



MPS CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT RECOMMENDATION	
CHARTER SCHOOL	The Alliance School
MISSION	The mission of Alliance is to be a safe, student-centered, and academically challenging environment where we prepare young people to become compassionate agents of change.
VISION	The vision of Alliance is to close the opportunity gap through high-level and student-led instruction, a strong and committed staff, and programs that create safe spaces for all of our students, their families, and our community.
YEAR OPENED	2005
DATE OF SITE VISIT	October 22, 2024

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, and school 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	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 a considerable number of the performance standards

		<p>(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> <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 or 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.

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		
CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL			
Met the Standard	Approaches the Standard	Did Not Meet the Standard	
The Application for Renewal provides	The Application for Renewal	The Application for Renewal does	

<p>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>provides information in the areas of Academic, Financial and Organizational Performance. The information provided does not fully meet the expectations of the standard. Some of the information provided is developing and there is evidence of growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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>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 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 type="checkbox"/> The school's plans for continued success are unclear and not fully described or developed.
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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. Some of the information provided is developing and the school demonstrated evidence of growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School presentation partially communicated information from its Application for Renewal. <input checked="" 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 	<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 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.

	provided some information to support the school's teaching and learning practices.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Samples of student work and classroom visits did not necessarily positively reflect the school's teaching and learning practices.
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SUMMARY COMMENTS

Alliance's mission is to be a safe, student-centered, and academically challenging environment where the school prepares young people to become compassionate agents of change. Alliance works to provide a safe space for students that fosters learning, acquisition of knowledge, encourages higher-order thinking, empathy, and other skills needed to be prepared for the wider world.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the evidence provided in the Charter School Application for Renewal; Preliminary Performance Summary; Site Visit, which included classroom visits, testimony from students and parents; along with additional information from the school team, the Charter School Review Team recommends a short-term charter school contract renewal.

Alliance welcomes all students and creates a safe environment for students to thrive. Restorative practices has been the foundation that promotes community, values, and positive outcomes for students. Students become the leaders in implementing restorative practices within the school community. Alliance embraces the whole child by providing professional learning to staff that specifically meets the individualized needs of students.

Alliance has strong student-teacher relationships and is a safe place for students who have historically felt disconnected and marginalized at school. It is recommended that Alliance needs to leverage the strong relationships and connections with students to increase academic performance. Alliance has focused on literacy across all content areas and increased student interest in financial literacy. The Review Team recommends that they become more intentional and narrow the focus on instructional practices to effectively measure growth and student outcomes.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Alliance has not met all the academic performance standards during the term of its contract. Although the school is not performing at the same rate as the district, growth has been made from year one to year two of its contract term. In the area of mathematics for the ACT and Pre-ACT assessments, Alliance has shown an increase of almost 5% proficiency. There was slight growth in the area of science. Alliance has shown growth in its stability rate, attendance rate, and graduation rate. For students who are new to Alliance, the data indicates an increase in attendance compared to their previous school. This data indicates the strong connections staff make with students in building authentic relationships.

In order to create a more cohesive learning environment to support students and meet their individual needs, there has been an increased accountability in using the district adopted resources. Alliance continues to participate in district-wide professional learning to foster growth in

teaching and learning of effective instructional practices within the classrooms. The school will continue to participate in Graduation Rate Improvement Plan (GRIP) to support students through mentoring, an evidence-based improvement strategy to increase successful academic outcomes for students through relationship building practices.

Alliance continues to meet expectations on the state report card.

FINANCIAL STANDARDS

Alliance has continuously met all of its financial performance standards. The school has complied with all accounting and submission of records and reporting as outlined in its contract.

ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

While Alliance has met their organizational performance standards over the term of its contract, it is recommended that the school invest in ways to increase family engagement to build a strong, consistent parent/guardian community.

SCHOOL SITE VISIT

Alliance's presentation provided some additional information to support the understanding of the educational practices used at Alliance and the progress towards performance data. During the presentation, Alliance presented additional data which provided opportunities for growth in the areas of attendance and behavioral outcomes.

The personal finance course, which also leads to a city-wide and state competition, for those that are interested, has been a bright spot for the school. The students shared how they learned life-long skills, gained confidence in themselves, and the ability to persevere through social anxieties.

The school referenced inquiry-based learning, service learning, blended learning, and literacy focus as the instructional strategies of the school. The Review Team recommended that the school narrow the focus on a strategy that will be most impactful to students and where data can be effectively collected and analyzed for positive student outcomes.

The Review Team participated in a few restorative circles throughout the day, which were led by students. The time spent in the community building circle was a true demonstration of the practices Alliance uses to build a positive and accepting school culture and community. Alliance has the foundation of restorative practices and continues to embed this into daily instruction and interactions.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

The classroom observations provided mixed results amongst review team members. In some classrooms, engagement and student ownership were evident. There are classrooms where the level of engagement, rigor, student choice, and leadership needed improvement. Most classrooms showed a high level of student-teacher relationships. Staff appear to be more organic with their approaches to connect with students. There were some classrooms utilizing virtual instruction which often presented more off task behavior in these rooms.

STUDENT FOCUS GROUP

Students appreciate the small setting and the authentic relationships with staff. They appreciated the diverse community of the school and the flexibility of the staff to support student needs. One student stated “I feel like I belong for once and I have formed several relationships.”

Students spoke proudly of their school community. When asked if they felt challenged at school, most of the students agreed that this could be an area of improvement. The students referenced the need for additional sports and clubs and to ensure that all students are accepting of each other.

PARENT FOCUS GROUP

Parents appreciate the small community and the supportive staff. Parents felt that they are able to communicate any concerns which get addressed immediately. One parent stated, “Ms. Smith mediates with both students and families. When it comes to conflict they are able to grab hold of it right away. She is honest about everything.” Parents appreciated Freshman Bridge and the level of communication they receive from the Alliance staff.

When asked if they felt that their children are being challenged, most agreed that the students are learning, felt safe, but that they could be challenged more in the classroom, which is similar to what the students mentioned. Parents would like to see more activities and clubs for students to increase socialization and parental involvement.

Alliance has been a pillar in the community for almost 20 years. They provide a safe space, particularly for students with high social and emotional needs, students who have been bullied, and students who identify as LGBTQIA+.

MPS CHARTER SCHOOL REVIEW TEAM MEMBERS

Rebecca Alt	MPS Research, Assessment and Data
Tangela Anderson	MPS Finance
Leon Groce	MPS Restorative Practices
Lolita Harden	Community Member
Henry Leonard	MPS Board of Directors
Marty Lexmond	Community Member
Tracy Wozniak	MPS Specialized Services
Missy Zombor	MPS Board of Directors

SIGNATURE: *Bridget Schock* DATE: October 22, 2024

Bridget Schock, Director, Contracted School Services