



MPS CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT RECOMMENDATION

CHARTER SCHOOL	Green Tree Preparatory Academy (GPA)
MISSION	Green Tree’s mission is to build a body of student leaders who lead or own tomorrow’s businesses.
VISION	Green Tree’s vision is to provide a safe, nurturing, and professional community of learning where students are educated, empowered, and enabled to develop the essential skills necessary to lead and exceed.
DATE OF SITE VISIT	October 31, 2023

The renewal recommendation is based on a thorough review and analysis of information and data from the following and summarized in this document:

- Charter School Performance Summary
- Application for Renewal
- School Site Visit

CHARTER SCHOOL PRELIMINARY PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

	Met the Standard (At least 75%)	Approaches the Standard (Between 50%-74%)	Did Not Meet the Standard (Below 50%)
Academic Performance			X
Financial Standard	X		
Organizational Standard	X		

SUMMARY COMMENTS - PRELIMINARY PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: Green Tree has struggled to meet the academic performance standards, primarily in the core content areas. Two of the four years of its contract, GPA met 50% of the performance standards, however, the majority of the standards were exempted due to the waiver of state assessments (2019-20 and 2020-21 school years). The past two years of its contract, GPA met less than 50% of the measures. The academic data illustrates minimal performance on assessment scores, graduation rate, and academic growth. GPA has failed to meet expectations on the state report card; however, there was an increase in the rating from the 2021-22 school year to the 2022-23 school year. The school has shown some growth in the middle school English Language Arts (ELA) and science assessment, as well as, in the high school ACT Aspire/Pre-ACT assessments for ELA and Math. Green Tree has maintained a solid promotional rate and had its first graduating class of 10 students during the 2022-23 school year.

Green Tree noted that in order to improve ELA and mathematics outcomes for the students, the SpringBoard curriculum would be implemented with fidelity. Small group instruction would be used to support students' needs and there would be real world applications embedded into the lessons to engage learners.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE: Green Tree has met all of the financial performance standards. GPA was awarded the Federal Charter School Grants - Wisconsin Charter School Program from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to help with the funding for starting the charter school. The school has complied with all accounting and submission of

records and reporting as outlined in its contract.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: Green Tree has met 75% or more of the organizational performance standards throughout the term of its contract. The school uses the Seven Skills for Success as part of its educational philosophy to help students achieve the mission of the school.

Through the term of its contract, the school has had consistent leadership. Green Tree has increased student enrollment each year of its contract. As GPA's enrollment has increased, recruiting and retaining staff have been a challenge. In addition to the support that is provided from MPS Human Resources, the school notes that there are continued efforts to work with surrounding colleges and universities to recruit teachers in areas of need.

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL

Met the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Did Not Meet the Standard
<p>The Application for Renewal provides clear, concise and compelling information in the areas of Academic, Financial and Organizational Performance. The school has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Included ample evidence of increased student achievement or shown continuous improvement; <input type="checkbox"/> Provided credible examples and documented evidence of its financial performance; and <input type="checkbox"/> Illustrated sufficiently and convincingly that it is organizationally sound. <input type="checkbox"/> The school's plans for continued success are clearly and effectively outlined with full details, descriptions, and explanations. 	<p>The Application for Renewal provides information in the areas of Academic, Financial and Organizational Performance. The information provided does not fully meet the expectations of the standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provided some evidence of increased student achievement or continuous improvement; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provided some evidence of its financial performance; and <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provided some evidence that it is organizationally sound. <input type="checkbox"/> The school's plans for continued success were partially developed and did not provide sufficient evidence to support the plan's for success. 	<p>The Application for Renewal does not provide clear, concise and compelling information in the areas of Academic, Financial and Organizational Performance. The school did not satisfactorily address application components. Responses lack details. Descriptions and/or examples are underdeveloped. The school provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Insufficient evidence of increased student achievement or continuous improvement; <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear examples and evidence of its financial performance; and <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate evidence that it is organizationally sound. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The school's plans for continued success are unclear and not fully described or developed.

SUMMARY COMMENTS - APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL

Throughout the charter school application, GPA shared that it has been faithful to the implementation of its educational program as outlined in its Appendix A. Green Tree stated that the school is committed to providing Milwaukee families with a rigorous program that challenges the students and will continue to keep its students on the path to success.

Some of the main components of its educational program that were mentioned throughout the application were the following: GPA's Seven Skills for Success, STEM program for middle school students, SpringBoard curriculum to support ELA and math, Proximity Language (Spanish) for middle school students, and three academies for high school students that are focused on specific career pathways.

Green Tree has provided a commitment to ensure that their students have opportunities to engage in a variety of district and community learning aligned with its mission, vision, and goals. The school is focused on strategies to build its climate and culture.

Although the application shared a variety of programs, opportunities, and commitments to different efforts, there were concerns that the review team noted in the application.

Green Tree shared some academic data in the application. They provided examples of growth related to the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) average scores from 2020-21 to 2022-23 in grades 6-8. However, it lacked evidence of how the school is planning to make improvements or changes to the educational program to increase academic outcomes. Instead, the application stated the school plans to continue the same strategies.

The application stated "staffing is a major challenge at GPA". The school did not clearly address the recruitment and retention efforts.

CHARTER SCHOOL SITE VISIT

Met the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Did Not Meet the Standard
<p>Charter school site visit provided excellent further evidence that the school is meeting performance standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School presentations clearly and effectively communicated information from its Application for Renewal. <input type="checkbox"/> School sufficiently addressed any issues/concerns raised by the MPS Charter School Contract Review Team members. <input type="checkbox"/> School (if appropriate) provided sufficient supplementary information to further clarify performance results and ratings. <input type="checkbox"/> Samples of student work and classroom visits reflect strongly and positively the school's teaching and learning practices. 	<p>Charter school site visit provided some evidence that the school is meeting some of the performance standards. The information provided does not fully meet the expectations of the standard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School presentation partially communicated information from its Application for Renewal. <input type="checkbox"/> School addressed some of the issues/concerns raised by the MPS Charter School Contract Review Team members. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School provided some supplementary information to clarify performance results and ratings. <input type="checkbox"/> Samples of student work and classroom visits provided some information to support the school's teaching and learning practices. 	<p>Charter school site visit did not provide compelling evidence that the school is meeting performance standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School presentation insufficiently communicated information from its Application for Renewal. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School did not adequately address issues/concerns raised by the MPS Charter School Contract Review Team members. <input type="checkbox"/> School did not provide ample supplementary information to clarify performance results and ratings. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Samples of student work and classroom visits did not necessarily positively reflect the school's teaching and learning practices.

SUMMARY COMMENTS FROM CHARTER SCHOOL SITE VISIT

Green Tree's motto is "Our roots run deep! Plant your scholar at Green Tree Preparatory Academy and watch how they grow!"

GPA was established in 2019 through a Board Resolution to provide 6-12 programming that prepares students for success in higher education, post-secondary opportunities, work, and citizenship at the Daniel Webster Secondary campus.

The school shared that they are grounded in the Seven Skills for Success and the three academic academies:

- **Katherine Johnson Academy of College Preparatory** - engages students in rigorous college preparatory courses, including access to early-college or dual enrollment;
- **Charles Drew Academy of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics** - brings learning to life through application-based learning in collaboration with our community partners; and
- **Michelle Obama Academy of Leadership, Business, Law and Social Justice** - includes access to community projects, service learning and internships.

The application and presentation indicated that they implement restorative circles daily during advisory. Green Tree shared that their professional development is around four pillars: school improvement plan, vocabulary, lesson planning, and culture and climate. The school has shown some academic growth based on average scores from the

Forward exam.

Green Tree works in collaboration with their governing body, parents, and the school leadership to make financial decisions.

During the presentation, the staff shared the partnerships they have which include, but not limited to: Lead to Change, Arts@Large, Hope Squad, Alverno College and Center for Entrepreneurship. Green Tree provides a few extracurriculars that include some athletics and student interest clubs.

The Review Team was able to observe classrooms and determine if the identified programs, strategies, and curriculum of GPA is being implemented. The Review Team noted that the students were willingly engaged with team members and students were polite and respectful. Students appeared eager to learn and to do their best. Some of the classrooms had students who were well engaged and appeared to have good rapport with the teachers. Some staff demonstrated passion for teaching and engaged students appropriately.

Where there were some classrooms with positive experiences, the overall sense was that students at all levels were not consistently receiving the support, rigor, or quality instruction necessary for academic growth. There were classrooms where learning intentions and success criteria were not posted or they were vague, overly broad, and/or poorly written. The majority of the instruction that occurred in classrooms was mainly whole group or students working independently on a worksheet. The activities and assignments did not always encourage critical thinking and the pacing of the lessons did not always foster appropriate productive struggle for students. Many classrooms lacked encouraging or educational signage to support learning. Classroom management seemed to be a challenge throughout and having the appropriate supplies for students such as Chromebooks, scissors, or headphones were not always available.

In the student focus groups, students expressed that they appreciated the friendships that have been developed and the connections that they have made with staff. The students were very candid about their learning and expressed their desire to be challenged. Students conveyed that they wanted more advanced classes, social justice courses, and subjects tackling real world issues. When asked about the advisory time, students were not aware of any restorative circles happening contradicting the school's charter application and presentation. The students shared that this time was more of a time to socialize or to come to class late.

The parents that participated in the staff focus group mentioned they liked the location of the school, the diversity, and the technology. Parents appreciated the relationships that have been developed with staff and the communication that the school provides. The M3 program was a strong positive for them as well.

As review team members asked clarifying questions, GPA did not adequately address the concerns raised. When asked for a plan to improve teaching and learning practices, the school indicated that there would be an increase in instructional walks, hold teachers accountable, and review lesson plans. The Seven Skills for Success and implementation of Restorative Practices were brought up repeatedly throughout the presentation, however, neither approach was evident during the site visit.

CHARTER SCHOOL REVIEW TEAM RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

	Renewal Terms	Criteria
	Full-term Renewal Term of five years	To be eligible, schools must be in the last year of the contract term and have achieved the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">There is a strong and compelling record of evidence that the school met the performance standards in the areas of Academic Performance, Financial Performance, and Organizational Performance. <u>Guidelines for Recommending Five-Year Renewal:</u>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Team determines that a school primarily merits <i>Met the Standard</i> ratings in the performance areas. A school that receives mixed ratings may be recommended for a full five-year renewal term if sufficient additional evidence obtained from the school's Application for Renewal and School Site Visit make this a credible recommendation.
X	Short-term Renewal Term of three years	<p>To be eligible, schools must be in the last year of the contract term and have achieved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a strong and compelling record of evidence that the school met a considerable number of the performance standards (approaches the standards) in the areas of Academic Performance, Financial Performance, and Organizational Performance and/or shows continuous, meaningful improvement toward meeting the performance standards. <p><u>Guidelines for Recommending Three-Year Renewal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Team determines that a school primarily merits <i>Met the Standard</i> or <i>Approaching the Standard</i> ratings or demonstrates continuous and meaningful improvement in the performance areas. A school that receives mixed ratings may be recommended for a three-year renewal term if evidence obtained from the school's Application for Renewal and School Site Visit make this a credible recommendation.
	Non-Renewal / Revocation	<p>To be considered for non-renewal or revocation, the school does not apply for renewal or the school's academic, financial, and/or organizational performance results do not meet the standards and are deemed unsatisfactory. This would result in a recommendation for non-renewal/revocation.</p> <p><u>Guidelines for Recommending Non-Renewal / Revocation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School receives a <i>Did Not Meet the Standard</i> in all three areas of performance. A school that receives mixed ratings may be recommended for non-renewal/ renovation if evidence obtained from the school's Performance Summary, Application for Renewal, and School Site Visit make this a credible recommendation.

SUMMARY COMMENTS

Green Tree opened in fall 2019, in spring 2020, the pandemic hit and the school had to restructure its programming to meet a virtual learning platform. Given these unprecedented challenges in starting a school, the MPS Charter School Review Team recommends a three-year renewal with Green Tree Preparatory Academy along with a developed action plan to be implemented. This will allow the time needed to fully execute its educational program and an opportunity to demonstrate growth.

Although Green Tree outlined various programs and strategies that were used to support its educational program, this information did not always align to what was seen in classrooms, provided during the presentation, and shared during focus groups (Seven Skills for Success, Restorative Practices, project based learning, parental involvement, career advancement for employees, various partnerships).

The Seven Skills for Success were mentioned throughout the application and were referenced on posters, but very few teachers incorporated these skills in the lessons. It was noted that the SpringBoard curriculum has been used throughout the term of its contract to support ELA and math and is part of the continued plan for academic improvement. However, SpringBoard is being discontinued at the end of the 2023-24 school year.

Restorative Practices was mentioned throughout the application in a way to support climate and culture at Green Tree. It was shared that the new staff have not had the required training to implement.

The MPS Charter School Review Team recommends a three-year charter renewal that includes an action plan to

address the following:

- effective teaching practices, curriculum development and lesson planning that is supported through professional development and coaching;
- provide professional learning on restorative practices and support the implementation; and
- revise the academic programming schedule that maximizes instructional time.

The action plan will be implemented by the school in a three-year progression and monitored and supported by Administration.

On November 30, 2023, Administration met with GPA leadership and governing body to address these concerns and to share next steps. Given that GPA opened in 2019, the Review Team and Administration believes that with these focused strategies in place, the school will have the opportunity to demonstrate growth and to execute its educational program.

MPS CHARTER SCHOOL REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS

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SIGNATURE: Bridget Schock DATE: 11/21/23

Bridget Schock, Director, Contracted School Services