to ensure compliance and timely, adequate support and evaluation without relying on the RTI² process. Upon enrollment, the applicant states they will administer a home language survey (HLS) to determine the predominant language spoken in

the home. For students where English is not the primary language spoken at home, an additional screener will be administered. Kindergarten students will receive the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (W-PAT) and the WIDA screener will be used for students in grades 1st-8th. The applicant states that their academic model is designed to be flexible and responsive to student variability across all populations, including students with disabilities, English-language learners, and at-risk students. The description of the instructional program throughout outlines the plan to support diverse learners.

The applicant identifies the process for identifying English Learners includes administering the WAPT screener for kindergarten students, but according to State Board Rule, NELB students in kindergarten should be screened with the WIDA Screener. Additionally, the application does not include a well-defined plan for exiting students from EL services.

School Culture and Discipline: The applicant plans to implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) and Restorative Practice approach to schoolwide culture. This will align to their core values of all means all, agency, and community. PBIS will support all students and provide more intensive support to students in Tiers 2 and 3. Restorative Practice will prioritize conflict resolutions that holds students and group accountable while focusing on relationship repair to reduce suspensions and punitive practices. Students will participate in structured Proactive Circles. Teacher onboarding includes training on PBIS, Restorative Practice, proactive circles, and schoolwide norms and values. The applicant outlines a plan for integrating new students and families through school-wide systems, routines, and procedures such as enrollment practices, monthly surveys, and buddy systems. The Student Handbook in Attachment D states that translation services will be available to families at official school functions. The handbook also states that the practices will not infringe upon any rights pursuant to IDEA, Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans with Disabilities Act. The discipline policy in Attachment D and E are aligned to MNPS and the applicant cites research-based evidence on the holistic school model rooted in Whole Child Development.

The Student Handbook is missing some key policies, such as the acceptable use policy for technology. While the handbook provides that the applicant will generate translated materials for languages outside of English and Spanish, they do not address the steps that will be taken to ensure the method of translation is valid and reliable.

Recruitment and Enrollment: The applicant has a community engagement team which includes three parents, two of the three attended school in one of the targeted zones. They describe leveraging community engagement by spending hundreds of hours knocking on over 500 doors to solicit feedback. Through the feedback received, the applicant will focus on accessibility using the following strategies:

- Partnerships with faith-based and community organizations
- Partnerships with local daycares and learning centers
- Door knocking
- Targeted marketing and social media

They state they have received 188 interest-to-enroll forms from students meeting enrollment criteria, 89% of which came from the Whites Creek and Pearl Cohn clusters. The applicant states they will follow MNPS calendar for recruitment and enrollment. They will also host on-site tours, informational sessions, and other events at the school. To ensure equal access, the applicant states they will continue to:

1. Invest time and resources to robust recruitment and outreach;
2. Prioritize face-to-face opportunities in accessible spaces with prospective families; and

3. Maintain and expand community partnerships.

However, the enrollment policy contains inaccurate information by stating that MNPS requires schools employ its Student Assignment System (SAS) software for the enrollment lottery. While this is preferred by MNPS, it is not required. Additionally, while the applicant states they will follow the MNPS calendar for enrollment, the timeline does not line up with the district lottery. Based on the timeline provided, the applicant will be taking applications outside of the MNPS lottery window. While the applicant provides an extensive community outreach plan, they are at risk of not being able to achieve their enrollment goals since there are already 5 existing charter schools operating in their target area and none of them are at full capacity. LEAD Brick Church College Prep will be closing at the end of this school year and returning to the district in part because of their continued enrollment declines.

Parent and Community Engagement and Support: The lead founder and the community engagement team state they have invested hundreds of hours in community engagement by spending 80 hours volunteering at organizations that serve the proposed community. They partnered with Open Jar LLC, a third-party research organization, to ensure they were hearing the voices of the community through open-ended questions. The common themes gained through the feedback are more robust academic support, accessibility, social-emotional support, family engagement resources, enrichment and related arts, and safety and security. In Attachment G of the application, there are various letters of support provided by the applicant including prospective parents, residents, educators, and partnership organization. The applicant provides a plan to inform and educate parents who prefer a language other than English. Additionally, they state they will establish a Community and Family Advisory Council (CFAC) to provide partnership, advice, and guidance. They will hold student and family orientation at the start of the school year. Online platforms for parent information will be DeansList and PikMyKid. The applicant outlines a plan that meets the basic requirements for engaging parents and community.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

OPERATIONAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Governance
2. Start Up Plan
3. Facilities
4. Personnel/Human Capital
5. Professional Development
6. Insurance
7. Transportation
8. Food Service
9. Additional Operations
10. Charter Management Organization (if applicable)

11. Network Vision, Growth Plan, & Capacity
12. Network Management
13. Network Governance
14. Network-Wide Personnel and Human Capital Projections
15. School Replication (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Governance: The applicant states the Board will consist of three to eleven community members with backgrounds and varied areas of expertise. The officer and committee structure includes an academic committee that will share current academic performance with the full Board and create a plan for continued improvement as needed. An ongoing description of the process to evaluate the Executive Director is provided via ongoing meetings and committee structures with final oversight by the Governance Committee. There are currently six Board members with a range of perspectives and skill sets, including traditional public and charter schools, special education, non-profits, real estate, finance/banking, consulting, community engagement and social services. The Board is vetting more members with emphasis on finding additional legal expertise. The applicant states that new Board members will receive an orientation including Board Bylaws, articles of incorporation, conflicts of interest policy, code of ethics, board biographies, a mission and vision deep dive, and access to historical board minutes, as well as a school history and performance summary. They will also receive annual training certified by the Tennessee Charter School Center. Additionally, they will provide the founding board startup plan. The applicant outlines two processes to receive and process complaints: an internal complaint process/informal complaint against a school policy or member of the school community, and formal complaints that pertains to an alleged violation of law and/or charter and the formal steps in this process are outlined. The governance documents provided in Attachments H, I, J, K, L, M, and N align with state laws and district policies.

However, some of the contents of the attachments are unclear and/or incomplete.

Start-Up Plan: The applicant provides a timeline dating back to Summer 2023 outlined in five phases. The applicant provides a list of anticipated challenges and detailed action plans which include facilities, student enrollment, attracting and retaining leadership and talent, funding, and innovative school model.

While details are provided, the timelines are broad and without firm end dates. Based on recent charter school openings in the Nashville market, the timeline for having facilities ready is not realistic. There is no contingency provided for not finding a suitable facility or a facility not being ready. In the current market, a two-month window to purchase furniture, technology, and materials is also not realistic. Additionally, there is no contingency for not being able to find staff. The startup money relies on \$400,000 that is yet to be raised. The applicant did not adequately address the potential challenge of meeting enrollment targets. The demographics of the targeted area are changing, and the types of developments coming in typically do not generate many students, especially the targeted population of students who are economically disadvantaged.

Facilities: The facility plan provides details for a space allocation program sufficient for growing the school's population over its startup timeline. The details are provided based on square footage needs in years 1-5 (70-114 square feet per student) and at full capacity in year 9 (104 square feet per student). The applicant retained a local real estate broker and consultants to assist with property acquisition in Nashville. The team to support their facilities work includes the founder and CEO of the Hammonds Group, Inc, Level Field Partners, and Southeast Ventures. The contingency plan describes seven options within the proposed cluster, and states there are leads to local developers, nonprofits, and childcare agencies that could become co-location partners.

The facilities plan does not provide sufficient space for the kitchen area as there is only 500 square feet. The physical education spaces grow from year 2 to year 3 and from year 3 to year 4 but details are not provided to understand how that could practically happen. The budget amounts for renovations/tenant improvements of \$100,000 are not sufficient given the information provided. While the applicant states they have a plan to co-locate if needed, details are not provided where the co-location would be to determine if this would be a realistic timeline and/or budget for the facilities modifications that would be required.

Personnel/Human Capital: The applicant provides an organizational chart in Attachments O and P to provide the roles and reporting structures of the Board and staff with an overview of division of responsibilities. The hiring process is focused on applications, phone interviews, performance tasks, and recommendation letters. The hiring timeline details for recruitment hiring and ongoing hiring efforts are described. The proposed Executive Director's credentials align with the responsibilities to demonstrate experience driving student achievement. The applicant states their intentionality in creating inclusive recruitment and hiring practices. A hiring process to minimize bias and create equitable opportunities for hiring include crafting inclusive job descriptions that focus on skills, training the interview team around unconscious bias, and standardizing the process with a set of questions and aligning those question to core skills and mindsets. The applicant has selected the TEAM evaluation process for supporting, developing, and annual evaluation teachers which aligns with the statewide evaluation requirements. The staffing projections also align with the educational program.

While the proposed Executive Director provides details about their background and experience, there is limited experience opening and operating a charter school provided, other than serving as an assistant principal at a local charter school.

Professional Development: The applicant states there are high expectations for instructional staff, similar to the model for students, with a focus in a mastery-based, responsive, and ongoing approach to adult development. Morningside Teacher's Academy (MTA) will provide internal coaching systems for new teachers learning new methods for the first time each year. A description of MTA's professional development is provided. Teachers will participate in 16 days of professional development in the summer. Ongoing professional development includes Monday professional development for one hour after school with varied foci based on need, and monthly and quarterly stepbacks to reflect on progress toward goals and adjusting. The applicant states that weekly observations will be conducted with specific topics as the focus; twice/monthly they will conduct weekly observations developed in collaboration with Morningside Teacher's Academy. Fidelity checks will be conducted within tiers I-III as part of the RTI² framework. There is a professional development design provided with topics noted that pertain to special and diverse populations regarding instruction, culture & community and

operations. The professional development plan includes a leadership pathway with a specific focus on teacher leader positions.

While the professional development details are provided, it is unclear how they will happen without pulling teachers from other critical duties. Safety training is not referenced in the extensive lists of required professional development. Details were not provided to understand how the teachers of special education and teachers of English Learners will receive training on writing instructionally appropriate IEPs, intensive intervention, and provide wraparound services. While the applicant provides a note on their professional development design and specific topics that will be addressed for special and diverse populations, more depth to this plan needs to be provided to know the specific plans around topics such as accommodations and modifications. There is one day identified in the 16-day summer PD plan for EL and SPED topics but no depth as to how these topics will be interwoven throughout the summer PD days to support EL and SPED students across the PD topics.

Insurance: The insurance letter in Attachment T is a standard letter from Martin and Zerfoss that the applicant will replace coverage with a carrier but provides no indication who the carrier will be.

Transportation: The applicant states they will partner with a private transportation provider to provide daily bus routes, field trips, and after-school activities as is feasible. There is an assumption that 75% of students will take advantage of transportation since this is a barrier identified for families seeking high-quality options for their students. Oversight will be the responsibility of the Director of Operations and Finance, and that person will provide necessary training to ensure compliance. They will include services for students requiring special transportation with flexibility to adjust transportation costs in the budget as needed. IEPs for special transportation and McKinney Vento Act are addressed in the applicant's response.

Food Service: The applicant states they will seek bids from local food service providers and provides a sample of contract provisions. The applicant identifies the role responsible for oversight of the free/reduced lunch process.

Additional Operations: The applicant provides classroom technology plan for Chromebooks in middle and high schools (1:1 ratio) using a wireless internet network system. They also identify how families and staff will be educated around FERPA compliance to protect the privacy of student information. To demonstrate the health and safety and maintenance requirements, the applicant states they will contract out health services through a registered nurse and hire a property management company to provide maintenance services.

While the applicant states they will use Chromebooks, there are not sufficient details about the use of technology within the classroom for state assessments. While the applicant identifies how they will educate staff around FERPA compliance, there is no information provided about ongoing training for key staff. The applicant does not provide an actual plan for safety and security, only states they will develop one.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Planning and Budget Worksheet
2. Budget Narrative
3. Network Financial Plan (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Planning and Budget Worksheet/Budget Narrative: The projected revenue is \$600,000 for year 0 with \$400,000 funding from national and local fundraising. The applicant outlines financial procedures, policies, systems, and processes for accounting, payroll, and conducting independent annual audits. The applicant provides built in contingencies if projected revenue comes in lower than expected.

The revenue projections of \$600,000 and total projected expenses of \$481,000 for year 0 may not be reasonable for start-up expenses. The applicant does not have a high level of financial expertise on the network-based staff. Information is not provided about their plans for Human Resources. While the budget narrative states they expect 75% of students to ride the bus, the budget does not reflect this. It is also unclear why the budget for nutrition is high since nutrition programs typically rely on USDA funding. The projected costs for Chromebooks are around \$200 which is below market pricing. Another budget issue is the \$5000 per employee for health insurance which is below the market rate if paying a market competitive share. The budget narrative does not indicate where the costs are for maintenance and custodial work. The applicant states they will contract with a registered nurse for health services, but this is not reflected in the budget narrative other than \$15,000 allocated to health services but does not specify if this is the contracted registered nurse. They also only forecast 1% inflationary growth, which is below the recommended 2.0-3.5%. The applicant intends to outsource many of its financial responsibilities, which can lead to limited organizational oversight. Overall, the financial document was challenging to review in that many of the pages, such as pages 391, 392, 393, of the budget provided in the electronic and hard copy submission contain columns that are split across pages.

Network Financial Plan (if applicable)

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RECORD

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the Past Performance of the following:

1. Portfolio Summary (if applicable)
2. Performance Record; Academics (if applicable)
3. Performance Record; Operations (if applicable)
4. Performance Record; Fiscal (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

Not Applicable



Charter New Start Application Review Team Findings

Nashville School of Excellence

Spring 2024| MNPS Office of Charter
Schools



METRO
NASHVILLE
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
SECTION 1: REPORT SUMMARY	3
About the State Law	3
About the Proposed School	3
Summary Rating	4
SECTION 2: THE EVALUATION PROCESS	4
The Review Committee	4
Ratings and Criteria	5
Evaluation Process for New Start Applications	5
Evaluation Categories	6
SECTION 3: THE RATINGS	6
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	6
The Criteria	6
Evidence Findings	6
Operational Plan and Capacity	12
The Criteria	12
Evidence Findings	13
Financial Plan and Capacity	16
The Criteria	16
Evidence Findings	16
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	17
The Criteria	17
Evidence Findings	18

Section 1: Report Summary

ABOUT THE STATE LAW

On or before February 1 of the year preceding the year in which the proposed public charter school plans to begin operation, the sponsor seeking to establish a public charter school shall prepare and file with the authorizer and the department of education an application using the application template developed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

T.C.A. 49-13-108 - Approval or denial of public charter school application by public charter school authorizer.

Evidence Findings presented to the board to consider in the recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and, if offered by the authorizer, applicant interviews.

Reviewers will score each of the subsections under the four categories (Academic Plan Design and Capacity, Operational Plan and Capacity, Financial Plan and Capacity, Portfolio Review and Performance Record). A reviewer’s subsection scores for a category shall be considered collectively to determine the summary rating for that category.

For an application to be deemed eligible for approval, the summary ratings for all applicable categories must be “Meets or Exceeds the Standard.” Thus, a single score of a “Does Not Meet Standard” or “Partially Meets Standard” on a subsection of a category does not necessarily prevent an otherwise satisfactory category from being scored a “Meets or Exceeds the Standard” overall. The totality of evidence reviewed should determine the overall score for each category.

ABOUT THE PROPOSED SCHOOL

Proposed Model: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)	
Grades	6-12
Enrollment	750
Location/Zone	Nashville, Nolensville Rd. area

SUMMARY RATING

There are three ratings (Meets or Exceeds, Partially Meets, or Does Not Meet). The committee’s evidence findings are outlined on the following pages.

THE MNPS REVIEW COMMITTEE RATINGS NASHVILLE SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE	
CATEGORY	OVERALL RATING
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Operational Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	Partially Meets Standard

Section 2: The Evaluation Process

THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

To ensure our review team consisted of cross departmental experts, MNPS appointed a core team specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. Individuals with specific expertise in Special Education, English Language Learners, Business and Finance, Curriculum, Facilities, Strategic Investments and Operations review each application to provide the needed expertise in those areas. Finally, the review team includes an external consultant who has experience and expertise in specialized areas.

A team of 10 people reviewed the new start applications and produced the evidence findings. The review committee members included:

- Director of Exceptional Education
- Coordinator of English Learners
- Executive Officer of Resource Strategy
- Executive Officer Operations
- Executive Officer of Teaching and Learning
- Data Coach of Research Assessment and Evaluation
- Director of Boundary and Planning
- Director of Facilities and Planning and Construction
- Partner School Budget Strategy
- External Consultant

RATINGS AND CRITERIA

State law and regulation require the Tennessee Department of Education to provide “a standard application format” (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-116), and “scoring criteria addressing the elements of the charter school application” (State Board of Education Rule 0520-14-01-.01(1)).

Additionally, the State Board of Education has adopted Quality Charter Authorizing Standards in Policy 6.111. Standard 2(c) addresses rigorous approval criteria for the application process and decision making. This Standard provides that a quality authorizer “[r]equires all applicants to present a clear and compelling mission, a quality educational program, a demonstration of community support, a solvent and sustainable budget and contingency financial plans, a clear demonstration of the effectiveness of the model for the target student population, effective governance and management structures and systems, founding team members demonstrating diverse and necessary capabilities in all phases of the school’s development, and clear evidence of the applicant’s capacity to execute its plan successfully.” An application that merits a recommendation for approval should satisfy each of these criteria.

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR NEW START APPLICATIONS

The MNPS Charter Schools Office evaluation process is based off the National Association of Charter School Authorizers standards, which adhere to best practices from authorizers across the country and have also gained statewide and national recognition as rigorous, thorough, fair and impartial practices. A review committee is specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. The MNPS Charter Schools Office oversees the review process and supports the committee. The review committee evaluates the new start application utilizing the published evaluation criteria from TDOE. The evaluation team reaches consensus regarding each section of the new start application, which comprises the final report produced by the Office of Charter Schools. Each section is given a rating of Meets or Exceeds Standard, Partially Meets Standard, or Does Not Meet Standard. The specific criterion for each standard is indicated below.

RATING CHARACTERISTICS	
RATING	CHARACTERISTICS
Meets or Exceeds the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It clearly aligns with the mission and vision of the school. The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation.
Partially Meets Standard	The response meets the criteria in some respects but lacks sufficient detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Does Not Meet Standard	The response is incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; does not align with the mission and vision of

the school; or otherwise raises significant concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

EVALUATION CATEGORIES

The analysis of the new start application is based in four categories:

- Academic Plan Design and Capacity
- Operational Plan and Capacity
- Financial Plan and Capacity
- Portfolio Review and Performance Record

This report includes a summary of evidence justifying the review team's scores and the applicant's responses to the capacity interview. The report indicates the review team's consensus rating for each evaluation category in Section 3.

Section 3: The Ratings

ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. School Mission and Vision
2. Enrollment Summary
3. Academic Focus and Plan
4. Academic Performance Standards
5. Assessments
6. School Calendar and Schedule
7. Special Populations
8. School Culture and Discipline
9. Recruitment and Enrollment
10. Parent and Community Engagement and Support
11. Phase in Turnaround Planning (if applicable)
12. High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the Academic Plan Design and Capacity section **Partially Meets Standard**.

School Mission and Vision: The applicant's mission statement is for each student to be empowered to succeed in college and career through the following:

- Mastering a rigorous, Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) focused curriculum,
- Experiencing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment,
- Receiving individual academic, social, and emotional support, and
- Working alongside families and community partners.

The vision is for the students to choose ambitious paths, persist and thrive in their choices, and strengthen their local and global communities. The applicant links the mission and vision to the purposes for charter schools found in TCA 49-13-102(a): to close the achievement gap, provide educational options for parents, and encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods. The applicant provides this will be accomplished through the curriculum with daily enrichment periods in ELA, math, and science for students to receive individual services or enrichment activities. Tutoring sessions at Saturday school will provide additional support. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) curriculum will include project-based learning, science fairs, and a robotics club. Teachers will have two daily planning periods and weekly early release professional learning communities. They will offer a curriculum with a range of opportunities to all students to close achievement gaps through STEM content in middle and high school, project-based learning, technology integration, summer programs, high dosage tutoring, and the School Transitional Environment Program (STEP). The innovations described by the applicant are cited through the National Science Foundation report that provides evidence that STEM coursework promotes STEM-related courses of study in college and STEM career choices. The applicant also states they will seek Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) STEM Designation for the school.

While the mission statement is provided, it is not measurable. Additionally, the STEM education focus is not compelling as this model is common in numerous MNPS schools. The applicant proposes the STEM-based curriculum to achieve its mission, but the opportunities to close the achievement gap are not fully described other than summer programming and high-dosage tutoring. More information is needed about culminating student credentials, Early Postsecondary Opportunities, and alignment to CTE pathways. The applicant states their evidence of success is that nearly 100% of their students have graduated but do not provide data sources for verification. Data is not provided about the applicant's current schools in operation in Memphis related to college, technical, and workforce data to support their innovations have evidence of success.

Enrollment Summary: The community from which the school intends to draw students is within the 37211-zip code. The applicant provides demographics from seven schools in that area. The applicant cites the population growth in this area as the reason for the proposed location. The enrollment projections and demographic charts are 52% students who are English Learners, 34% of students who are economically disadvantaged, and 10% students with disabilities. The applicant identifies key similarities in current communities and the students they serve and the proposed communities and the students they propose to serve.

The applicant describes the community it intends to draw students and lists seven schools in that zip code but does not provide the school zones. The applicant does not provide a sound rationale for selecting the community where they will locate other than growth in the area. They did not provide projected student demographics by race/ethnicity. The enrollment projections are not reasonable since they plan to offer STEM education to draw students, which is available at most MNPS schools. During

the capacity interview, the applicant used the waitlist for Valor as a rationale for their enrollment projects but did not provide any evidence of how this one example would apply to their proposed school. The applicant states they will use the same enrollment practices they use at their existing schools, but they did not provide sufficient details about what those are.

Academic Focus and Plan: The school's academic focus, which is to empower students to succeed in college and career, aligns with the school's mission and vision. The applicant proposes using an EL Education ELA curriculum; iReady Math and Ready Math curricula for middle school and Reveal Math for high school; HMH for science instruction in middle school and Savvas Science in high school; and Voices and Perspectives program will be the foundation for Social Studies in middle school. The applicant states the curriculum will be standards-based, inquiry-based and aligned to TDOE academic standards. As mentioned previously, STEM Designation will be a goal. Students can earn industry certification in STEM or CTE Completer Status upon graduation. The applicant will administer Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP) three times a year. They will have a virtual test center for test results to be disaggregated by subpopulation, cohort, and individual student levels. They cite research on page 25 to support an enriched curriculum, technology integration, standardized and authentic assessments, and instructional and support staff. Additionally, every teacher will have two periods of planning time daily to internalize and differentiate lesson plans.

While the applicant provides an academic focus that aligns with the mission and vision, sufficient information is needed about the elective technology class to understand if this is part of Project Lead the Way (PLTW) or separate. The academic plan is rigorous and research-based but does not directly address how it will meet the needs of the targeted student population. Not all curricular materials are aligned with Tennessee State Standards, most notably plans for teacher-created materials for ELA grades 9-12 and social studies grades 9-12. There are no plans to submit a waiver to the Tennessee State Board for these materials noted in the written application and no crosswalk of materials and standards is available. The applicant does not clearly describe an evidence-based plan to help remediate students' academic underperformance. The applicant provides that students will attend daily 45-minute enrichment periods in ELA, math, and science where students may receive pull-out English as a second language (ESL) services, special education services, tiered interventions, and/or enrichment activities; however, they do not address how they will ensure services are provided if students demonstrate a need for both ESL services and tiered interventions. Although noted in the written application that the "academic plan does not include blending learning" when asked during the capacity interview why a STEM school with a focus on technology and technology integration with all students having access to a Chromebook will not employ any level of blended learning, several examples were cited by the applicant. Based on their response, it is not clear to what degree blended learning will be offered and why the applicant did not know this was not included in the written application.

Academic Performance Standards: A table of goals, methods of measurement, frequency, and measurable student outcomes is provided which details the applicant's goal of all reporting categories having a combined TVAAS score of 3 or higher each year. On NWEA MAP the goal is that 50% of students will score in the 50th percentile on the MAP reading assessment, including special populations. Additionally, the applicant has a goal to score at least 3 on the Charter School Performance Framework for Academic Standards in each of the three sections: academic goals, financial goals, and organizational goals. Academic goals support the mission and vision of the school, particularly the STEM goals. The applicant outlines Ready Graduate, AP and College Course, AP exams, college admissions, high school graduation, and postsecondary matriculation outcomes that also align with the mission and vision of the school. The applicant outlines a process for measuring, monitoring, and revising academic achievement goals including the use of a dashboard with metrics from a variety of data points from sources used by the leadership team to

monitor progress and share with the Board. If goals need revisions, the executive director will develop and share modified goals to the Board for approval. There is a corrective action plan to be implemented if the school falls below state, district and/or its own academic achievement goals. The plan outlines steps to address underperformance at the schoolwide, classroom, and individual student levels. The applicant states that they will implement Tennessee's RTP² Framework. In grades 6-8, this will include administration of a universal screener and data analysis. Teachers will meet in grade level teams weekly to discuss assessment results and teacher observation data. The applicant describes block scheduling to provide differentiated instruction based on individual needs. They will use multiple resources to support studies such as IXL, i-Ready, Newsela, Accelerated Math. Student attendance goals are realistic (96% or better average student attendance rate) and plans to ensure high rates of student attendance are outlined including close monitoring, calls home, and parent meetings with the principal and/or counselor to determine the root cause and create support plans. They will use PowerSchool and examine the data weekly. The policies for promotion/retention are provided which will be based on skill mastery and what the committee making the decision thinks is best for the student. They provided considerations for students who are English Learners and students with disabilities.

One of the applicant's academic achievement goals is to meet or exceed Tennessee state average TNReady achievement levels by the conclusion of the first charter term which does not set high standards. Because the charter term is 10 years, the school could perform below the state average for 9 years. The applicant did not include the specific STEM industry credentials that will satisfy the TNReady graduate criteria. Academic goals align with achievement goals within the Tennessee Public Charter School Commission's performance framework; however, there is no reference to how these goals align to the community the school intends to serve. While the applicant outlines a plan for Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTP²) that aligns with Tennessee guidelines, only providing skills-based or survey level assessments to those who score at or below the 10th percentile on MAP will likely miss a significant number of students who need tiered intervention support. On page 38 the applicant states, "Students will attend daily 45-minute enrichment periods in ELA, math, and science during these periods, students may receive pull-out English as a second language (ESL) services, special education services, tiered interventions, and/or enrichment activities." Based on this schedule, it is not clear how English Learners who demonstrate a need for both ESL services and tiered interventions will receive services for both to determine if the plan aligns with Tennessee guidelines. The plan does not address how the school will screen and provide services for students who score in the 25th percentile or below. The intervention plan also lacks evidence-based programs and the frequency of progress monitoring. While the applicant provides plans to address chronic absenteeism, a goal was not provided. The applicant provides a plan for ensuring 3rd graders receive proper support but did not give strong evidence of connection between data, tutoring, and interventions.

Assessments: The internal assessments that will provide data for evaluation of the academic program are NWEA MAP administered three times a year to measure proficiency and growth, benchmark assessments each six weeks to review mastery of specific standards within core subject areas, and other formative assessments. A process for collecting, analyzing, and using data to support instruction is provided with detailed plans presented to provide adequate training for teachers and school leaders. Leaders and instructional coaches will be trained by the network staff in the types of data they will be responsible for analyzing and interpreting. Teachers will receive training on data analysis during summer professional development, grade-level team meetings, data days, and data analysis meetings. The applicant states that some of the data will come from teacher-created curricular materials in some subject areas so there is no way to ensure assessments align with state standards. Notably, since MAP is a standards-based measure the applicant intends to use as a universal screener, there is no skills-based screener or survey level assessment identified in the suite of assessments described on page 46. EasyCBM is mentioned elsewhere in the application but not in the assessment section. While the use of EasyCBM is mentioned in previous sections, the applicant does not provide the criteria for which a student will receive it or how it will be used in decision-making. Additionally, evidence is not provided

on what will be used for a dyslexia-specific screener.

School Calendar and Schedule: The applicant provides a school calendar (Attachment B) and student schedules (Attachment C) to demonstrate how they meet the Tennessee minimum requirements of the equivalent of 180 days of instruction. Students will attend weekdays for 7.75 hours, except on Wednesday when they will have early release and attend 5.25 hours. Students also have access to a variety of core, support, and enrichment opportunities each day. Students will have 45-minute enrichment periods in ELA, math, and science each day in each of the three subject areas. This time is used for instructional support aligned to individual student needs, tiered intervention and/or enrichment activities. Students will participate in an elective class each day. Several club and athletic opportunities are also described on pages 50-51. Saturday School, summer school, and after school programming will be offered throughout the year as described on page 51.

While the schedule meets the 180 days of instruction, the extended days may create scheduling challenges for parents and fatigue for students. On page 249, the schedule shows early release days every Wednesday which violates the minimum 6.5 hours of attendance as outlined in TCA 49-6-3004 (e)(1) and does not show any professional development days during the year to understand how they are accounting for the inclement weather days. The start time for school is also not clear since 7:15-7:45 is breakfast/homeroom which is counting as part of the schedule when typically breakfast is before the school day. Additionally, the student schedules in Attachment C are only 30-minute periods on Wednesdays so English Learners who require one hour of daily direct ESL services will not receive them. The applicant does not explain how students with disabilities will receive core instruction and interventions. During the capacity interview, the applicant stated that students “not on standard” are required to attend Saturday tutoring and teachers are required to provide after school tutoring. They do not address the challenges of being able to maintain the continuous staffing for all the supports that extend beyond the school day. Additionally, the budget is not reflective of the cost to compensate staff for these additional duties.

Special Populations: The leadership team at the network level has experience working with special populations as described on page 52 of the application. The Executive Director, Special Education Coordinator, ESL Coordinator, and Director of Special Programs/Elementary Education have experience teaching, coaching, and administrative experience working with students with disabilities, English Learners, gifted students, and students who struggle academically. There is a process for identifying students with disabilities that aligns with the Federal Child Find requirements. The Home Language Survey (HLS) and WIDA Screener will be used to identify EL students. The applicant provides a plan for identifying gifted students and a standards-based, inquiry-based curriculum aligned to Tennessee academic standards with additional enrichment for gifted students is outlined. The applicant outlines a plan to comply with educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment and providing specialized services as needed. The proposed process for identifying English Learners aligns with state guidance. The applicant provides a progress monitoring process that includes analysis of assessment data during regular grade level, Data Team, and Student Study Team meetings. The ESL Coordinator and EL teachers will reference Individualized Instruction Plans (ILPs) to monitor and evaluate students' progress toward goals. Related to at-risk students, the applicant will implement Tennessee's RTI Framework, including the universal screener, MAP and an Early Warning System process that includes data collection of multiple sources of data.

The applicant's plan for hiring qualified personnel and adapting the school schedule to address the needs of special populations is inadequate based on enrollment projections. For example, with 52% of students expected to be an English Learner of the expected 330 students, only 1 ESL certified teacher is planned to be hired in year 1. With 10% of the 330 students anticipated to have exceptional needs, only 1 special education teacher is planned to be hired along with 1 aide. An interventionist is not planned to be hired until year 3 and a gifted and talented teacher is not planned to be hired until year 4. This means there will not be staff available to provide services to students with specific needs. During the capacity

interview the applicant stated they are open to hiring more teachers if the need arises, which is not a proactive approach based on their enrollment projections. There is a process for identifying students with disabilities, but by only screening those students who score at or below the 10th percentile on MAP with EasyCBM, which may cause many students with disabilities not to be identified and students who need interventions not to be provided.

School Culture and Discipline: The applicant outlines strategies to promote a positive academic environment using restorative practices and the PBIS framework and listing behavior expectations in various locations. Home visits are part of the parent engagement plan to partner with parents. They will use orientation, back-to-school assemblies, student success celebrations, and the parent-student handbook to implement and sustain school culture. Teachers and administrators will use summer professional development to train in the school culture fundamentals.

While the applicant mentions counselors helping students identify their postsecondary goals, the focus appears to be on colleges and universities only. The Student Handbook provided in Attachment D is for Memphis School of Excellence, not the proposed Nashville School of Excellence. The handbook did not address incentives for positive behavior through PBIS.

Recruitment and Enrollment: The applicant's enrollment policy provided in Attachment F complies with state law and district policies. The applicant will partner with local organizations to engage the community and establish relationships with local parents, canvas neighborhoods, send mail and email communication, advertise on billboards, host open house events, and conduct school tours and meet and greets to foster demand and support. They want to partner with community organizations as recruitment partners, such as Youth Encouragement Services (YES) and Family Center, to engage diverse populations.

While the enrollment policy is compliant, it does not follow the district's choice process timeline. There are not sufficient details to know which teammates will engage in canvassing to support the applicant's recruitment and enrollment strategy. Based on the timeline provided on page 74, it is not realistic that the facility will be ready to showcase to prospective families by the date identified in the outline. The marketing plan does not provide robust details around the applicant's STEM focus and PLTW curriculum and the connections to career opportunities to support this model since it is available to students at most MNPS schools. The recruitment plan for getting diverse populations lacks details as well to know if this will be successful. While the applicant promotes a small, family-centered model, the enrollment projections of the 6-12 school do not support that marketing plan.

Parent and Community Engagement and Support: The evidence of community feedback provided by the applicant is a survey conducted in Fall 2023 to community members which they state indicates that STEM and career and college prep are key areas of interest. The applicant provides a list of community partners, such as Tennessee STEM Innovation Network (TSIN), City Fund, St. Jude's, Bethel, and University of Memphis. The applicant will create a virtual suggestion box on the website for parents to engage and provide feedback. Additional communication methods are a school website, social media, PowerSchool, language translations, phone calls, and newsletters. They will also have a parent board, parent advisory council, Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), meet and greets, and home visits throughout the life of the school. The plan for information and educating parents on school policies will be through the student and parent handbook, orientation, meet and greets, and home visits. The applicant want to provide adult classes on language and technology.

There is little evidence that the applicant did research when choosing this part of Nashville to locate. During the capacity interview, the applicant still did not expand on why they chose this part of town or why their school would be bigger than most of the others in the targeted area. While they cite a survey indicating community members are interested in STEM education, most schools in the area provide this in some capacity so this does not support that they will be able to attract a diverse population. The

survey results only indicated interest in STEM education but did not provide evidence of interest in their proposed school. Additionally, Attachment G does not include any letters of support from prospective families. Most of the letters are from Memphis organizations so there is little evidence that they have support from the Nashville community. In the capacity interview they indicated that they had talked to a few groups about potential partnerships, but there was no evidence provided.

High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness: The applicant provides a plan for meeting the Tennessee graduation requirements (including credits, transcripts, electives, and GPA calculation) and an explanation of any additional requirements beyond the State’s requirement. The key characteristics of the academic plan are enriched curriculum, and rigorous curriculum. The curriculum will be aligned to TN standards and Next Generation Science Standards with the focus on STEM and technology integration. The applicant explains how the graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college and postsecondary opportunities by offering electives aligned to Tennessee preferred industry credentials, CTE programs of study, and dual enrollment. Students will take EOC exams and ACT or SAT before graduation. The applicant outlines systems and structures to address students at risk of dropping out or not meeting graduation requirements by reviewing a comprehensive variety of data and providing supports, as needed. The applicant states they will use the Tennessee RTI² framework. They will have an Early Warning System (EWS) that will include attendance, behavioral, and academic competency indicators.

The applicant provides a plan for meeting the Tennessee graduation requirements (including credits, transcripts, electives) and an explanation of any additional requirements beyond the State’s requirements. However, since “students will receive letter-based grades for all academic courses, including electives”, they do not explain how these letter grades will be converted to a numeric scale to align to State Board policy 3.301 to add percentage point weights and how GPA will be calculated from letter grades. The application contains information related to kindergarten grades and report cards even though they propose a 6-12 school. The applicant does not clearly nor persuasively explain how the school’s graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college/career or other postsecondary opportunities, especially in STEM-related fields.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

OPERATIONAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state’s rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Governance
2. Start Up Plan
3. Facilities
4. Personnel/Human Capital
5. Professional Development
6. Insurance
7. Transportation
8. Food Service
9. Additional Operations

10. Charter Management Organization (if applicable)
11. Network Vision, Growth Plan, & Capacity
12. Network Management
13. Network Governance
14. Network-Wide Personnel and Human Capital Projections
15. School Replication (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Governance: The applicant's sponsoring entity is the Read Foundation (RF) which will focus on the promotion of STEM in school environments. They provide a plan for parent involvement and an advisory committee structure with an academic committee and finance committee. They state the board structure allows the members expertise in specific areas of oversight. The areas of expertise include community service/outreach, public relations, legal, education, management, parent & community involvement. The applicant outlines an orientation program and development activities throughout the year, provided by BoardOnTrack. At least one annual Board training course will be required, and board retreats will be conducted as needed.

While information is provided about the governing board, there is not information about how this board functions to ensure effective governance and oversight. Several members live in Texas, one lives in Cookeville, and another is a partner in a law firm that is based in Atlanta (but the resume has a Memphis address). The applicant does not provide information in the application or during the capacity interview that indicates how the board will be responsive to and engage with parents in Nashville other than they were investigating adding a Nashville parent. While the governance documents are provided in Attachments H, I, J, K, L, M, and N, the bylaws are not signed and executed, and the conflict-of-ethics policy is not signed and executed.

Start-Up Plan: The applicant provides a chart with a start-up timeline. They identify challenges and ways to address these challenges around opening a school in a different region, related to compliance for two authorizers, hiring high-quality staff, selecting candidates that align with the school.

While the start-up timeline is provided, the renovation timeline is unrealistic. In the table on page 119, the applicant indicates that they would close on a facility by December of 2024, and then complete renovations by the end of May 2025, which gives them only 5 months total to design renovations, get them permitted and execute construction when permits in Nashville can take 1-2 months for small projects. The timeline provided is not reasonable since the applicant offers commercial office space and/or industrial space as their choice for a leased facility. Per the enforceable 2018 IBC, a school must include a storm shelter per ICC 500. While it is unknown, it is unlikely that the existing structures are built to ICC 500 standards as this is not a requirement for a commercial building. The potential renovations needed to bring the commercial buildings up to standard could be significant which would extend beyond the proposed 5 months for renovations.

Facilities: The applicant offers a reasonable list of spaces needed to serve the school on the table on pages 122-123. The applicant indicates that they will negotiate a lease which includes the tenant improvements. The Read Foundation is working with real estate partner, Southeast Venture. The executive director of the charter network and the assistant executive director will oversee facilities management for the organization. The facility plan in Table D includes facilities planning steps and calendar timelines for completion.

While the applicant identifies staffing for the facilities plan, they do not provide sufficient information about how they will manage the project without a local presence. Tenant improvements are in the budget, but the amount is low based on the scope of work identified. The applicant identifies several facility options, but a contingency plan is not provided in the application to understand how they will address the renovation window overlapping with the start of school. In the capacity interview, the applicant did not provide a contingency plan, but they did respond that they would be open to delaying a year when asked the question directly. Also, the applicant's response conflicts between their start-up plan in section 2.1 and the timeline offered in section 2.2, and the typical timelines for delivery and installation of furniture and other items needed to run the school.

Personnel/ Human Capital: The applicant states that the principal will be hired by December 2024 once the application is approved by qualified existing staff. Recruitment will include local colleges and universities that enroll diverse student bodies. Salary ranges are provided, and the proposed teacher salaries will be generally higher than MNPS salaries and administrative salaries will be competitive with MNPS. The applicant provides a plan for supporting, developing, and annually evaluating leadership and teachers that aligns with statewide evaluation requirements. The applicant states that every teacher will be assigned to an instructional coach.

While the organizational chart is provided, it is unclear who will manage school-based operations. The Operations Manager role is listed as the network position, but the responsibilities listed cover school-based operational oversight. It is unclear if the Business Manager is a network role or a school-based role. On pages 139-140, the programs listed to get teaching licenses indicate a reliance on hiring uncertificated personnel and getting them certified after they are hired. The school-based leadership team has not been identified. Additionally, the principal is not scheduled to be hired until year 1 of operation, although most new start charters hire their school leader in year 0.

Professional Development: The applicant will provide four professional development days before school starts during the summer. New teachers will have five days of PD, two full PD days will be offered during the year, and teachers will engage in PD from 2-3:45 PM. During this time, teachers meet with their subject area colleagues for collaborative lesson prep. Professional Learning Communities will provide time to meet to analyze data from various sources to inform instructional practices. The Director of Instruction/Secondary Education will work closely with other members of the network academic team (e.g., Director of Special Programs/Elementary Education, Special Education Coordinator, ESL Coordinator, instructional coaches) as well as school-based staff (e.g., the Principal and Dean of Academics) when creating the initial professional development calendar and throughout the year to identify areas that need to be addressed during professional development. The applicant states that PBIS, Implicit Bias, and restorative justice as some of the PD to address special and diverse populations. There is a Grow Your Own Admin Program that teachers can participate in to develop their skill sets. There are other opportunities for teacher leaders, such as mentor teachers. External partnerships, Teach Like a Champion, provides leadership support.

Insurance: The applicant provides insurance coverage by a letter from a broker, but not a carrier. They did not even provide a certificate listing existing coverage for other network schools as documentation of the availability of coverage.

Transportation: The applicant will provide bus service by contracting with a transportation provider. The director of Culture and Discipline will be responsible for oversight of contracted services. They will coordinate with the Dean of Students who will provide daily oversight at the school with direct support of the principal.

While the applicant provides a transportation plan, there is only one bus for years 1 and 2 which only allows for about 50 students to be transported and does not account for any special needs, homeless or foster transportation. During the capacity interview, the applicant stated they expect most students to be car riders which does not fit with the students they indicate that they are trying to serve. Special Needs transportation issues were not addressed other than stating they did not encounter that issue at their other schools.

Food Service: The applicant will offer food service to students for breakfast and lunch every day the school is in session and states they will partner with MNPS to provide meals. They anticipate approximately 34% of students will qualify for free/reduced lunches and intend to participate in the Community Eligibility Provision.

While the applicant indicates partnering with MNPS, there have been no discussions about this partnership with MNPS.

Additional Operations: The applicant provides a plan to have 1:1 student technology with Chromebooks. The student information management plan is outlined to protect student information privacy. The applicant states they will fully comply with coordinated school health requirements. The Dean of Students will be responsible for the safety of the school during day-to-day operations with direct support from the Director of Culture and Discipline. They will contract out for school maintenance services.

The applicant states they will develop the safety and security plan but should have been able to provide one from the existing schools.

Network Vision, Growth Plan and Capacity: The applicant created a network-level team in SY 2019-2020 and has opened four schools in the Memphis area since then.

While the applicant provides evidence of the organizational capacity to open and operate a school, without having the Nashville staff identified, it cannot be determined the level of support that can be offered without adversely impacting existing operations. The report provided in Attachment V is not a comprehensive network report since it is only an Accountant's Compilation Report. The last sentence of the second paragraph says, "This report is limited solely for the information and use of the State of Tennessee Department of Education and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than this specified party." A comprehensive network report needs to contain academic analysis of schools and other pertinent data for the review team to evaluate the network capacity.

Network Management: The applicant provides a list of the network's leadership team and their roles/responsibilities. They provide examples of shared PD, curriculum selection and design, accounting and budget management, IT management, HR management, student recruitment, fundraising, and community relations to demonstrate shared support services. The applicant outlines network and school decision making by function.

Within the information the applicant provides, the principals and school staff do not appear on the organizational charts so it cannot be determined who they would report to determine decision-making responsibilities between the school and network.

Network Governance: The applicant provides an evaluation plan for academic and operational success that includes an evaluation process of the ED, including an evaluation timeline.

As mentioned previously, the plan provided does not thoroughly explain how a single board operating in cities outside of Nashville will be able to hold meetings and realistically encourage all stakeholders to regularly attend, particularly if their students are economically disadvantaged.

Network Wide Personnel and Human Capital Projections: The applicant provided staffing projections aligned to the proposed educational program and supports the school's success.

There is conflicting information provided on page 214, which provides plans for 0.5 Business manager during the first year of operation, but hiring plans indicate a business manager on board 6 months before opening. Additionally, there is information listed in the application where the principal is planned to be hired in year 0; however, other sections indicate that the principal will be hired in year 1. Information is not provided on how they will hire and train a PLTW instructor prior to opening to ensure the model is successful.

School Replication: The Read Foundation provides information that the applicant complies with all five requirements to complete a replication application. The applicant provides the previously approved and authorized application for the school being replicated.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Planning and Budget Worksheet
2. Budget Narrative
3. Network Financial Plan (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Planning and Budget Worksheet/ Budget Narrative: The budget worksheet provided in Attachment AA demonstrates rational assumptions and budget figures that encompass all initial expenses associated with the start-up. Attachment BB details financial procedures, policies, systems, and processes for accounting, payroll, and independent annual audits. Situated within the network of Memphis, TN, they

have procedures in place for payroll, annual audits, and accounting. Read Foundation will provide staffing support services to the applicant around accounting, purchasing, and payroll. The applicant states they will have a business manager, HR specialist and clerical personnel. The applicant states “Nashville School of Excellence, as part of the Read Foundation/Memphis School of Excellence, has support from a network finance and operations team -- as detailed in subsections, f), g), and h). These teams will be responsible for financial and accounting management support at Nashville School of Excellence. The school will utilize the PowerSchool eFinancePlus platform for accounting, finance, and payroll software functions. In addition, the school will contract with a CPA firm for its annual audit.” The applicant states they will have a finance committee, a network finance team and school-based finance team, an ED and assistant ED. The applicant states that the charter network has a cash reserve of approximately \$8 million.

The enrollment projections for year 1, which anticipate 330 students, are unreasonable based on the numerous established middle and high schools within the targeted area. The budget worksheet lists 2 Special Education Teachers in Years 1-2, and 4 in Years 3-5. The worksheet denotes “SPED/ESL” for these line items. The application projects 52% of its population will be English Learners (page 17), or approximately 170 students. Given that State Board Rule 0520-01-19 states that the LEA-wide ESL program staffing ratio shall be based on an average of no more than thirty-five (35) identified EL students per full-time equivalent ESL teacher, the applicant will not meet the required ratio based on 1 budgeted position for an EL teacher in Year 1. The applicant stated in the capacity interview they plan to start with one and hire more if the need arises. However, this is not a proactive approach since these positions are hard to fill, especially after the start of the school year. The amounts budgeted for health insurance, equipment and supplies are also unreasonable to open a school. Additionally, the school model focuses on STEM and PLTW, but the site license and required equipment for the program is not listed.

Network Financial Plan: The applicant states that none of their charter schools have been on fiscal probation in any year and have not faced the threat of bankruptcy. The applicant identifies relationships with several local foundations/funds. The applicant provides a contingency plan that because NSE has support from a charter network with a strong cash reserve (approximately \$8 million), the school could meet financial needs with lower than anticipated revenue in the short-term, and then make structural adjustments in costs over the medium to long-term.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RECORD

The Criteria

According to the state’s rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the Past Performance of the following:

1. Portfolio Summary (if applicable)
2. Performance Record; Academics (if applicable)
3. Performance Record; Operations (if applicable)
4. Performance Record; Fiscal (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Portfolio Summary/Performance Record: Academics: The applicant provides evidence of student achievement by providing MAP growth projections and TVAAS data for the current network of schools:

- Memphis School of Excellence Level 5 2022 and 2023
- Memphis School of Excellence MS Cordova Level 4 2023, Level 5 2022
- Memphis School of Excellence Cordova Elementary Level 5 2022
- Memphis School of Excellence Level 5 2023, 5, Level 5 2022

The applicant also provides data about graduation rates and college acceptance rate to demonstrate successful strategies. The school also states their accomplishment as a STEM School Designation to demonstrate their success. They attribute this success to teacher quality and retention, enriched curriculum, robust data analysis, progress monitoring, and parent partnerships. When faced with a challenge of an increase in the population of English Learners from 8.4% in 2019-2020 to 28% in 2021-2022, they expanded their coaching model to further support data analysis. Another challenge is Memphis School of Excellence earning a letter D and TVAAS score of 1 in 2023. The applicant states the primary cause of this was the teacher shortage, increase in the population of English Learners, and the challenge of exceeding large growth in achievement in 2021-2022.

While the applicant provided years with high TVAAS ratings, the overall achievement percentages are below proficiency. The current ACT scores are below the MNPS average.

Performance Record: Operations/Performance Record: Fiscal: The applicant did not provide the 2022-2023 School Improvement Plan meeting agendas and minutes, annual Title I meeting documents, McKinney-Vento training documents, or the Title I Family Engagement documents. The financial documents provided are from 2021-2022 rather than the current year and there was no information provided about why the current documents are not included. The Read Foundation's audited financials for 2022-2023 were obtained from the TN Comptroller's website which demonstrate a clean opinion from Crosslin, an independent auditor. However, there are some corrective actions needed.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.



Charter New Start Application Review Team Findings

LEAD Cameron Elementary School

Spring 2024| MNPS Office of Charter
Schools



METRO
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Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
SECTION 1: REPORT SUMMARY	3
About the State Law	3
About the Proposed School	3
Summary Rating	4
SECTION 2: THE EVALUATION PROCESS	4
The Review Committee	4
Ratings and Criteria	5
Evaluation Process for New Start Applications	5
Evaluation Categories	6
SECTION 3: THE RATINGS	6
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	6
The Criteria	6
Evidence Findings	6
Operational Plan and Capacity	12
The Criteria	12
Evidence Findings	12
Financial Plan and Capacity	14
The Criteria	14
Evidence Findings	15
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	15
The Criteria	15
Evidence Findings	16

Section 1: Report Summary

ABOUT THE STATE LAW

On or before February 1 of the year preceding the year in which the proposed public charter school plans to begin operation, the sponsor seeking to establish a public charter school shall prepare and file with the authorizer and the department of education an application using the application template developed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

T.C.A. 49-13-108 - Approval or denial of public charter school application by public charter school authorizer.

Evidence Findings presented to the board to consider in the recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and, if offered by the authorizer, applicant interviews.

Reviewers will score each of the subsections under the four categories (Academic Plan Design and Capacity, Operational Plan and Capacity, Financial Plan and Capacity, Portfolio Review and Performance Record). A reviewer’s subsection scores for a category shall be considered collectively to determine the summary rating for that category.

For an application to be deemed eligible for approval, the summary ratings for all applicable categories must be “Meets or Exceeds the Standard.” Thus, a single score of a “Does Not Meet Standard” or “Partially Meets Standard” on a subsection of a category does not necessarily prevent an otherwise satisfactory category from being scored a “Meets or Exceeds the Standard” overall. The totality of evidence reviewed should determine the overall score for each category.

ABOUT THE PROPOSED SCHOOL

Proposed Model: Create a K-12 pathway towards success in college and life	
Grades	K-5
Enrollment	360
Location/Zone	LEAD Cameron Community (Southeast Nashville)

SUMMARY RATING

There are three ratings (Meets or Exceeds, Partially Meets, or Does Not Meet). The committee’s evidence findings are outlined on the following pages.

THE MNPS REVIEW COMMITTEE RATINGS LEAD CAMERON ES	
CATEGORY	OVERALL RATING
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Operational Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	Partially Meets Standard

Section 2: The Evaluation Process

THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

To ensure our review team consisted of cross departmental experts, MNPS appointed a core team specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. Individuals with specific expertise in Special Education, English Language Learners, Business and Finance, Curriculum, Facilities, Strategic Investments and Operations review each application to provide the needed expertise in those areas. Finally, the review team includes an external consultant who has experience and expertise in specialized areas.

A team of 10 people reviewed the new start applications and produced the evidence findings. The review committee members included:

- Director of Exceptional Education
- Coordinator of English Learners
- Executive Officer of Resource Strategy
- Executive Officer Operations
- Executive Officer of Teaching and Learning
- Data Coach of Research Assessment and Evaluation
- Director of Boundary and Planning
- Director of Facilities and Planning and Construction
- Partner School Budget Strategy
- External Consultant

RATINGS AND CRITERIA

State law and regulation require the Tennessee Department of Education to provide “a standard application format” (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-116), and “scoring criteria addressing the elements of the charter school application” (State Board of Education Rule 0520-14-01-.01(1)).

Additionally, the State Board of Education has adopted Quality Charter Authorizing Standards in Policy 6.111. Standard 2(c) addresses rigorous approval criteria for the application process and decision making. This Standard provides that a quality authorizer “[r]equires all applicants to present a clear and compelling mission, a quality educational program, a demonstration of community support, a solvent and sustainable budget and contingency financial plans, a clear demonstration of the effectiveness of the model for the target student population, effective governance and management structures and systems, founding team members demonstrating diverse and necessary capabilities in all phases of the school’s development, and clear evidence of the applicant’s capacity to execute its plan successfully.” An application that merits a recommendation for approval should satisfy each of these criteria.

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR NEW START APPLICATIONS

The MNPS Charter Schools Office evaluation process is based off the National Association of Charter School Authorizers standards, which adhere to best practices from authorizers across the country and have also gained statewide and national recognition as rigorous, thorough, fair and impartial practices. A review committee is specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. The MNPS Charter Schools Office oversees the review process and supports the committee. The review committee evaluates the new start application utilizing the published evaluation criteria from TDOE. The evaluation team reaches consensus regarding each section of the new start application, which comprises the final report produced by the Office of Charter Schools. Each section is given a rating of Meets or Exceeds Standard, Partially Meets Standard, or Does Not Meet Standard. The specific criterion for each standard is indicated below.

RATING CHARACTERISTICS	
RATING	CHARACTERISTICS
Meets or Exceeds the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It clearly aligns with the mission and vision of the school. The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation.
Partially Meets Standard	The response meets the criteria in some respects but lacks sufficient detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Does Not Meet Standard	The response is incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; does not align with the mission and vision of

the school; or otherwise raises significant concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

EVALUATION CATEGORIES

The analysis of the new start application is based in four categories:

- Academic Plan Design and Capacity
- Operational Plan and Capacity
- Financial Plan and Capacity
- Portfolio Review and Performance Record

This report includes a summary of evidence justifying the review team's scores and the applicant's responses to the capacity interview. The report indicates the review team's consensus rating for each evaluation category in Section 3.

Section 3: The Ratings

ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. School Mission and Vision
2. Enrollment Summary
3. Academic Focus and Plan
4. Academic Performance Standards
5. Assessments
6. School Calendar and Schedule
7. Special Populations
8. School Culture and Discipline
9. Recruitment and Enrollment
10. Parent and Community Engagement and Support
11. Phase in Turnaround Planning (if applicable)
12. High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the Academic Plan Design and Capacity section **Partially Meets Standard**.

School Mission and Vision: The applicant's mission is to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in both college and life. They state the mission will be accomplished with an emphasis on early literacy and critical thinking, individualized learning acceleration, inclusiveness, SEL, innovative staff professional development, and intentional career and college focus. The applicant links the mission and vision to 6 of the purposes for charter schools found in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13- 102(a):

1. Achievement gap closure between high and low students by prioritizing early literacy skills
2. Options for parents to meet educational needs of students including the implementation of Individual Growth Goals (IGGs),
3. Innovative teaching methods by empowering school leadership teams and teachers in decision-making processes
4. Performance measurement of pupils and faculty through data-informed instructional practices
5. Professional development opportunities for teachers through a coaching program and leadership development program
6. Parental participation in their child's education including student-led conferences, family leadership team, volunteerism

The application includes the goal of closing the achievement gap as one of primary purposes and using Early Literacy skills as the cornerstone in building a strong foundation. The applicant will implement Individual Growth Goals (IGGs) set at 1.5 years of growth over a one-year period in literacy and numeracy; a 95% attendance goal with a dedicated staff member to oversee chronic absenteeism and managing the attendance team; transition plans; SEL and trauma-informed practices integrated into classroom activities; a mindfulness program that is science-backed, and student conferences. The innovations and strategies that are aligned to MNPS ReimaginED are described on pages 18-28. The applicant cites evidence-based curriculum materials related to visible thinking.

While the mission statement is clear, it is not measurable, concise, or compelling. The curriculum and range of opportunities lack details about those they will close achievement gaps related to at-risk learners, students with disabilities, and English Learners, especially on curriculum, universal screeners, culture, climate, and SEL.

Enrollment Summary: The applicant describes the targeted community as central Nashville with a focus on the Glenclyff cluster. The school intends to enroll students of the current families whose older siblings attend LEAD Cameron and LEAD Academy. The applicant states that they have had consistent enrollment of 20-25% of their incoming 5th grade class with younger siblings of rising 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students. The applicant provides the population growth in central Nashville as the rationale for selecting the community where the school will be located. They also cite the LEAD experience from K-12 to ease the learning gap for students entering LEAD Cameron. The enrollment summary is provided with the applicant projecting demographics will be 50% students who are economically disadvantaged, 15% students with disabilities, and 60 % students who are English Learners. The applicant states

they will use the same enrollment practices used for all LEAD schools as described on page 33 of the application.

While the applicant describes the community from which it intends to draw, they do not provide the specific academic performance of existing cluster area elementary schools to support their decision. The general community where the school will be located is in the LEAD Cameron Middle and LEAD Academy High community, but there is not a specific location provided since this is currently not an area with affordable real estate. Additionally, the primary cluster where the students will be coming has not seen significant increases in K-5 enrollment based on the table provided on pages 31-32 of the application. The enrollment summaries provided on the charts on page 35 also do not factor in attrition since the enrollment targets for each year are 60 students even though schools typically see enrollment decline as grade levels advance. Additionally, the enrollment targets do not reflect the current demographics of ED and EL for LEAD's middle school and high school, so if the school is approved the actual student body would likely look different than their provided targets. Several LEAD schools are currently operating below capacity which does not support their ability to meet their enrollment goals.

Academic Focus and Plan: The applicant's academic focus aligns with the school's mission and vision to provide academic and social-emotional skills to thrive in middle school. The applicant identifies key elements of their instructional approach as being focused on high-quality state standards-aligned curriculum, data-driven instruction, and their overall assessment philosophy. The academic plan addresses the needs of the targeted student population, and implements the school's academic focus including curriculum, MTSS, supports for diverse learners, emphasis on foundational literacy skills, collaboration, early college and career exposure, SEL, and teacher development and coaching. The curriculum supports all students' growth and is aligned with Tennessee State Standards as all materials in the application have been approved by the TN State Board. The application states that they will embed science and social studies content in literacy through Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) curriculum in ELA. Amplify Science will emphasize real-world problems and roles. Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum will be used in K-2 for foundational literacy. They will use Eureka Squared curriculum in math to emphasize foundational skills through problem solving and exploration. Students will also have access to intervention as needed. Dreambox Math and Accelerated Reader will be used for blended learning. The applicant identifies that the proposed academic plan will not differ from the sponsor's existing schools other than a more intense focus on foundational skills in K-2 with longer literacy and math blocks.

The school's academic plan may align to TN Academic Standards, but there is not a clear delineation for how student need will be matched to specific programmatic supports to remediate student academic underperformance. The plan for blended learning is provided on page 49, but the applicant does not explain the role of the teacher within the blended learning environment.

Academic Performance Standards: Academic achievement goals are provided to address student learning, student absences, behavior, and other indicators of success. The academic goals are aligned to the mission and vision with continuous monitoring of progress towards the goals through internal assessments. Goals for monitoring student subgroups through English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA), number of students in Tiers II and III interventions, and growth of bottom 25% are also provided. Academic goals also align with the authorizer/state model performance framework as they provide metrics in absolute achievement, growth, chronic absenteeism, and school culture. The applicant states that there will be a process for setting, monitoring, and revising

academic achievement goals through a structured and collaborative endeavor. Annually, the network academic team, school leadership team, and heads of schools join forces to set clear and measurable academic goals for the upcoming school year. This involves an examination of academic data, including NWEA MAP, Fastbridge, LEAD Network Interim Assessments, Unit Assessments, TNReady data, and other relevant data points. As a network-wide practice, they will conduct quarterly data days, providing teachers with dedicated time for in-depth data exploration and collaboration. Common assessments will be administered the week before data days to facilitate comprehensive analysis with teachers. The Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) plan includes hiring, scheduling, curriculum, fidelity checks, data team meetings, and goal tracking to ensure effective implementation. Student attendance goals address student attendance and chronic absenteeism with a tier-based approach to data monitoring, early outreach, student and family engagement, and attendance recognition. The applicant provides a list of requirements students must meet to be promoted. The plans include components to ensure third graders receive tutoring, remediation, support, and summer school as needed.

The school has a projection of a high EL population and while the goals have been identified for EL, the detail of methodology is not available. English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) does not have an AMO aligned to the state AMO of 60%. The applicant outlines a plan for RTI² that aligns with Tennessee guidelines, but the exact interventions used for each tier for math and ELA, description of who will be providing math interventions, details for progress monitoring (noted in the assessment section), and the screening process are not well-defined. Finally, the school's promotion/retention and exit policies and standards are generic and not clearly outlined for matriculation across the school.

Assessment: Internal assessments will provide data for evaluation of the academic program and align with state standards such as unit assessments within the state-approved curriculum, network-created interim assessments. The applicant explains the practice of students using their own data and understanding the purpose of every assessment they take. The application includes evidence of a universal reading screener process, including MAP and Fastbridge for students who fall below the 40th percentile.

While the applicant provides details about tutoring, they have conflicting information about screening for students who will qualify for interventions. In the application on page 66, the applicant states students who fall below the 40th percentile in MAP will be screened using FAST reading CBM measures, but on pages 224 and 244, the applicant states they will use the 25th percentile as cutoffs for Tier II and Tier III in intervention supports so it is unclear in the application which percentile will be used to determine intervention and support. In the capacity interview, the applicant explained the reason for the different thresholds is that the state expectation is 25th percentile, but they have an internal threshold of 40% so they can ensure they are intervening with more students who may qualify for Tier I but may not be on track for scoring On Track/Mastery on TNReady, but the rationale was not clearly articulated to determine if it will provide rich data for evaluation of the academic program.

School Calendar and Schedule: The applicant will follow the MNPS calendar as provided in Attachment B which will meet Tennessee minimum requirements for instructional days. The school calendar (Attachment B) and student schedules (Attachment C) meet Tennessee minimum requirements of the equivalent of 180 days of instruction. The applicant explains how the academic calendar and

schedule will facilitate student learning which includes extended time in ELA to focus on foundational reading skills and a 90-minute math blocks that include intervention or additional support if needed. There is also time for community building and social emotional development. The school calendar includes 45 minutes of RTI personalized learning time block for all grades as provided in Attachment C. The applicant states they will offer before/after care by partnering with the Boys & Girls Club. The application includes a proposal to provide additional targets Foundational Reading Skills support outside of school hours using K-1 Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Modules. This support will be provided by a certified teacher trained in the Science of Reading as described on page 73 of the application. They will also provide targeted after school tutoring to 2nd grade students reading significantly below grade level. After year 3, learning loss bridge camps will be available to rising 3rd graders. Additionally, there are plans to have summer school and Saturday school.

While the calendar and schedules meet Tennessee minimum requirements for days of instruction, ELA instruction in K-2 have a maximum of 120 minutes, while the state recommends 150 minutes in the RTII manual. Additionally, Attachment C does not show Personalized Learning Time (PLT) for intervention in the daily schedule.

Special Populations: The applicant's leadership team has dedicated staff at network level with experience working with special populations, including the Director of EE Instruction, Director of EE Compliance, Director of MTSS, and Chief Academic Officer as described on pages 74-75 of the application. The applicant plans to hire 2 exceptional education teachers for inclusion or pull-out and one English Learner teacher for newcomers and educational assistance. The applicant describes a plan for hiring qualified personnel and adapting the school schedule through mapping, time for small group instruction, etc. to address the needs of special populations described on page 75. There is a process for identifying students with disabilities through RTI², English Learners through the HLS and appropriate screeners, at-risk students with LEAD's Student Needs Assessment Protocol (SNAP), and gifted students through teacher and/or parent referral for testing. The plan ensures dually identified (EE and EL) students will have access to both services outlined in their IEP and ILP plans. The applicant illustrates their data-driven approach with an example of a Student Data Dashboard which has teachers' rosters of students, filterable by class period, to view accommodations for English learners, students with 504 plans, and exceptional education students (page 83). The school plans to administer ACCESS-aligned formative language assessments (FLAs) three times per year to monitor progress towards language goals.

School Culture and Discipline: The applicant outlines a vision for school culture anchored in Ethos with these evidence-based tiered supports:

- PBIS,
- RTI supports
- Building relationships
- Acknowledgement of success
- Family engagement
- CREW,
- BeWell
- Student surveys
- SNAP intervention for at-risk attendance, behavior, and grades,
- Restorative Practice,
- Trauma-informed practice

To create and sustain the culture, all staff will participate in LEAD university, a network professional development that addresses educational priorities that are consistent across the schools. New students and families will go through commitment meetings with staff. Other events will be offered to integrate and inform families like Back-to-School Bash as provided on page 96 of the application. The Student Handbook in Attachment D has positive incentives and discipline task tables. The applicant states they will use DeansList software to manage tracking, communication, and analysis in alignment with the school's PBIS.

Recruitment and Enrollment: The applicant's enrollment policy complies with state law and district policies. The applicant's community outreach will include canvassing neighborhoods, conducting needs assessments, and working with Neighborhood Resource Center and the Family Resource Center to conduct research. Communication will be offered in multiple languages. The applicant plans to leverage their current families by hosting a referral campaign. The Director of Enrollment has experience in student recruitment in the Nashville charter school community. They will also employ a full-time family and community engagement (FACE) coordinator. The applicant states they will draw from past experience with recruiting in diverse communities.

While the applicant provides the family engagement team has knocked on 950 doors and held more than 405 conversations with families about their enrollment intentions, they did not provide evidence about how many of those families had students that are included in the targeted demographic or how many decided to choose LEAD due to their canvassing efforts to determine if there is demand and community support.

Parent and Community Engagement and Support: The applicant cites a series of parent meetings to gather information from potential middle and high school families. The applicant has developed partnerships with Southeast Community Center, Team Smile, Nashville After Zone Alliance (NAZA), the Nations ministry, Nashville International center for Empowerment, and Small World Yoga to provide support from the community. The applicant states that they have adopted new metrics to track families who are meaningfully engaged. There is a family and community engagement (FACE) Coordinator at each school to ensure strong communication with families prior to the school's opening and throughout its life. Additionally, the applicant will use biweekly family surveys, student-led conferences, annual community and family events, social media, parent leadership council, and cultural celebrations as some of the other ongoing communication methods. An inclusive approach to two-way communication with families which includes communicating with families in a language they understand through written translation and oral interpretation is provided.

There are no letters of support from prospective parents despite the applicant stating they contacted many families and are building a waitlist. Two of the letters (Lipscomb University and Nashville Teacher Residency) are identical (pages 282-283, Attachment G). Three of the letters of support (Blueprint Schools Network, Lipscomb University, and Nashville Teacher Residency) mention their partnerships with the existing 6 LEAD schools but do not address LEAD Cameron Elementary specifically (pages 281-283). While a plan for ongoing parent engagement is provided, it is not compelling, so it cannot be determined if it would engage parents throughout the school's life.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

OPERATIONAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Governance
2. Start Up Plan
3. Facilities
4. Personnel/Human Capital
5. Professional Development
6. Insurance
7. Transportation
8. Food Service
9. Additional Operations
10. Charter Management Organization (if applicable)
11. Network Vision, Growth Plan, & Capacity
12. Network Management
13. Network Governance
14. Network-Wide Personnel and Human Capital Projections
15. School Replication (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Governance: The applicant states that the Board is comprised of 14 members which includes a family representative. There is a plan to increase it by 3 to 4 more members. The applicant provides the range of expertise and division of responsibilities of the proposed board. The applicant is in the process of aligning training requirements with the new law passing responsibility of approving training requirements to the State Board of Education.

Start-Up Plan: The applicant references their experience in launching six schools in Davidson County and cites the primary challenges as being time, facilities, talent, enrollment and expanding their model to elementary.

The applicant indicates there is more detail in the start-up plan in the appendix but does not identify which appendices they are referencing. The potential challenges are identified, but the applicant states they will start with low enrollment in year 1 and build a base off that year but they do not provide a rationale to determine if this will adequately address potential challenges effectively. The applicant indicates they may need to seek a one-year delay in school opening if the timeline is not feasible to purchase and renovate a facility and do not address how this will impact student recruitment and families that have already committed to sending their children to the school.

Facilities: The applicant provides examples of their expertise and experience in facility acquisition and management. The applicant states they prefer to purchase and renovate a facility. The contingency plan is to lease with an option to purchase. As previously indicated, if this does not happen according to their timeline, they state they will work with the LEA to push back the opening of the school to Fall 2026. In their interview, the applicant indicated a \$16,000,000 overall construction budget planned for renovation of the proposed 50,000 SF facility.

While the facility plans are provided for a facility, the size of the core classrooms and art room at 700 SF, and kitchen at 500 SF is not reasonable. MNPS plans for 800 to 1,000 SF for elementary classrooms, 1,000 SF for art rooms, and 2,695 SF for full-service kitchens. These spaces are not sufficient for the anticipated student population based on square footage described in the application. The applicant states they have worked through a project plan with timelines, but the plan is not provided. As noted above, the applicant prefers to purchase and renovate a facility. The contingency plan is to lease with an option to purchase. If this does not happen according to their timeline, they will work with MNPS to push back the opening of the school to Fall 2026, but as previously mentioned, they do not address how this will impact student recruitment and families that have already committed to sending their children to the school. The applicant indicates an annual debt service of \$712,000 in their budget, but the budget is only for 5 years.

Personnel/Human Capital: To attract and retain qualified staff, the applicant will provide teachers with up to 10% base salary increases based on their performance. The applicant states they will use the TEAM evaluation model that aligns with statewide evaluation requirements.

The competencies are identified for selecting teachers, but the applicant does not explain how they will identify and measure some of the competencies, such as grit and perseverance.

Staffing plans for diverse learners are not conducive to the school's success as the Table 8 (page 181) lists 2 "Special Education Teacher (Sped, EL, 504)" positions for Year 1 of operation. However, the Year 1 staff assumption on page 16 of Attachment AA lists 1 Special Education Teacher (SPED, EL, 504). One teacher will not be sufficient to meet the needs of all students with IEPs, EL students, and students with 504 plans. Additionally, the staffing for paraprofessionals is not sufficient given the targeted demographics.

Professional Development: The applicant provides a professional development plan that takes place throughout the year, including leadership institute, coaching institute, and weekly sessions. In addition to the general plan, they provide topics to address special and diverse populations by offering sessions specific to the needs of various subgroups represented within the school community.

The professional development plan does not include safety/emergency response training. In the chart outlining the plan, the applicant states the Instructional Manager will work with teachers 2 times a month as needed based on the tiered coaching assessment but does not include a description of that assessment to know how it will maximize success in improving student achievement.

Insurance: The insurance documents provided in Attachment T confirm the required coverage will be provided if the application is approved.

Transportation: The applicant states they will continue to offer transportation through their contract with Grayline. They further state that Grayline is prepared to expand its services to transport more students.

Food Service: The applicant currently contracts with MNPS for food service and has a relationship with the Healthy School Food Collaborative as a contingency plan.

While the applicant indicates their intention to contract with MNPS, there have been no discussions at this point.

Additional Operations: The applicant outlines a technology plan that includes 1:1 Chromebooks for students. The applicant states they will contract out for nursing services and facilities maintenance. They will use Infinite Campus for the data management system and state they will follow all FERPA laws to ensure student privacy is protected.

The applicant does not provide detailed safety and security plans for students, staff, guests, and property.

Network Vision, Growth Plan, and Capacity: The applicant outlines the greatest anticipated risks and challenges and provides how they will address them. These include academic deficits, talented staff, adequate facilities, time, student enrollment, student mobility, community outreach and impact, and funding.

While the challenges of the five-year plan associated with opening additional schools are addressed, they are not comprehensive enough to ensure they can overcome the challenges and risks to achieve their stated outcomes.

Network Management: The applicant states that they charge a management fee of 15% of revenue for each campus to provide central office support, including the senior leadership team, shared services, and school-based support.

Network Governance: The applicant states that the school will be represented by the governing network and will have its own Family Leadership Team that provides advisory support and feedback to the school leadership team.

Network Wide Personnel and Human Capital Projections: The network staffing projections are provided in Tables 6-10.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Planning and Budget Worksheet
2. Budget Narrative
3. Network Financial Plan (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Planning and Budget Worksheet/Budget Narrative: The budget worksheet includes rational assumptions and budget figures that encompass all initial start-up expenses outlined on the Attachment AA worksheet. They provide an outline of procedures and policies for accounting and payroll in Attachment AA. Lead's Annual Audit for FY23, which can be found on their website under public information and referenced on page 188 of their application, indicates they have financial experience amongst internal and external services receiving an Unqualified opinion from Crosslin, PLLC.

The budget worksheet notes unreasonable funding for insurance costs, textbooks, software, laptops, and other non-salary start-up costs. Transportation for year 1 is for one bus which leaves no margin for inflationary increases. Also, there is no provision for students with special transportation needs. The contingency plan to use reserves of an existing line of credit does not support a sound contingency plan. The facilities improvement budget of \$16,000,000 for construction seems adequate for a 50,000 SF facility; however, 50,000 SF is inadequate to serve the proposed student population and perform the functions described in the application.

Network Financial Plan: The applicant states they are in a strong financial position based on annual audits and multiple years of budget surpluses. They articulate a plan to reduce expenses in the event they can't meet revenue projections.

However, the applicant is at risk of not meeting their projected revenue numbers after losing a school from their network. As per their FY24 budget available on their website, revenues are projected at \$53.4 million, while expenses are estimated at \$49.6 million, resulting in a surplus of \$3.8 million. However, with the proposed opening of LEAD Cameron ES and Lead Southeast ES, the applicant is at risk of expenses exceeding revenues in FY25. Although expenses will be incurred for each school, the revenue generated may not offset these expenses significantly.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RECORD

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the Past Performance

1. Portfolio Summary (if applicable)
2. Performance Record; Academics (if applicable)
3. Performance Record; Operations (if applicable)
4. Performance Record; Fiscal (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Portfolio Summary/Performance Record: Academics: The applicant provides evidence of student growth by providing TVAAS scores for the network schools on pages 191-192 of the application. One example was LEAD Academy's turnaround from TVAAS Level 1 in 2021-2022 to TVAAS Level 4 in 2022-2023. LEAD Cameron has been a TVAAS Level 5 school for every year other than 2020-2021 (Held Harmless). The graduation rates for LEAD Academy indicate successful strategies as those rates are above MNPS and state averages: LEAD Academy is 90% and LEAD Southeast is 93% for 2022. The applicant selects LEAD Cameron as an example of high performance. It has been a Reward School 3 times before the pandemic and has maintained growth rates post-pandemic. They attribute this to the emphasis on college prep, personalized learning, LEAD Ethos, culturally responsive supports, and multiple community partnerships. The applicant selects LEAD Brick Church as the lowest performing school in the network. The school identifies the challenges with higher-than-average student behavior issues and chronic absenteeism levels.

Although LEAD Cameron has been a TVAAS Level 5 school for every year other than 2020-2021, the school received a bottom 10% designation from TDOE for school year 21-22. The achievement scores indicate low proficiency rates across the board, the 2022-2023 proficiency rates for LEAD Cameron were below the district in every subject, English –13%, Math –11%, Science –7%, and Social Studies –5% which resulted in the school receiving a 2.35 (Does Not Meet Standard) on the Charter School Annual Performance Framework. The English Learners and BHN subgroups had a score of 1 out of 4 in achievement on the Federal accountability in 2022-2023. The state commission report provides the agreement with the ASD with LEAD Brick Church is not being renewed due to academic performance and enrollment issues. As per the 22-23 APF, the student attrition rate of 32% is high for LEAD Cameron.

Performance Record: Operations/ Performance Record: Fiscal: The agreement with the ASD with LEAD Brick Church is not being renewed due to academic performance and enrollment issues.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.



Charter New Start Application Review Team Findings

LEAD Southeast Elementary School

Spring 2024| MNPS Office of Charter
Schools



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SCHOOLS

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
SECTION 1: REPORT SUMMARY	3
About the State Law	3
About the Proposed School	3
Summary Rating	4
SECTION 2: THE EVALUATION PROCESS	4
The Review Committee	4
Ratings and Criteria	5
Evaluation Process for New Start Applications	5
Evaluation Categories	6
SECTION 3: THE RATINGS	6
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	6
The Criteria	6
Evidence Findings	6
Operational Plan and Capacity	12
The Criteria	12
Evidence Findings	12
Financial Plan and Capacity	15
The Criteria	15
Evidence Findings	15
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	16
The Criteria	16
Evidence Findings	16

Section 1: Report Summary

ABOUT THE STATE LAW

On or before February 1 of the year preceding the year in which the proposed public charter school plans to begin operation, the sponsor seeking to establish a public charter school shall prepare and file with the authorizer and the department of education an application using the application template developed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

T.C.A. 49-13-108 - Approval or denial of public charter school application by public charter school authorizer.

Evidence Findings presented to the board to consider in the recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and, if offered by the authorizer, applicant interviews.

Reviewers will score each of the subsections under the four categories (Academic Plan Design and Capacity, Operational Plan and Capacity, Financial Plan and Capacity, Portfolio Review and Performance Record). A reviewer’s subsection scores for a category shall be considered collectively to determine the summary rating for that category.

For an application to be deemed eligible for approval, the summary ratings for all applicable categories must be “Meets or Exceeds the Standard.” Thus, a single score of a “Does Not Meet Standard” or “Partially Meets Standard” on a subsection of a category does not necessarily prevent an otherwise satisfactory category from being scored a “Meets or Exceeds the Standard” overall. The totality of evidence reviewed should determine the overall score for each category.

ABOUT THE PROPOSED SCHOOL

Proposed Model: Create a K-12 pathway towards success in college and life	
Grades	K-5
Enrollment	360
Location/Zone	LEAD Southeast Community

SUMMARY RATING

There are three ratings (Meets or Exceeds, Partially Meets, or Does Not Meet). The committee’s evidence findings are outlined on the following pages.

THE MNPS REVIEW COMMITTEE RATINGS LEAD SOUTHEAST ES	
CATEGORY	OVERALL RATING
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Operational Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets Standard
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	Partially Meets Standard

Section 2: The Evaluation Process

THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

To ensure our review team consisted of cross departmental experts, MNPS appointed a core team specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. Individuals with specific expertise in Special Education, English Language Learners, Business and Finance, Curriculum, Facilities, Strategic Investments and Operations review each application to provide the needed expertise in those areas. Finally, the review team includes an external consultant who has experience and expertise in specialized areas.

A team of 10 people reviewed the new start applications and produced the evidence findings. The review committee members included:

- Director of Exceptional Education
- Coordinator of English Learners
- Executive Officer of Resource Strategy
- Executive Officer Operations
- Executive Officer of Teaching and Learning
- Data Coach of Research Assessment and Evaluation
- Director of Boundary and Planning
- Director of Facilities and Planning and Construction
- Partner School Budget Strategy
- External Consultant

RATINGS AND CRITERIA

State law and regulation require the Tennessee Department of Education to provide “a standard application format” (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-116), and “scoring criteria addressing the elements of the charter school application” (State Board of Education Rule 0520-14-01-.01(1)).

Additionally, the State Board of Education has adopted Quality Charter Authorizing Standards in Policy 6.111. Standard 2(c) addresses rigorous approval criteria for the application process and decision making. This Standard provides that a quality authorizer “[r]equires all applicants to present a clear and compelling mission, a quality educational program, a demonstration of community support, a solvent and sustainable budget and contingency financial plans, a clear demonstration of the effectiveness of the model for the target student population, effective governance and management structures and systems, founding team members demonstrating diverse and necessary capabilities in all phases of the school’s development, and clear evidence of the applicant’s capacity to execute its plan successfully.” An application that merits a recommendation for approval should satisfy each of these criteria.

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR NEW START APPLICATIONS

The MNPS Charter Schools Office evaluation process is based off the National Association of Charter School Authorizers standards, which adhere to best practices from authorizers across the country and have also gained statewide and national recognition as rigorous, thorough, fair and impartial practices. A review committee is specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. The MNPS Charter Schools Office oversees the review process and supports the committee. The review committee evaluates the new start application utilizing the published evaluation criteria from TDOE. The evaluation team reaches consensus regarding each section of the new start application, which comprises the final report produced by the Office of Charter Schools. Each section is given a rating of Meets or Exceeds Standard, Partially Meets Standard, or Does Not Meet Standard. The specific criterion for each standard is indicated below.

RATING CHARACTERISTICS	
RATING	CHARACTERISTICS
Meets or Exceeds the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It clearly aligns with the mission and vision of the school. The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation.
Partially Meets Standard	The response meets the criteria in some respects but lacks sufficient detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Does Not Meet Standard	The response is incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; does not align with the mission and vision of

the school; or otherwise raises significant concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

EVALUATION CATEGORIES

The analysis of the new start application is based in four categories:

- Academic Plan Design and Capacity
- Operational Plan and Capacity
- Financial Plan and Capacity
- Portfolio Review and Performance Record

This report includes a summary of evidence justifying the review team's scores and the applicant's responses to the capacity interview. The report indicates the review team's consensus rating for each evaluation category in Section 3.

Section 3: The Ratings

ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. School Mission and Vision
2. Enrollment Summary
3. Academic Focus and Plan
4. Academic Performance Standards
5. Assessments
6. School Calendar and Schedule
7. Special Populations
8. School Culture and Discipline
9. Recruitment and Enrollment
10. Parent and Community Engagement and Support
11. Phase in Turnaround Planning (if applicable)
12. High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the Academic Plan Design and Capacity section **Partially Meets Standard**.

School Mission and Vision: The applicant's mission is to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in both college and life. They state the mission will be accomplished with an emphasis on early literacy and critical thinking, individualized learning acceleration, inclusiveness, SEL, innovative staff professional development, and intentional career and college focus. The applicant provides they have been serving the Southeast Community since 2013, with almost 1,000 students in the LEAD Southeast middle and high schools, which has allowed them to develop strong relationships with students and families. The applicant links the mission and vision to 6 of the purposes for charter schools found in Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13- 102(a):

1. Achievement gap closure between high and low students by prioritizing early literacy skills
2. Options for parents to meet educational needs of students including the implementation of Individual Growth Goals (IGGs),
3. Innovative teaching methods by empowering school leadership teams and teachers in decision-making processes
4. Performance measurement of pupils and faculty through data-informed instructional practices
5. Professional development opportunities for teachers through a coaching program and leadership development program
6. Parental participation in their child's education including student-led conferences, family leadership team, volunteerism

The application includes the goal of closing the achievement gap as one of primary purposes and using Early Literacy skills as the cornerstone in building a strong foundation. The applicant will implement Individual Growth Goals (IGGs) set at 1.5 years of growth over a one-year period in literacy and numeracy; a 95% attendance goal with a dedicated staff member to oversee chronic absenteeism and managing the attendance team; transition plans; SEL and trauma-informed practices integrated into classroom activities; a mindfulness program that is science-backed, and student conferences. The innovations and strategies that are aligned to MNPS ReimaginED. The applicant cites evidence-based curriculum materials related to visible thinking. The applicant states that the new school will join a strong culture of schools built at LEAD SE MS and LEAD SE HS.

While the mission statement is clear, it is not measurable, concise, or compelling. The curriculum and range of opportunities lack details about those they will close achievement gaps related to at-risk learners, students with disabilities, and English Learners, especially on curriculum, universal screeners, culture, climate, and SEL.

Enrollment Summary: The applicant describes the targeted community as Cane Ridge, Antioch, and Glenclyff clusters located in the southeast region of Davidson County, with the ideal location in the Glenclyff cluster close to the middle and high schools where they serve over 800 students in grades 5-12. The school intends to enroll students of the current families whose older siblings attend LEAD Southeast Middle and High School. The application states that LEAD Southeast Middle consistently enroll 35-55% of the incoming 5th grade class with younger siblings of the rising 6th, 7th, and 8th grade

students which they state demonstrates demand within the current school community for options for students in lower grades. The applicant provides the population growth in central Nashville as the rationale for selecting the community where the school will be located. They also cite the LEAD experience from K-12 to ease the learning gap for students entering LEAD Cameron. The enrollment summary is provided with the applicant projecting demographics will be 30% students who are economically disadvantaged, 10% students with disabilities, and 50 % students who are English Learners. The applicant states they will use the same enrollment practices used for all LEAD schools as described on page 33 of the application.

While the applicant describes the community from which it intends to draw, they do not provide the specific academic performance of existing cluster area elementary schools to support their decision. The general community where the school will be located is in the LEAD Prep Southeast Middle and High community, but there is not a specific location provided other than the plan to recruit from Antioch, Cane Ridge, and Glenclyff, since this is currently not an area with affordable real estate. Additionally, the primary cluster where the students will be coming has not seen significant increases in K-5 enrollment based on the table provided on pages 31-32 of the application. The enrollment summaries provided also do not factor in attrition since the enrollment targets for each year are 60 students even though schools typically see enrollment decline as grade levels advance. Additionally, the enrollment targets do not reflect the current demographics of ED and EL for LEAD's middle school and high school, so if the school is approved the actual student body would likely look different than their provided targets. Several LEAD schools are currently operating below capacity which does not support their ability to meet their enrollment goals.

Academic Focus and Plan: The applicant's academic focus aligns with the school's mission and vision to provide academic and social-emotional skills to thrive in middle school provided on page 36. The applicant identifies key elements of their instructional approach as being focused on high-quality state standards-aligned curriculum, data-driven instruction, and their overall assessment philosophy. The academic plan addresses the needs of the targeted student population, and implements the school's academic focus including curriculum, MTSS, supports for diverse learners, emphasis on foundational literacy skills, collaboration, early college and career exposure, SEL, and teacher development and coaching. The curriculum supports all students' growth and is aligned with Tennessee State Standards as all materials in the application have been approved by the TN State Board. The application states that they will embed science and social studies content in literacy through Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) curriculum in ELA. Amplify Science will emphasize real-world problems and roles. Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum will be used in K-2 for foundational literacy. They will use Eureka Squared curriculum in math to emphasize foundational skills through problem solving and exploration. Students will also have access to intervention as needed. Dreambox Math and Accelerated Reader will be used for blended learning. The applicant identifies that the proposed academic plan will not differ from the sponsor's existing schools other than a more intense focus on foundational skills in K-2 with longer literacy and math blocks.

The school's academic plan may align to TN Academic Standards, but there is not a clear delineation for how student need will be matched to specific programmatic supports to remediate student academic underperformance. The plan for blended learning is provided, but the applicant does not explain the role of the teacher within the blended learning environment.

Academic Performance Standards: Academic achievement goals are provided to address student learning, student absences, behavior, and other indicators of success. The academic goals are aligned to the mission and vision with continuous monitoring of progress towards the goals through internal assessments. Goals for monitoring student subgroups through English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA), number of students in Tiers II and III interventions, and growth of bottom 25% are also provided. Academic goals also align with the authorizer/state model performance framework as they provide metrics in absolute achievement, growth, chronic absenteeism, and school culture. The applicant states that there will be a process for setting, monitoring, and revising academic achievement goals through a structured and collaborative endeavor. Annually, the network academic team, school leadership team, and heads of schools join forces to set clear and measurable academic goals for the upcoming school year. This involves an examination of academic data, including NWEA MAP, Fastbridge, LEAD Network Interim Assessments, Unit Assessments, TNReady data, and other relevant data points. As a network-wide practice, they will conduct quarterly data days, providing teachers with dedicated time for in-depth data exploration and collaboration. Common assessments will be administered the week before data days to facilitate comprehensive analysis with teachers. The Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) plan includes hiring, scheduling, curriculum, fidelity checks, data team meetings, and goal tracking to ensure effective implementation. Student attendance goals address student attendance and chronic absenteeism with a tier-based approach to data monitoring, early outreach, student and family engagement, and attendance recognition. The applicant provides a list of requirements students must meet to be promoted. The plans include components to ensure third graders receive tutoring, remediation, support, and summer school as needed.

The school has a projection of a high EL population and while the goals have been identified for EL, the detail of methodology is not available. English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) does not have an AMO aligned to the state AMO of 60%. The applicant outlines a plan for RTI² that aligns with Tennessee guidelines, but the exact interventions used for each tier for math and ELA, description of who will be providing math interventions, details for progress monitoring (noted in the assessment section), and the screening process are not well-defined. During the capacity interview, when asked about intervention programs, the applicant started using DIBELS, which is not an intervention program, it is a screener. Moreover, DIBELS is not mentioned in the entirety of the written application. Additionally, there was conflicting information regarding which math intervention program(s) would be used and why. At the conclusion of the capacity interview, the applicant chose to send additional intervention documents. Overall, the applicant did not provide a cohesive response to the interventions and RTI model in the application or capacity interview to determine if it is a strong plan. Finally, the school's promotion/retention and exit policies and standards on pages 58-59 are generic and not clearly outlined for matriculation across the school.

Assessment: Internal assessments will provide data for evaluation of the academic program and align with state standards such as unit assessments within the state-approved curriculum, network-created interim assessments. The applicant explains the practice of students using their own data and understanding the purpose of every assessment they take. The application includes evidence of a universal reading screener process, including MAP and Fastbridge for students who fall below the 40th percentile.

While the applicant provides details about tutoring, they have conflicting information about screening for students who will qualify for interventions. In the application on page 66, the applicant states students who fall below the 40th percentile in MAP will be screened using FAST reading CBM measures, but on pages 224 and 244, the applicant states they will use the 25th percentile as cutoffs for Tier II and Tier III in intervention supports so it is unclear in the application which percentile will be used to determine intervention and support. In the capacity interview, the applicant explained the reason for the different thresholds is that the state expectation is 25th percentile, but they have an internal threshold of 40% so they can ensure they are intervening with more students who may qualify for Tier I but may not be on track for scoring On Track/Mastery on TNReady, but the rationale was not clearly articulated to determine if it will provide rich data for evaluation of the academic program.

School Calendar and Schedule: The applicant will follow the MNPS calendar as provided in Attachment B which will meet Tennessee minimum requirements for instructional days. The school calendar (Attachment B) and student schedules (Attachment C) meet Tennessee minimum requirements of the equivalent of 180 days of instruction. The applicant explains how the academic calendar and schedule will facilitate student learning which includes extended time in ELA to focus on foundational reading skills and a 90-minute math blocks that include intervention or additional support if needed. There is also time for community building and social emotional development. The school calendar includes 45 minutes of RTI personalized learning time block for all grades as provided in Attachment C. The applicant states they will offer before/after care by partnering with the Boys & Girls Club. The application includes a proposal to provide additional targets Foundational Reading Skills support outside of school hours using K-1 Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Modules. This support will be provided by a certified teacher trained in the Science of Reading. They will also provide targeted after school tutoring to 2nd grade students reading significantly below grade level. After year 3, learning loss bridge camps will be available to rising 3rd graders. Additionally, there are plans to have summer school and Saturday school.

While the calendar and schedules meet Tennessee minimum requirements for days of instruction, ELA instruction in K-2 will be at most 120 minutes, while the state recommends 150 minutes in the RTI² manual. Additionally, Attachment C does not show Personalized Learning Time (PLT) for intervention in the daily schedule.

Special Populations: The applicant's leadership team has dedicated staff at network level with experience working with special populations, including the Director of EE Instruction, Director of EE Compliance, Director of MTSS, and Chief Academic Officer. The applicant plans to hire 2 exceptional education teachers for inclusion or pull-out and one English Learner teacher for newcomers and educational assistance. The applicant describes a plan for hiring qualified personnel and adapting the school schedule through mapping, time for small group instruction, etc. to address the needs of special populations. There is a process for identifying students with disabilities through RTI², English Learners through the HLS and appropriate screeners, at-risk students with LEAD's Student Needs Assessment Protocol (SNAP), and gifted students through teacher and/or parent referral for testing. The plan ensures dually identified (EE and EL) students will have access to both services outlined in their IEP and ILP plans. The applicant illustrates their data-driven approach with an example of a Student Data Dashboard which has teachers' rosters of students, filterable by class period, to view accommodations for English learners, students with 504 plans, and exceptional education students. The school plans to administer ACCESS-aligned formative language assessments (FLAs) three times per year to monitor progress towards language goals.

School Culture and Discipline: The applicant outlines a vision for school culture on pages 89-95 anchored in Ethos with these evidence-based tiered supports:

- PBIS,
- RTI supports
- Building relationships
- Acknowledgement of success
- Family engagement
- CREW,
- BeWell
- Student surveys
- SNAP intervention for at-risk attendance, behavior, and grades,
- Restorative Practice,
- Trauma-informed practice

To create and sustain the culture, all staff will participate in LEAD university, a network professional development that addresses educational priorities that are consistent across the schools. New students and families will go through commitment meetings with staff. Other events will be offered to integrate and inform families, like Back-to-School Bash. The Student Handbook in Attachment D has positive incentives and discipline task tables. The applicant states they will use DeansList software to manage tracking, communication, and analysis in alignment with the school's PBIS.

Recruitment and Enrollment: The applicant's enrollment policy complies with state law and district policies. The applicant's community outreach will include canvassing neighborhoods, conducting needs assessments, and working with Neighborhood Resource Center and the Family Resource Center to conduct research. Communication will be offered in multiple languages. The applicant plans to leverage their current families by hosting a referral campaign. The Director of Enrollment has experience in student recruitment in the Nashville charter school community. They will also employ a full-time family and community engagement (FACE) coordinator. The applicant states they will draw from past experience with recruiting in diverse communities.

While the applicant provides the family engagement team has knocked on 1350 doors and held more than 820 conversations with families about their enrollment intentions, they did not provide evidence about how many of those families had students that are included in the targeted demographic or how many decided to choose LEAD due to their canvassing efforts to determine if there is demand and community support.

Parent and Community Engagement and Support: The applicant cites a series of parent meetings to gather information from potential middle and high school families. The applicant has developed partnerships with Southeast Community Center, Team Smile, Nashville After Zone Alliance (NAZA), the Nations ministry, Nashville International center for Empowerment, and Small World Yoga to provide support from the community. The applicant states that they have adopted new metrics to track families who are meaningfully engaged. There is a family and community engagement (FACE) Coordinator at each school to ensure strong communication with families prior to the school's opening and throughout its life. Additionally, the applicant will use biweekly family surveys, student-led conferences, annual community and family events, social media, parent leadership council, and cultural celebrations as some of the other ongoing communication methods. The application outlines

the inclusive approach to two-way communication with families which includes communicating with families in a language they understand through written translation and oral interpretation.

There are no letters from prospective parents despite the applicant stating they contacted many families and are building a waitlist. Two of the letters (Lipscomb University and Nashville Teacher Residency) are identical (pages 282-283, Attachment G). Three of the letters of support (Blueprint Schools Network, Lipscomb University, and Nashville Teacher Residency) mention their partnerships with the existing 6 LEAD schools but do not address LEAD Southeast Elementary specifically (pages 281-283). While a plan for ongoing parent engagement is provided, it is not compelling, so it cannot be determined if it would engage parents throughout the school's life.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

OPERATIONAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Governance
2. Start Up Plan
3. Facilities
4. Personnel/Human Capital
5. Professional Development
6. Insurance
7. Transportation
8. Food Service
9. Additional Operations
10. Charter Management Organization (if applicable)
11. Network Vision, Growth Plan, & Capacity
12. Network Management
13. Network Governance
14. Network-Wide Personnel and Human Capital Projections
15. School Replication (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Governance: The applicant states that the Board is comprised of 14 members which includes a family representative. There is a plan to increase it by 3 to 4 more members. The applicant provides the range of expertise and division of responsibilities of the proposed board. The applicant is in the process of aligning training requirements with the new law passing responsibility of approving training requirements to the State Board of Education.

Start-Up Plan: The applicant references their experience in launching six schools in Davidson County and cites the primary challenges as being time, facilities, talent, enrollment and expanding their model to elementary.

The applicant indicates there is more detail in the start-up plan in the appendix but does not identify which appendices they are referencing. The potential challenges are identified, but the applicant states they will start with low enrollment in year 1 and build a base off that year but they do not provide a rationale to determine if this will adequately address potential challenges effectively. The applicant indicates they may need to seek a one-year delay in school opening if the timeline is not feasible to purchase and renovate a facility and do not address how this will impact student recruitment and families that have already committed to sending their children to the school.

Facilities: The applicant provides examples of their expertise and experience in facility acquisition and management. The applicant states they prefer to purchase and renovate a facility. The contingency plan is to lease with an option to purchase. As previously indicated, if this does not happen according to their timeline, they state they will work with the LEA to push back the opening of the school to Fall 2026. In their interview, the applicant indicated a \$16,000,000 overall construction budget planned for renovation of the proposed 50,000 SF facility.

While the facility plans are provided for a facility, the size is not reasonable related to the core classrooms and art room at 700 SF, and kitchen at 500 SF. MNPS plans for 800 to 1,000 SF for elementary classrooms, 1,000 SF for art rooms, and 2,695 SF for full-service kitchens. These spaces are not sufficient for the anticipated student population based on functions described in the application. The applicant states they have worked through a project plan with timelines, but the plan is not provided. As noted above, the applicant prefers to purchase and renovate a facility. The contingency plan is to lease with an option to purchase. If this does not happen according to their timeline, they will work with MNPS to push back the opening of the school to Fall 2026, but as previously mentioned, they do not address how this will impact student recruitment and families that have already committed to sending their children to the school. The applicant indicates an annual debt service of \$712,000 in their budget, but the budget is only for 5 years.

Personnel/Human Capital: To attract and retain qualified staff, the applicant will provide teachers with up to 10% base salary increases based on their performance. The applicant states they will use the TEAM evaluation model that aligns with statewide evaluation requirements.

The competencies are identified for selecting teachers, but the applicant does not explain how they will identify and measure some of the competencies, such as grit and perseverance.

Staffing plans for diverse learners are not conducive to the school's success as the Table 8 lists 2 "Special Education Teacher (Sped, EL, 504)" positions for Year 1 of operation. However, the Year 1 staff assumption on page 16 of Attachment AA lists 1 Special Education Teacher (SPED, EL, 504). One teacher will not be sufficient to meet the needs of all students with IEPs, EL students, and students with 504 plans. Additionally, the staffing for paraprofessionals is not sufficient given the targeted demographics.

Professional Development: The applicant provides a professional development plan that takes place throughout the year, including leadership institute, coaching institute, and weekly sessions.

In addition to the general plan, they provide topics to address special and diverse populations by offering sessions specific to the needs of various subgroups represented within the school community.

The professional development plan does not include safety/emergency response training. In the chart outlining the plan, the applicant states the Instructional Manager will work with teachers 2 times a month as needed based on the tiered coaching assessment but does not include a description of that assessment to know how it will maximize success in improving student achievement.

Insurance: The insurance documents provided in Attachment T confirm the required coverage will be provided if the application is approved.

Transportation: The applicant states they will continue to offer transportation through their contract with Grayline. They further state that Grayline is prepared to expand its services to transport more students.

Food Service: The applicant currently contracts with MNPS for food service and has a relationship with the Healthy School Food Collaborative as a contingency plan.

While the applicant indicates their intention to contract with MNPS, there have been no discussions at this point.

Additional Operations: The applicant outlines a technology plan that includes 1:1 Chromebooks for students. The applicant states they will contract out for nursing services and facilities maintenance. They will use Infinite Campus for the data management system and state they will follow all FERPA laws to ensure student privacy is protected.

The applicant does not provide detailed safety and security plans for students, staff, guests, and property.

Network Vision, Growth Plan, and Capacity: The applicant outlines the greatest anticipated risks and challenges and provides how they will address them. These include academic deficits, talented staff, adequate facilities, time, student enrollment, student mobility, community outreach and impact, and funding.

While the challenges of the five-year plan associated with opening additional schools are addressed, they are not comprehensive enough to ensure they can overcome the challenges and risks to achieve their stated outcomes.

Network Management: The applicant states that they charge a management fee of 15% of revenue for each campus to provide central office support, including the senior leadership team, shared services, and school-based support.

Network Governance: The applicant states that the school will be represented by the governing network and will have its own Family Leadership Team that provides advisory support and feedback to the school leadership team.

Network Wide Personnel and Human Capital Projections: The network staffing projections are provided in Tables 6-10.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Planning and Budget Worksheet
2. Budget Narrative
3. Network Financial Plan (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Planning and Budget Worksheet/Budget Narrative: The budget worksheet includes rational assumptions and budget figures that encompass all initial start-up expenses outlined on the Attachment AA worksheet. They provide an outline of procedures and policies for accounting and payroll in Attachment AA. Lead's Annual Audit for FY23, which can be found on their website under public information and referenced on page 188 of their application, indicates they have financial experience amongst internal and external services receiving an Unqualified opinion from Crosslin, PLLC.

The budget worksheet notes inadequate funding for insurance costs, textbooks, software, laptops, and other non-salary start-up costs. Transportation for year 1 is for one bus which leaves no margin for inflationary increases. Also, there is no provision for students with special transportation needs. The contingency plan to use reserves of an existing line of credit does not support a sound contingency plan. The facilities improvement budget of \$16,000,000 for construction seems adequate for a 50,000 SF facility; however, 50,000 SF is inadequate to serve the proposed student population and perform the functions described in the application.

Network Financial Plan: The applicant states they are in a strong financial position based on annual audits and multiple years of budget surpluses. They articulate a plan to reduce expenses in the event they can't meet revenue projections.

However, the applicant is at risk of not meeting their projected revenue numbers after losing a school from their network. As per their FY24 budget available on their website, revenues are projected at \$53.4 million, while expenses are estimated at \$49.6 million, resulting in a surplus of \$3.8 million. However, with the proposed opening of Cameron ES and Lead Southeast ES, the applicant is at risk of expenses

exceeding revenues in FY25. Although expenses will be incurred for each school, the revenue generated may not offset these expenses significantly.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RECORD

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the Past Performance

1. Portfolio Summary (if applicable)
2. Performance Record; Academics (if applicable)
3. Performance Record; Operations (if applicable)
4. Performance Record; Fiscal (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Portfolio Summary/Performance Record: Academics: The applicant provides evidence of student growth by providing TVAAS scores for the network schools on pages 191-192 of the application. One example was LEAD Academy's turnaround from TVAAS Level 1 in 2021-2022 to TVAAS Level 4 in 2022-2023. LEAD Cameron has been a TVAAS Level 5 school for every year other than 2020-2021 (Held Harmless). The graduation rates for LEAD Academy indicate successful strategies as those rates are above MNPS and state averages: LEAD Academy is 90% and LEAD Southeast is 93% for 2022. The applicant selects LEAD Cameron as an example of high performance. It has been a Reward School 3 times before the pandemic and has maintained growth rates post-pandemic. They attribute this to the emphasis on college prep, personalized learning, LEAD Ethos, culturally responsive supports, and multiple community partnerships. The applicant selects LEAD Brick Church as the lowest performing school in the network. The school identifies the challenges with higher-than-average student behavior issues and chronic absenteeism levels.

Although LEAD Cameron has been a TVAAS Level 5 school for every year other than 2020-2021, the school received a bottom 10% designation from TDOE for school year 21-22. The achievement scores indicate low proficiency rates across the board, the 2022-2023 proficiency rates for LEAD Cameron were below the district in every subject, English –13%, Math –11%, Science –7%, and Social Studies –5% which resulted in the school receiving a 2.35 (Does Not Meet Standard) on the Charter School Annual Performance Framework. The English Learners and BHN subgroups had a score of 1 out of 4 in achievement on the Federal accountability in 2022-2023. The state commission report provides the agreement with the ASD with LEAD Brick

Church is not being renewed due to academic performance and enrollment issues. As per the 22-23 APF, the student attrition rate of 32% is high for LEAD Cameron.

Performance Record: Operations/ Performance Record: Fiscal: The agreement with the ASD with LEAD Brick Church is not being renewed due to performance and enrollment issues.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard.**



Charter New Start Application Review Team Findings

Nurses Middle College

Spring 2024| MNPS Office of Charter
Schools



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Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
SECTION 1: REPORT SUMMARY	3
About the State Law	3
About the Proposed School	3
Summary Rating	4
SECTION 2: THE EVALUATION PROCESS	4
The Review Committee	4
Ratings and Criteria	5
Evaluation Process for New Start Applications	5
Evaluation Categories	6
SECTION 3: THE RATINGS	6
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	6
The Criteria	6
Evidence Findings	6
Operational Plan and Capacity	14
The Criteria	14
Evidence Findings	14
Financial Plan and Capacity	17
The Criteria	17
Evidence Findings	17
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	17
The Criteria	17
Evidence Findings	18

Section 1: Report Summary

ABOUT THE STATE LAW

On or before February 1 of the year preceding the year in which the proposed public charter school plans to begin operation, the sponsor seeking to establish a public charter school shall prepare and file with the authorizer and the department of education an application using the application template developed by the Tennessee Department of Education.

T.C.A. 49-13-108 - Approval or denial of public charter school application by public charter school authorizer.

Evidence Findings presented to the board to consider in the recommendations for approval or denial will be based on the written application (narrative and attachments), independent due diligence, and, if offered by the authorizer, applicant interviews.

Reviewers will score each of the subsections under the four categories (Academic Plan Design and Capacity, Operational Plan and Capacity, Financial Plan and Capacity, Portfolio Review and Performance Record). A reviewer’s subsection scores for a category shall be considered collectively to determine the summary rating for that category.

For an application to be deemed eligible for approval, the summary ratings for all applicable categories must be “Meets or Exceeds the Standard.” Thus, a single score of a “Does Not Meet Standard” or “Partially Meets Standard” on a subsection of a category does not necessarily prevent an otherwise satisfactory category from being scored a “Meets or Exceeds the Standard” overall. The totality of evidence reviewed should determine the overall score for each category.

ABOUT THE PROPOSED SCHOOL

Proposed Model: Nursing College and Career Preparation	
Grades	9-12
Enrollment	500
Location/Zone	Nashville, TN

SUMMARY RATING

There are three ratings (Meets or Exceeds, Partially Meets, or Does Not Meet). The committee’s evidence findings are outlined on the following pages.

THE MNPS REVIEW COMMITTEE RATINGS NURSES MIDDLE COLLEGE	
CATEGORY	OVERALL RATING
Academic Plan Design and Capacity	Partially Meets
Operational Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets
Financial Plan and Capacity	Partially Meets
Portfolio Review and Performance Record	Not Applicable

Section 2: The Evaluation Process

THE REVIEW COMMITTEE

To ensure our review team consisted of cross departmental experts, MNPS appointed a core team specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. Individuals with specific expertise in Special Education, English Language Learners, Business and Finance, Curriculum, Facilities, Strategic Investments and Operations review each application to provide the needed expertise in those areas. Finally, the review team includes an external consultant who has experience and expertise in specialized areas.

A team of 10 people reviewed the new start applications and produced the evidence findings. The review committee members included:

- Director of Exceptional Education
- Coordinator of English Learners
- Executive Officer of Resource Strategy
- Executive Officer Operations
- Executive Officer of Teaching and Learning
- Data Coach of Research Assessment and Evaluation
- Director of Boundary and Planning
- Director of Facilities and Planning and Construction
- Partner School Budget Strategy
- External Consultant

RATINGS AND CRITERIA

State law and regulation require the Tennessee Department of Education to provide “a standard application format” (Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-13-116), and “scoring criteria addressing the elements of the charter school application” (State Board of Education Rule 0520-14-01-.01(1)).

Additionally, the State Board of Education has adopted Quality Charter Authorizing Standards in Policy 6.111. Standard 2(c) addresses rigorous approval criteria for the application process and decision making. This Standard provides that a quality authorizer “[r]equires all applicants to present a clear and compelling mission, a quality educational program, a demonstration of community support, a solvent and sustainable budget and contingency financial plans, a clear demonstration of the effectiveness of the model for the target student population, effective governance and management structures and systems, founding team members demonstrating diverse and necessary capabilities in all phases of the school’s development, and clear evidence of the applicant’s capacity to execute its plan successfully.” An application that merits a recommendation for approval should satisfy each of these criteria.

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR NEW START APPLICATIONS

The MNPS Charter Schools Office evaluation process is based off the National Association of Charter School Authorizers standards, which adhere to best practices from authorizers across the country and have also gained statewide and national recognition as rigorous, thorough, fair and impartial practices. A review committee is specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. The MNPS Charter Schools Office oversees the review process and supports the committee. The review committee evaluates the new start application utilizing the published evaluation criteria from TDOE. The evaluation team reaches consensus regarding each section of the new start application, which comprises the final report produced by the Office of Charter Schools. Each section is given a rating of Meets or Exceeds Standard, Partially Meets Standard, or Does Not Meet Standard. The specific criterion for each standard is indicated below.

RATING CHARACTERISTICS	
RATING	CHARACTERISTICS
Meets or Exceeds the Standard	The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. It clearly aligns with the mission and vision of the school. The response includes specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation.
Partially Meets Standard	The response meets the criteria in some respects but lacks sufficient detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.
Does Not Meet Standard	The response is incomplete; demonstrates lack of preparation; does not align with the mission and vision of

the school; or otherwise raises significant concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.

EVALUATION CATEGORIES

The analysis of the new start application is based in four categories:

- Academic Plan Design and Capacity
- Operational Plan and Capacity
- Financial Plan and Capacity
- Portfolio Review and Performance Record

This report includes a summary of evidence justifying the review team's scores and the applicant's responses to the capacity interview. The report indicates the review team's consensus rating for each evaluation category in Section 3.

Section 3: The Ratings

ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. School Mission and Vision
2. Enrollment Summary
3. Academic Focus and Plan
4. Academic Performance Standards
5. Assessments
6. School Calendar and Schedule
7. Special Populations
8. School Culture and Discipline
9. Recruitment and Enrollment
10. Parent and Community Engagement and Support
11. Phase in Turnaround Planning (if applicable)
12. High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the Academic Plan Design and Capacity section **Partially Meets Standard**.

School Mission and Vision: The mission statement identifies two measurable facets: a diverse group of students and preparing students for the nursing workforce, including student academic outcome and growth goals and mission-specific goals related to work-based learning, workforce credential, and postsecondary credit. The applicant aligns the mission and vision with four purposes for charter schools found in TCA 49-13- 102(a):

- Improve learning for all students and close the achievement gap between high and low students anchored in TDOE’s RTI framework.
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods by covering academic and content standards while teaching nursing-specific content and skills.
- Measure performance of pupils and faculty through primary internal assessments and Accuplacer, CPR and First Aid, Certified Nurse Aid, Health Education Systems exams; using TEAM evaluation system to measure administrator and teacher performance which will be supported with coaching and professional development.
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers by having only nursing-focused mission so teachers be at a one-of-a-kind school.

When achieving its mission, the applicant states they will offer a strong curriculum and a range of opportunities to all students and will close achievement gaps through a variety of dual enrollment courses, work-based learning opportunities, and a strong academic program providing students an applied experience through the lens of the general academic program. The applicant’s CMO has served in school leadership using the same model in Rhode Island. The applicant describes their innovations as providing foundational knowledge and skills needed to pursue nursing in college and career to fill the decreasing candidates in the nursing field.

While the mission statement is measurable, some of the goals are not clear. In the table on page 4, it is not clear if the level 4 goals in the student outcomes and growth goals refers to TVAAS, federal or school letter grades, or achievement performance levels. The applicant does not explain how “a diverse group of students” will be measured. They do not address how the placement rate in postsecondary nursing programs or employment will be used to measure success since there may be students who complete the pathway but decide not to pursue a nursing career. Additionally, they do not address how a model with only one career pathway being offered will support students who decide this is not a career pathway for them and do not have options other than transferring to another school. Limiting career academy pathways to one school is not the research-based career academy model of MNPS. MNPS currently offers healthcare models in existing healthcare academies and concerns are noted regarding the lack of coordination of business and university stakeholders. The CMO has been in school leadership in schools with a similar model in Rhode Island (opened in 2011) and New York (open in 2023), but they do not provide cited evidence of academic success. While this was not required since the applicant was approved to submit as a Category 1 applicant by TDOE, they refer to the school in Rhode Island throughout the application. Additionally, the applicant refers to Brookings Institute research around work-based learning and workforce credentials improving work and college outcomes, but they do not address the nursing profession as a whole and why nurses are leaving the profession at higher rates than before the pandemic to know if they will be able to successful sustain graduates who enter

nursing as a career. Evidence-based research is not provided about the percentage of students who enter nursing after programs like this.

Enrollment Summary: The applicant describes the community from which they intend to draw students across MNPS clusters and provide plans to locate the school in the downtown Nashville area. The 2021-2022 State Report Card data is provided to support the academic performance of existing schools in their targeted school zones. The rationale for selecting the community is the strategic proximity to healthcare partners as the applicant's focus is addressing the national and local shortage of nurses and certified nursing assistants (CNAs). They also state they will address the lack of diversity in the current nursing profession through this model. The enrollment summary and demographic charts are complete. The applicant plans to enroll 82% of students who are economically disadvantaged, 10% of students with disabilities, and 33% of students who are English Learners.

While the applicant intends to recruit from all MNPS clusters and prioritize recruitment in historically marginalized communities with high rates of poverty, they do not specify the specific zones in which recruitment will take place or the academic performance of schools in those zones to provide a clear understanding of this recruitment strategy. While the applicant provides the enrollment summary and targeted demographics, the enrollment model that only allows students to enter as freshman will have funding implications for future years if those enrollment and student retention targets aren't met. The projection of students who are economically disadvantaged (ED) does not seem accurate given the state's requirement that students must be directly certified to qualify as ED which could have a significant impact on revenue projections. Additionally, more information needs to be provided about how many of the students meet the enrollment criteria in the percentage of students that indicated they would like to enroll and if there are enough students with disabilities to meet the criteria.

Academic Focus and Plan: The school's academic focus aligns with the school's mission and vision through 3 key characteristics: nursing college and career preparation, applied learning, and personal development which will be implemented through offering specialized nursing and college and career readiness courses in alignment with the core curriculum. The academic plan addresses the needs of the targeted student population and implements the school's academic focus. An approach to support learning for all students is described, including students "at-risk, have disabilities, are acquiring English, are economically disadvantaged, and who are of color". The school has established partnerships with Tennessee State University, Belmont University, and Vanderbilt University to provide dual-enrollment opportunities and specialized nursing classes. There is embedded time in extended periods to be utilized based on student's individual needs to ensure that they receive intervention that closes gaps, brings them to grade level, and allows them to gain proficiency in core academic and nursing content. They cite evidence-based research from TDOE's Response to Intervention and Instruction Framework manual on the effectiveness of RTI² to support this curriculum plan.

While an overview of the curriculum is provided, the details are not established so the review team cannot determine alignment to TN State Standards. The ELA curriculum choice is not final, and the proposed selection is not approved by the TN State Board. The science courses are "proprietary and developed by the CMO" and therefore not approved by the TN State Board. On page 39 of the application, it indicates the applicant will be prepared to submit a waiver to the State Board which requires a crosswalk to state standards and the applicant states they will "conduct a thorough crosswalk between all our curriculum/courses and Tennessee Academic Standards. These crosswalks will be completed by the CMO and an external service provider with expertise in evaluating standards alignment." However, this crosswalk is not complete for at least core academic courses. There is also concern about how the applicant will address the

digital knowledge needed in the healthcare industry since they will not offer blended learning.

Academic Performance Standards: Academic achievement goals are related to the school's specific mission, school culture, and financial health. The applicant has described annual and long-term achievement goals that meet these criteria, including being in the top quartile of performance for MNPS schools by the conclusion of their charter term. Academic goals support the mission-specific goals for work-based learning, nursing workforce credential, and 3 college credits. They align with achievement goals within the state's report card accountability framework for schools. The applicant's executive director will monitor a data dashboard regularly and review Star Renaissance assessments in reading and math results three times per year. The applicant cites the nursing shortage and diversity goals to justify the performance goals demonstrating their relevance to the school's target population. The applicant's goal of producing the professional nursing workforce of the future aligns to employment opportunities in Nashville. A process is outlined for measuring, monitoring, and revising academic achievement goals. There are plans to create a dashboard to implement this process during leadership and board meetings. If there is a need to revise goals, the executive director will take the lead in this process by developing a corrective action plan that includes a root cause analysis, outline of solutions, and action steps. The proposed approach for RTI² is aligned with TDOE's RTI² framework, including the use of Universal Screeners in reading and math, implementing early warning system processes, analyzing multiple sources of data, conducting additional screenings as necessary, and making data-driven decisions. The student attendance goals are 94% daily attendance and less than 20% chronic absenteeism. Their first step to reach these goals is to establish a positive culture around the Pillars of Nursing: Scholarship, Character, Compassion & Empathy, and Professionalism. Instruction will be grounded in rigor and real-world relevance to the profession of nursing. An advisory program is described where students have the same advisory cohort and meet twice per week for 43 minutes. Advisors will use PowerSchool to check attendance, discipline, etc. An attendance team will consist of the Deans of Student Support, Community Health Manager, school counselors, a social worker, and other staff as relevant. This team will execute attendance intervention plans and monitor them for their impact. The applicant states they will implement a standards-based grading approach, anchored in evaluating students based on their ability to demonstrate proficiency against state academic standards. Students failing 3 or more failures in grade 9 will receive an academic intervention plan. Students in grades 10 and 11 will be retained if they cannot finish their coursework necessary for graduation. The applicant requires 24 credits to graduate. Specifically, high school RTI² should carry an emphasis on standards-based remediation and tutoring instead of tiered skills-based interventions only.

The applicant addresses their standards-based approach to grading but does not address health science competencies or what happens when a student is not proficient on a competency. Additionally, the health science courses listed do not align with the TDOE Nursing Services Career Pathway of study. For example, Anatomy & Physiology and Medical Therapeutics are not listed. They will require that students successfully complete a work-based learning experience, obtain a workforce credential (entry-level patient care), and earn at least 3 college credits to ensure that students acquire the experience, skills, credentials, and knowledge needed to prepare students for postsecondary opportunities in nursing and related healthcare fields. The applicant outlines a distinct process for measuring, monitoring, and revising academic achievement goals, but this includes reviewing a dashboard that is yet to be built. If there is a need to revise goals, the Executive Director will take the lead in this process. However, the description of the process is not adequate since it does not include specific leading indicators for key metrics aligned to the school's goals (attendance, discipline, post-secondary credentials, etc.). The

school's RTI² plan is more aligned to the state's framework from 2014 instead of the most recent version from August 2023. There is not an academic plan for students with disabilities or English Learners beyond RTI. The ADA goal of 94% with less than 20% chronic absenteeism is not rigorous enough since students who miss up to 18 school days a year cannot be successful in a middle college model. The school's promotion/retention and exit policies and standards are not rigorous or clearly defined to describe what constitutes a 9th grader satisfactorily becoming a 10th grader. Finally, career seminar with technology education is not a course approved by TDOE to satisfy the computer science requirement.

Assessments: The applicant proposes Renaissance Star assessments in reading and math to all students across all grade levels (fall, winter, and spring). More frequent assessments can be administered for those students at academic risk or in need of intervention. Final exams will be conducted in every course. The curriculum will have embedded assessments that may be formative or summative (project-based, constructed response or skills demonstration). A variety of informal classroom assessments are listed in the application. Data analysis and schoolwide data-based decision-making planning tools are identified by the applicant as the process to inform and improve instruction. This process includes Academic Department Chairs and Grade Level Chairs meeting with teachers in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The PLCs will be built on personalized coaching sessions with teachers. Student and teacher data talks are planned to help the students identify their strength and areas of refinement.

The applicant provides assessments to measure and monitor academic performance across the year. However, the applicant cites a study noting the Star assessment's high correlation to TNReady erroneously concluding that because of this high correlation, the assessment must be aligned to course specific state standards. This correlation is statistical and not necessarily substantive. Further, Star cannot serve as both a universal screener/diagnostic and measure of learning on state standards indicating lack of clarity in purpose for the assessment system. The process provided is not adequate to address how the school will ensure universal screening aligned with the updated TN RTI² framework for early warning systems and follow up screening on at-risk students. Because the curricular materials are not approved by the state board, alignment of the curricular assessments to state standards is not evident.

School Calendar and Schedule: The school calendar (Attachment B) and student schedules (Attachment C) meet Tennessee minimum requirements of the equivalent of 180 days of instruction consistent with MNPS's annual schedule. There will be extended instructional periods four times per week and shortened periods on early release days. Grades 9-10 have year-long courses to allow time to close gaps, and 11-12th graders have semester-long courses. The extended periods will be used to deliver tiered interventions, tutoring, and enrichment. Stipends are also in the budget for clubs. One day per week students will be dismissed at 1:50pm to have the option to participate in work-based learning, such as internships.

While the applicant's schedule meets the equivalent of 180 days of instruction, the schedules provided include an early release day every Wednesday which does not meet the required 6.5 hours minimum hours of attendance as outlined in TCA 49-6-3004(e)(1). The application predicts that 33% of students will be English Learners and 10% will be students with disabilities, but this part of Section 1.6 does not specifically address how the school schedule will be optimal for those populations, including provision of Direct ESL services. Additionally, the applicant's schedule does not include Tier III intervention 5 days per week and the plan needs clarification since there is conflicting information provided about the push in or pull-out model. Sufficient details are not provided to know where clinicals and work-based learning will occur at the junior and senior levels and if dual enrollment is both virtual and on campus so

it cannot be determined if this schedule is optimal for student learning. While tiered interventions, tutoring, enrichment activities are built into the school schedule, the extra-curricular offerings described are limited to clubs. Sports, theatre, band, or other musical opportunities are not offered, which are critical for students to feel connected to the school and enhance the overall school experience and develop positive school culture. Finally, the applicant does not have a plan to offer additional academic support during Saturday School, summer school, additional remediation, and tutoring after school hours.

Special Populations: The applicant states there is a plan to hire personnel with individuals who have experience working with special populations of students. The plan is to hire eight leadership staff in year 1, two additional leaders in year 2, and one additional leader in year 3 to address the needs of special populations. They describe ways they will identify students with disabilities, including those students who have an existing IEP and 504 Plan and referral plan. Details are provided about how students with disabilities are to earn an occupational diploma. Methods for identifying EL students include the two primary methods applicable with state and federal guidelines. The individualized learning plan (ILP) process includes an EL teacher who will work in collaboration with the general education teacher. The applicant outlines the process for identifying and meeting the needs of gifted students and identifies coursework available to these students. The applicant will contract with a school psychologist. Methods to avoid overidentification are provided. The application states that EL students will be able to access tiered interventions if needed, and that language proficiency will be considered when identifying the placement of eligible ELs in tiered interventions. Additionally, students will receive accommodations aligned to their ILPs for instruction, assessments, and classroom environment. There is a description of the Community Health Manager who will provide referrals for social resources to help meet the needs of students who are at-risk/socioeconomically disadvantaged and a plan for a literacy and numeracy coordinator to support instructional practices for all students. There are plans for monitoring and evaluating progress and exiting students, as appropriate. Ninth grade students who perform at an elementary level in reading and/or math will be enrolled in a yearlong reading and math college readiness and skills class with low class size and targeted support to accelerate learning which the applicant states will have a TDOE designated intervention course code.

The leadership team has not been identified yet, so there is currently no evidence of its ability to serve special populations. The applicant will encounter challenges in hiring a leadership team that has the described special populations expertise, such as a bi-lingual Dean of Student Support, and a Community Health Manager. Additionally, the criteria provided for experience in those areas are limited. There will be difficulty in finding an executive director with a BA in nursing (preferably a graduate degree) who has knowledge of regulations for special populations. The Director of Teaching and Learning is not required to have knowledge of the nursing field, which is not realistic if they are overseeing the teaching and learning of CNA competencies. The application states that “One of the MLL teachers and one of the Special Education teachers will be identified to assume coordinator responsibilities and will receive a stipend to compensate for these additional duties”, but they do not explain how they will ensure that these additional duties do not occur during required direct service hours. The school plans to “contract out for related services such as occupational, speech, and physical therapy.” Contracted services are extremely difficult to find, and the school's plan doesn't reflect the significance of providing these services and the need to identify them aggressively enough. The application states, “We will administer the Home Language Survey (HLS) when students newly enroll at our school.” When asked during the capacity interview what the school’s process will be for obtaining the original HLS if the student was previously enrolled in a US school, the school stated that they will take the previous HLS into consideration but will still administer it themselves to all enrollees. TN State Board Rule states that “an

HLS should be completed only once in a student's educational career", so administering it again will violate that rule. In general, the RTP² plan needs more clarity for English Learners and Students with Disabilities. The application states that the school will implement Sheltered English Instruction, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English, Push-In English Instruction, Pull-Out English Instruction, and Structured English Immersion but does not explain how each service model fit into the school's master schedule. Additionally, the application states, "Content will be sheltered during general education classes to help students who are ELs access the general education curricula", but they do not clarify what this will look like and if all content classes will be sheltered for EL students or how will the school determine who participates in sheltered content classes. Sufficient details were not provided to understand how the school can service students in tier III in a 1:1 manner for the required 45 minutes as indicated in the application.

School Culture and Discipline: The applicant plans to align school culture with the four pillars of nursing: scholarship, professionalism, character, compassion, and empathy. They reference CASEL and the core skills needed to achieve social-emotional competence. A Positive Behavior and Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework will be the foundation of cultural components. Students will attend 45-minute advisory twice a week. The applicant provides a plan to create and sustain school culture focused on nursing college and career readiness. There will be an emphasis on student personal development and the pillars of nursing with academic and behavior expectations. To maintain the culture, the applicant will provide open houses, orientation week required for all students, a parent/student handbook, advisory program, SEL, culturally responsive teaching, and student recognition. The plan for integrating new students and families as they arrive begins with Open House orientation week held before the first day of school. Students and parents will be required to attend portions of the orientation. Students who enter mid-year will be paired with a Student Ambassador who will assist as a resource for questions and support. The student discipline policy is provided which includes information about the dean of students; equity, diversity, and inclusion; and wrap-around supports.

The Student Handbook does not contain PBIS, which the applicant indicates will be a focus of the school culture.

Recruitment and Enrollment: The applicant's enrollment policy follows Tennessee policies related to nondiscriminatory admission policies, articulation agreements, identification of any pre-admission activities, and policies and procedures for student waitlists, withdrawals, re-enrollment, and transfers. The applicant includes the engagement of community organizations as an outreach strategy, including faith-based institutions, community libraries, youth centers, and community centers. They will advertise using social media platforms, attend community events, present to feeder middle schools, hold informational sessions, and hire a recruitment specialist. The school has outlined how recruitment efforts will reflect the school's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The school plans to prioritize recruiting multilingual candidates for its Recruitment Specialist position. The school plans to provide recruitment materials in multiple languages which will "highlight the language services and supports that we will provide, as well as emphasize the immense need for multilingual nurses".

The application does not include compelling evidence of parents interested in enrolling their students in the school. While the applicant provides the recruitment and marketing plan, the timeline provided does not align with the MNPS lottery process. More information is needed to

understand if posting marketing and informational materials in healthcare organizations and postsecondary institutions will attract diverse student populations and how the school will identify feeder middle schools if students come from multiple clusters.

Parent and Community Engagement and Support: There is evidence of community feedback from Vanderbilt, TSU, Belmont, HCA Healthcare Tristar, and Ascension St. Thomas. The applicant also indicates alignment with Metro Public Health Department's strategic initiatives and goals. The applicant provides letters of support from healthcare organizations and support from the local community (TSU School of Nursing, National HealthCare Corporation, Nashville Chapter of the National Black Nurses Association, Belmont University, among others). There are also two letters of support from grantors willing to partner with the school. The applicant intends to make new connections with charter middle schools. The applicant outlines a plan to engage parents and community partners through advertisement, social media, open house, orientation, and community and school events. Examples are provided of ways they will inform and educate parents on school policies, including open houses, orientation week, and ongoing events.

While they provide evidence of community partnerships, the application does not include evidence from parents interested in enrolling their student in the school. Additionally, while potential partners have been identified, many of them are not finalized. MNPS currently offers similar health career models in existing high school academies. It is possible there will be a loss of potential stakeholder support for MNPS schools if this model is approved. Additionally, limiting career academy pathways to one school is not the model of MNPS.

High School Graduation and Postsecondary Readiness: The applicant provides a plan for meeting Tennessee graduation requirements which will require one additional science credit, work-based learning credit, a workforce credential, and 3 college credits. The applicant outlines systems and structures to address students at risk of dropping out or not meeting graduation requirements which are noted throughout the application in other sections, such as engaging families and attendance support plans.

The applicant provides a plan for meeting the Tennessee graduation requirements (including credits, transcripts, electives, and GPA calculation) and an explanation of any additional requirements beyond the State's requirements. However, as noted previously, college seminar with technology education is not approved by the state as a computer science course required by statute. Further, it is not clear from the chart on page 100 where students will take a math course during 12th grade to fulfill the enrollment requirement necessary to earn an TN diploma per SBE high school policy 2.103. On page 101, the applicant indicates that they will use a "Standards-Based Proficiency Scale", but they did not provide details about how the grades will be converted for students who transfer in and out of the school. During the capacity interview, the applicant provided the rationale for using the scale, but stated since they are college prep program, they know they will need to send transcripts out so they know they will want traditional alpha grades. They will set up a conversion in the background to align with the TN grading scale. While a conversion is needed, the conversion cannot be reviewed for alignment since it is not provided in the application. As mentioned previously, freshman students who decide nursing is not something they want to pursue have no option other than to withdraw from the school. More information is also needed about the rationale for teaching Algebra I in two parts when there are students who could complete it in one semester. Also, the plan to provide credit recovery support in this class needs to be

provided. Finally, the systems to ensure English Learners get the supports they need did not include RTI², IDEA, or Title.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

OPERATIONAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Governance
2. Start Up Plan
3. Facilities
4. Personnel/Human Capital
5. Professional Development
6. Insurance
7. Transportation
8. Food Service
9. Additional Operations
10. Charter Management Organization (if applicable)
11. Network Vision, Growth Plan, & Capacity
12. Network Management
13. Network Governance
14. Network-Wide Personnel and Human Capital Projections
15. School Replication (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Governance: The applicant provides a plan to ensure governance and oversight of the school performance, operations, and financials. The board will consist of two former charter high school founders and two registered nurses. The list of responsibilities and experience of the board members is provided in Table 3. One Board member with Vanderbilt experience has a background in collaborating with nurse leadership around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs and initiatives. Another board member has finance and operations experience. The board will complete at least one annual board training that is certified by the Tennessee Charter School Center and approved by the State Board of Education and new member orientation. The applicant states they will complete the required documentation to MNPS. The applicant provided details about the informal and formal complaint review process.

While the applicant states they will consider adding more board members, there are immediate concerns about the relatively small four-member board since an even number can create quorum issues. Additionally, there are concerns that given the small size of the board, they will be able to execute all the executive, audit, finance, and academic requirements. Additionally, the board has limited experience in the operation of schools in Tennessee. While some of the governance documents are provided, the articles of incorporation are missing, and the non-profit status has been filed but the applicant is waiting on receipt.

Start-Up Plan: The startup plan with the timeline and sequence is provided. The applicant provides details about the potential challenges with student recruitment and enrollment, staff recruitment and training, facilities, and startup funding. The application addresses startup funding by securing a Bloomberg Philanthropy grant for \$19.7 million for the first three years of operation.

There are numerous concerns with the timeline due to the time allotted for important events. The facility timeline is unrealistic based on the scope of renovations needed, teacher recruitment and hiring not beginning until January 2025, and student recruitment efforts not taking place until September 2024 despite the applicant stating it will accept and acknowledge student applications beginning in January 2024. There are several typos on the dates of the schedule making it confusing to review. The salaries are listed under the compensation column, but many of the items are contracts and purchases which will require monetary expenditures beyond the salary of the person coordinating them.

Facilities: The budget assumptions are reasonable based on MNPS projects of similar scale and scope. The applicant has engaged a qualified school facilities consulting firm to locate a facility and lead the renovation. The CMO currently contracts with two other schools and led the facility acquisition process for those schools. They have previously used Level Field Partners in identifying, securing, renovating, and occupying a school facility. The timeline outlines a reasonable tenant improvement timeline.

The facility plans have some areas of concern. The proposed gymnasium is unreasonable at only 2,000 SF and details are not provided about how the state-required 90 minutes per week of physical activity can be achieved in a school for 500 students in a space less than half the size of a basketball court. The space plan lacks the code-required custodial facilities. The plans do not include an allowance for hallways. In years 1 through 3, there is no allowance for a kitchen so it is unclear how they will serve food since even catered operations need spaces for storage and warming. The applicant does not plan to occupy the facility until July 2025, which is one month before students will occupy the facility. Currently, the applicant is only considering two facilities. The contingency plan is not realistic since the applicant only indicates they will lease another facility if their top choice fell through. If both choices are unavailable, then the applicant does not have a reliable contingency plan.

Personnel/ Human Capital: The applicant's organizational chart delineates the roles, responsibilities, and reporting for the Board, staff, related bodies, and external organizations. The applicant states the finalists for executive director (ED) position will fly to the Rhode Island school location and interview for a full day. The ED hired will participate in a three-year fellowship program created by the CMO. The specific activities over the three-year fellowship are outlined. The Board is diverse and has access to a diverse pool of candidates. The applicant intends to partner with non-traditional teacher prep programs (Teach for America, Nashville Teacher Residency). The starting salary is \$63,662 with 3% increases per year. The applicant will use TEAM for the annual evaluation that aligns with statewide evaluation requirements. The Years 1-5 Staff Assumptions for English Language Learner teachers (listed as

“Elective Teachers”) are aligned with the staffing chart which will support the educational program for students who are English Learners.

Based on the charts on pages 265-266, the board appears to take direction from the CMO. There are concerns that no one has been identified as the executive director since this could impact the opening timeline. The applicant did not provide details about the compensation package and recruitment timeline for the nursing instructors. Additionally, there is no rationale provided about having two numeracy coordinators and only one literacy coordinator.

Professional Development: The professional development plan and schedule are provided in Attachment B. The application includes a plan to provide training around intercultural competence and culturally responsive teaching practices during summer professional development. Weekly PD and asynchronous Grade-level, Engaging, Affirming, Meaningful (GLEAM) modules will build on the initial learning. Implementing culturally responsive teaching practices will be a focus of instructional coaching. Teachers will receive instructional coaching and participate in PLCs. Academic Department Chairs will receive additional supports to build their capacity around facilitation and coaching. Teachers may serve as Grade Level leaders and facilitate grade level meetings to build leadership capacity.

The professional development plan will not be possible since the early release days for students do not meet the state minimum requirements outlined in TCA 49-6-3004(e)(1) and the schedule will have to be adjusted. The plan did not include safety and emergency response training.

Insurance: The insurance letter the applicant provides is from a broker saying they could place the coverage, but there is no letter from a carrier that will actually write the policy to confirm that the required coverage will be provided if the charter application is approved.

Transportation: The applicant provides a plan for transportation using WeGo bus cards for students who live on or close to the bus line/stop and school buses.

However, sufficient details are not provided to understand how they determined the budget for buses and if it is adequate to meet the transportation needs.

Food Service: The applicant will contract with MNPS and provide free breakfast and lunch for students; however, they have not reached out for discussions with MNPS about contracts. While the applicant indicates they will provide meals at no charge, this would be determined by meeting the requirements for CEP or a subsidy from the school. The applicant does not provide a contingency plan if they are not able to contract with MNPS.

Additional Operations: While the applicant provides details about the use of Chromebooks for technology, there is very little detail about how they will be used in the classroom. There is a safety and security plan with school crisis plan updates planned for January 2025 which states that the executive director will have a nursing or healthcare background, to support the health and safety requirements, but this is not listed as a requirement in the previous section outlining the requirements for this role. There is a plan on using the CMO safety plan template, but this may not align with the Tennessee template.

Charter Management Organization: The applicant states Bloomberg Philanthropies is providing funding to build the human capital capacity of the CMO to bring on additional schools in addition to the

schools the CMO is affiliated with in Rhode Island and New York. The key functions are delineated between the school-based team and CMO.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the following:

1. Planning and Budget Worksheet
2. Budget Narrative
3. Network Financial Plan (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

The review team found the following strengths and concerns in the new start application and concluded that the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

Planning and Budget Worksheet/Budget Narrative: The budget assumptions are provided on Attachment AA and page 347 of the application. The organization plans to hire a Business Operations Manager who will collaborate with the Executive Director to implement Fiscal Policies. The start-up and 5-year plan have sufficient growth projections based on the financial information provided. The budget narrative provided by the applicant in Attachment BB offers a detailed explanation for all revenue and cost assumptions, with supporting evidence. Revenue contingencies are reported if they are not able to meet projected revenue goals.

Currently, more information needs to be provided about the financial procedures and the selection of contractors to carry out administrative tasks. Details also need to be provided about the support that one person will have for administrative functions related to payroll, accounting, and internal audits since this will be a substantial workload for one person. While there is a plan to hire a qualified candidate, more evidence is needed about the level of financial expertise the candidate will need to have. The budget for year 0 displays a sole reliance on a Bloomberg grant of approximately \$2.1 million and a CSP start-up grant of \$750,000 as the only sources of revenue, so more information is needed about the projected revenues at the end of year 0.

To restate, the review team consensus determined the section **Partially Meets Standard**.

PORTFOLIO REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE RECORD

The Criteria

According to the state's rubric, the review committee should consider if the application provides a characteristic of a strong response addressing the Past Performance of the following:

1. Portfolio Summary (if applicable)
2. Performance Record; Academics (if applicable)
3. Performance Record; Operations (if applicable)
4. Performance Record; Fiscal (if applicable)

Evidence Findings

Not Applicable

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Sales Tax Collections
As of April 20, 2024

General Purpose Fund

MONTH	2023-2024 Projection	TOTAL 2023-2024 COLLECTIONS	\$ Change For Month - FY24 Projection	% Change For Month - FY24 Projection	% Increase / Decrease Year- To-Date
September	\$29,614,730.71	\$23,500,346.50	(\$6,114,384.21)	-20.65%	-20.65%
October	31,300,471.66	30,353,786.31	(946,685.35)	-3.02%	-11.58%
November	32,275,358.53	30,414,845.48	(1,860,513.05)	-5.76%	-9.57%
December	32,893,416.28	31,955,643.83	(937,772.45)	-2.85%	-7.82%
January	31,779,095.35	30,477,016.30	(1,302,079.05)	-4.10%	-7.07%
February	35,682,401.73	34,859,859.72	(822,542.01)	-2.31%	-6.19%
March	29,103,582.21	26,938,594.10	(2,164,988.11)	-7.44%	-6.35%
April	29,031,422.83	28,829,060.98	(202,361.85)	-0.70%	-5.70%
May	33,945,570.52				
June	32,571,772.75				
July	34,915,238.30				
August	34,936,439.13				
TOTAL	\$388,049,500.00	\$237,329,153.22	(\$14,351,326.08)		-5.70%

Debt Service Fund

MONTH	2023-2024 Projection	TOTAL 2023-2024 COLLECTIONS	\$ Change For Month - FY24 Projection	% Change For Month - FY24 Projection	% Increase / Decrease Year- To-Date
September	\$5,585,730.06	\$4,433,949.71	(\$1,151,780.35)	-20.62%	-20.62%
October	5,905,807.72	5,727,028.84	(178,778.88)	-3.03%	-11.58%
November	6,089,750.46	5,738,549.23	(351,201.23)	-5.77%	-9.57%
December	6,206,366.29	6,029,260.79	(177,105.50)	-2.85%	-7.81%
January	5,996,114.96	5,750,279.37	(245,835.59)	-4.10%	-7.07%
February	6,732,595.15	6,577,216.43	(155,378.72)	-2.31%	-6.19%
March	5,491,296.18	5,082,664.27	(408,631.91)	-7.44%	-6.35%
April	5,477,681.06	5,439,349.87	(38,331.19)	-0.70%	-5.70%
May	6,404,887.91				
June	6,145,678.22				
July	6,587,845.91				
August	6,591,846.09				
TOTAL	\$73,215,600.00	\$44,778,298.51	(\$2,707,043.37)		-5.70%