



**urban learning  
collaborative**

July 25, 2024

**Contracted School Services  
Milwaukee Public Schools  
5225 W. Vliet Street, Room 204  
Milwaukee, WI 53208**

To Whom It May Concern,

On behalf of the Milwaukee Environmental Sciences Academy, an Urban Learning Collaborative (ULC) Charter School, formerly MTEC Charter school, it is our intent to renew a 5-year contract with Milwaukee Public Schools.

Serving over 300 students in grades K4 - 8, MESA is currently authorized by Milwaukee Public Schools as a "non-instrumentality" charter school. ULC works closely with its MESA teachers and community partners in the ongoing development of a Teacher Training Design Center, located at MESA. The Design Center is focused on advancing the goal of providing highly qualified teachers in the Milwaukee area.

We believe that all children can and want to learn! Through discovery, inquiry, and critical thinking, we prepare our scholars to become leaders of their own learning. We believe this is accomplished by educators partnering with families each day. Continued authorization by Milwaukee Public Schools allows for constant progress in these efforts.

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Sincerely,

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## Milwaukee Environmental Sciences Academy (MESA)

### Charter School Application for Renewal 2024

#### I. Response to Current Charter School Performance

##### A. Academic Performance

#### 1. Provide a description of how the school has been faithful in implementing its educational program outlined in the charter proposal (Appendix A).

The goal of the Urban Learning Collaborative (ULC), formerly the Milwaukee Teacher Education Center (MTEC), is to maintain a high-performing charter school focusing on environmental sciences using the Expeditionary Learning (EL) model. The World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) defines sustainability as “...meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The Milwaukee Environmental Sciences Academy (MESA), a ULC (MTEC) Charter School utilizing project-based learning and differentiated instruction, nurtures and ensures that all scholars become ecologically responsible.

The EL Education Model developed in collaboration between Kurt Hahn, the founder of Outward Bound, and the Harvard Graduate School of Education is based on the understanding that high-quality learning is active, challenging, meaningful, public, and collaborative. At MESA, this means that teachers work with scholars to ensure that they are deeply engaged in learning and striving to reach high levels, academically and socially. Scholars gain the necessary skills to be ready for college and/or career readiness through a rigorous curriculum that strives to develop strong literacy and math skills, as well as the ability to think critically, problem-solve, collaborate, and become active citizens within their community.

#### EL Education is guided by the following ten design principles:

1. ***Primacy of Self-Discovery*** - Learning happens best with emotion, challenge, and the requisite support. Scholars undertake tasks that require perseverance, fitness, craftsmanship, imagination, self-discipline, and significant achievement. The teacher's primary task is to help scholars overcome their fears and discover they can do more than they think they can.

2. ***Having Wonderful Ideas*** - This principle fosters curiosity about the world by creating learning situations that provide something important to think about, time to experiment, and time to make sense of what is observed.

3. ***Responsibility for Learning***- Learning is both a personal process of discovery and social activity. Everyone learns both individually and as part of a group. Every aspect of an EL Education school encourages both scholars and adults to become increasingly responsible for directing their own personal and collective learning. Scholars facilitate their Student-Led Conferences twice a year.

4. ***Empathy and Caring*** - Teachers infuse the Habits of Scholarship into their daily instruction which is aligned with Crew. Crew is a strategy used to develop positive relationships as well as support students and adults socially, emotionally, and academically. The structure of the crew allows for relationship building, academic progress monitoring, and character development.

5. ***Success and Failure*** - All scholars need to be successful if they are to build the confidence and capacity to take risks and meet increasingly difficult challenges. It is also important for scholars to learn from their failures, to persevere when things are difficult, and to learn to turn challenges into opportunities.

Through ***Celebrations of Learning***, scholars gain confidence as docents or guides and masters of their learning. They present this content to stakeholders, family members, and community leaders. Scholars will demonstrate their mastery of the oral presentation. They know that making mistakes is part of the learning process and through failure, knowledge is gained.

6. ***Collaboration and Competition***- Individual and group development are integrated so that the value of friendship, trust, and group action is clear. Scholars are encouraged to compete with their personal best and rigorous standards of excellence.

Collaboration is one of the six *Habits of Scholarship* supported at MESA. This is demonstrated in each class as teachers and educational assistants work with small groups of scholars to develop their skills. Scholars are encouraged to facilitate and collaborate in small groups while teachers or educational assistants monitor and provide affirmation and feedback. All teachers have scholars' STAR test data available to share and encourage growth.

Scholars participate in school-wide assemblies which highlight their success, provide incentives, and include shout-outs to support the development of school-wide Crew during times of uncertainty.

Under the guidance of the instructional coach and EL Director, Professional Development was provided to support phonics intervention groups.

7. ***Diversity and Inclusion***- Diversity and inclusion increase the richness of ideas, creative power, problem-solving ability, and respect for others. Our scholars investigate and value their different histories and talents and those of other communities and cultures. To meet the needs of all scholars, data continues to drive the creation of learning groups that are heterogeneous and homogeneous. We analyzed the STAR, iReady and EL Skills Block data to create a school-wide focus on phonics and vocabulary.

MESA demonstrates diversity and inclusion by forming partnerships with Northwestern Mutual, Urban Ecology and City Forward centered around service learning. Additionally, teachers select a wide range of expedition topics, inclusive of different communities and cultures. Therefore, scholars become well-rounded and informed in their understanding, which will deepen their appreciation and respect for others.

8. ***The Natural World*** - A direct and respectful relationship with the natural world refreshes the human spirit and teaches the important ideas of recurring cycles as well as cause and effect. Scholars learn to become stewards of the earth and of future generations.

MESA is located across the street from Dineen Park which is part of the Milwaukee County Parks System. Scholars and adults have partnered with the park in clean-up efforts and learning opportunities. They have had the opportunity to analyze the biodiversity of the pond. MESA will

continue to provide scholars with hands-on science opportunities and field experiences. Our understanding of our environment extends outside of our area, and the field experiences are tied to our environmental theme. During the 2022-23 school year we partnered with the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center and the Milwaukee County Zoological Society. We will be working to reestablish our partnership with these organizations to provide our scholars with offsite outdoor instruction. This complements and enriches classroom instruction. Our field experiences, science curriculum, and award-winning garden will introduce our scholars to new interconnected concepts to give the “Big Picture” of how we connect to the natural world.

This past Spring, MESA rebuilt the planting beds; two of the gardens were planted with vegetables while two standing gardens were filled with herbs and greens in collaboration with the Master Gardener from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, a community member from the Greek organization Phi Beta Sigma. MESA will continue working to turn the newly restructured courtyard into an outdoor classroom and hopes to add more picnic tables to allow for outdoor seating. MESA has come extremely far in the last three years and our environmental connection deepens as more students become exposed to the opportunities we offer. Through our partnership with EL, we were able to secure a media grant which provided for two staff members and two students the opportunity to attend a national conference in December and become keynote speakers at the event. Additionally, a documentary has been created to highlight the journey of our garden rejuvenation which will be featured at the national conference and amongst the EL community.

9. ***Solitude and Reflection***- Scholars and teachers need time alone to explore their thoughts, make their connections, and create their ideas. They also need to exchange their reflections with other scholars and with adults.

Through the EL practice of peer critique, scholars provide each other with feedback to enhance their personal development. Additionally, teachers plan multiple opportunities throughout the instructional day for scholars to reflect on their behavioral and academic performance. Finally, the staff serves as critical accountability partners for scholars’ individual growth.

10. ***Service and Compassion***- EL Education School’s primary function is to prepare scholars with attitudes and skills for acts of consequential service to others.

### **Instructional Program**

MESA’s educational program is the integration of learning across disciplines in phases which include:

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). The interdisciplinary program integrates:

- **Science** - Engage scholars in scientific study, inquiry, problem solving, and developing research skills critical for advanced academic studies through Amplify Science.
- **Technology** - Provide a gateway into the 21st century by way of literacy through multimedia and global awareness, with standards and skill development embedded. We purchased Smartboards and new chromebooks for the 2024-25 school year. Kiddom programming was also purchased to ease administration of EL Skills and all Block in Primary and Intermediate grades. Kiddom is a high-quality curriculum combined with teaching tools to make the classroom more efficient and effective. The Amplify curriculum was approved by the Department of Public Instruction’s Early Literacy Curriculum Council based on criteria that includes phonics, oral language development, vocabulary building and instruction in writing.

- **Engineering** - The infusion of math and science.
- **Art** - Develop a greater appreciation of a scholar's individual talents, understanding, and appreciation of the humanities.
- **Mathematics** - Savvas Envision will be used to teach problem-solving strategies that help scholars see the many applications of their mathematical understandings in the world around them. This curriculum will be implemented in the 2024-2025 school year. In addition, Mesa will receive math coaching and professional development support from our EL partners.

The core instructional program includes:

- **Literacy (reading and writing)** - A balanced, integrated approach that focuses on targeted, comprehensive, and meaningful student-centered project based instruction. El Education's Literacy program is an Act 10 approved curriculum.
- **Social Studies** - Equips students with information and skills necessary to become productive citizens in a democratic society. We follow the Social Studies standards which are embedded in the EL Curriculum.
- **Physical Education** - Through contemporary sports students develop and maintain healthy bodies and lifestyles.

**Music** - Students are exposed to different music methods, genres and experiences.

Researched based strategies are utilized for academic achievement at MESA include but not limited to:

- **Expeditionary Learning/Project-Based Learning:** Filled with active and engaged experiences exploring real-world problems and challenges inspires scholars to obtain a deeper knowledge of the subjects they are studying. Research indicates that students are more likely to retain the knowledge gained through these approaches far more readily than through traditional textbook-centered learning. In addition, students develop confidence and self-direction as they move through both team-based and independent work across disciplines.

- **Accelerated Curriculum:** The Accelerated Schools Model developed by Dr. Henry Levin at Stanford University is committed to the premise that every child should be treated as gifted and will achieve when supported in a learning environment with high expectations. Schools incorporate the efforts of parents/guardians and schools together, co-leading governance and decision-making functions to create a curriculum and an atmosphere in which accelerated learning is fostered.

- **Differentiated Instruction:** Teachers tailor their teaching approach to match their scholars' learning styles and needs. We have the same learning expectations for all our scholars. Instead of using a one-size-fits-all approach, teachers use a variety of methods, **IEP snapshots for students with disabilities**, academic accommodations, and best practices to teach. This may include teaching our scholars in small groups or in one-on-one sessions.

- **Social-Emotional Learning** - Social-emotional learning (SEL) is the process of developing the self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are vital scholar academic success as well as life success. Scholars with strong social-emotional skills are better able to cope with everyday challenges and benefit academically and socially. Classes meet for Crew every morning where they meet with their classmates and teachers for team building, and conversations which strengthen their teams and provide a solid foundation for collaborative learning. Teachers are encouraged to use the Second Step Bullying program in collaboration with the Guidance Counselor and/or School Social Worker.

● **Response to Intervention RtI:** Response to Intervention (RtI) is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of scholars with learning and behavior needs. MESA will provide Universal Tier 1 instruction and progress monitoring with fidelity. The staff will attend various professional development meetings offered throughout the 2024-2025 school year. The school will use the RTI framework to provide academic and behavioral support for all students.

**Plan of Action:**

- The school will implement RTI with fidelity and monitor the progress of interventions at monthly team meetings.
- The principal and leadership team will receive a refresher on the RTI model to support the fidelity of this process
- The principal and or her designee will monitor the SRBIs for fidelity purposes.

**2. Explain how the school has met goals and measurable objectives during the term of this contract. Highlight growth in student achievement and provide evidence of how the school is making progress towards meeting its academic outcomes.**

According to the 2022-2023, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction District Report Card, MESA achieved **Meets Expectations** rating with an overall score of 60.7. Priority area scores showed that MESA scored higher than 10.7% of K-8 schools in the state from the Achievement category. In the growth category, MESA scored the same or higher than 55.5% of K-8 schools in the state. In the target group outcomes, MESA scored the same or higher than 19.6% of K-8 schools in the state. In the on-track to graduation category, MESA scored the same or higher than 11.3% of K-8 schools in the state. The 2023-2024 State Report Card is unavailable at this time and will be released to individual schools in August and available to the public in September.

As evidenced by the EL Curriculum Skills Data Tracker, Primary students have demonstrated growth in letter and sound recognition, spelling and decoding skills during the 2023-2024 school year.

**Pupil Academic Achievement Report (PAAR)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>MESA Attendance</b>	<b>District Attendance</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>MESA Mobility</b>	<b>District Mobility</b>	<b>Met</b>
2020-2021	78.9%	87.3%	NO	3.3%	5.0%	YES
2021-2022	83.0%	82.9%	YES	3.0%	12.3%	YES
2022-2023	83.5%	85.8%	NO	2.6%	13.4%	YES

The Pupil Academic Achievement Report above chart reflects the attendance and mobility rate results of MESA and the district for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years. The MESA attendance rate of 83% is .1% greater than the district, which is 83% in 2021-2022. Additionally, the MESA mobility rate for both school years was 3.3% and 3.0% respectively. This is a 1.7% and 9.3% lower mobility rate than the district. The table demonstrates MESA’s ability to increase attendance and decrease student mobility.

According to Renaissance STAR Reading Assessment, our fifth graders' scores increased by 4% in the significantly above category from fall to spring. Eighth graders scores increased by 3%, and school-wide increased by 1%. First, third, fourth, sixth, and seventh grade remained the same. Overall, MESA increased by 1% in the significantly above category.

In the on target category, fourth and seventh grades increased by 3%, and eighth graders increased by 4% from fall to spring. Second and sixth grade remained the same and there was a 1% decrease in first, third, and fifth grade. On average fourth, seventh, and eighth graders made an increase of 3.3%

### **Below Target**

Our third and fifth grader scholars made significant progress by reducing scores in the below target area by 11% from fall to spring. Sixth graders reduced scores by 3%, seventh graders by 6%, and eighth graders by 8%. Grades first, second, fourth and seventh declined by increasing scores 3%-11%. Third, fifth, and sixth graders were able to decrease below target scores on an average by 7%.

### **Well Below Target**

First, seventh and eighth graders made significant progress by reducing scores by 17%, 25%, and 8% in the well below target area. Grades second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth declined by increasing scores by 9% to 30%. On average, first, seventh, and eighth graders reduced scores in the well below target area by 17%.

### **Significantly Below**

In the significantly below category, second graders made significant progress, by reducing scores by 15%, third graders by reducing scores by 19%, fourth grade by 17%, and fifth grade by 7%. Grades sixth and seventh remained the same. First and eighth grade declined by increasing scores by 9%-15%. Grades second, third, fourth, and fifth were able to reduce significantly below scores on average by 15%.

### **Math At/Above**

According to STAR Math Assessment, our first graders increased by 5% in the at/above category from fall to spring. Fourth graders increased by 3% and eighth graders by 4%. Second, sixth, and seventh grade percentages remained the same. Third graders decreased by 5% and fifth graders decreased by 11%. On average fourth and eighth graders made an overall increase of 3.3%

### **Below Target**

First graders showed significant progress by reducing scores by 39%, fifth grade by 1%. Sixth grade percentages remained the same. The following grade percentage scores increased. Second at 26%, third at 6%, fourth at 2%, seventh at 5%, and eighth at 3%. First graders were able to show significant progress by reducing scores in this category by 39%.

### **Well Below Target**

Second graders showed significant progress by reducing scores by 39%, fourth graders reduced by 14%, sixth graders by 3%, seventh graders by 19%, and eighth graders by 2%. First, third and 5th grade percentage scores increased by 37%, 11%, and 9%. On average, second, fourth, sixth, seventh, and eighth graders were able to reduce scores in this category by 15.4%.

**Significantly Below Target**

The following grades showed a slight reduction in the significantly below target area. First grade was reduced by 2%, third grade reduced by 6%, fifth grade by 3%, and eighth grade by 5%. Second grade percentage scores increased by 11%, fourth grade increased by 9%, sixth grade increased by 3%, and seventh grade increased by 14%. On average, first, third, fifth, and eighth graders were able to reduce scores in this category by 4%.

An investigation of the practices of instructional staff and a closer look at curriculum delivery, strategies, and assessments was evaluated by our leadership team to ensure that expected growth is attained for each grade annually moving forward.

The leadership team decided to adopt a different math curriculum (SAVVAS/enVisionmath 2.0) for the 2024-2025 school year. As well as, including a pacing guide organized by trimesters and weeks for each grade.

**Wisconsin Forward Exam Comparisons**

	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>
WSAS - ELA	NA	NO MESA: 6.1% District: 14.6%	NO MESA: 7.4% District: 16.3%
WSAS - Math	NA	NO MESA: 0.9% District: 10.4%	NO MESA: 1.5% District: 11.8%
WSAS - Science	NA	NO MESA: 6.74% District: 19.6%	YES MESA: 20.7% District: 20.5%
WSAS - Social Studies	NA	NO MESA: 20.0% District: 28.6%	YES MESA: 29.3% District: 29.9%
Promotion Rate 4th and 8th grade	YES 4th: MESA: 100% 4th: District: 99.9%  8th: MESA: 100% 8th: District: 99.8%	YES 4th: MESA: 100% 4th: District: 99.7%  8th: MESA: 100% 8th: District: 99.7%	YES 4th: MESA: 100% 4th: District: 99.9%  8th: MESA: 100% 8th: District: 99.8%

Note: For the 2020-2021 school year, the district received a federal waiver for test participation in meeting the 95% requirement.

As part of the EL ELA curriculum, scholars in kindergarten, first, and second grades are assessed at the beginning of the year, middle of the year, and end of the year on alphabet recognition, sounds, phonics skills, and phonological awareness. They are then placed into small groups called microphases based on this assessment data. Teachers are then able to determine specific phonological awareness and phonics skills to teach each small group of students to help them



progress as readers. The EL Skills block has starting points for students in each microphase. These groupings empower students to begin small group instruction at their specified entry point and thereby learn from that point. The goal is to grow a whole phase or more during one school year. Below is a summary of the growth of scholars in kindergarten, first and second grades during the 2023-2024 school year.

During the 2023 - 2024 school year, there was a 36 point increase in the score on the EL Education Implementation Review (IR) from the year before. MESA was also selected for EL Education's annual Better World Day and the Garden Club will be showcased and recognized at the National Conference in Atlanta, Georgia in December 2024.

Fourteen of twenty-two kindergarten students were on grade level. Fifteen out of twenty first graders made growth from the beginning of year to the end of year assessment. All twenty-six second graders showed growth.

As part of our RtI process, our first through eighth-grade scholars were placed into Tier 2 reading intervention groups based on STAR scores of below grade level or significantly below grade level, as well as classroom data. Students were all assessed on individual units and leadership has begun to train teachers on entering that data using the classroom-based assessment tracker.

There were 24 second-grade students given the STAR Assessment and 18 third graders and both grades made an average grade equivalency increase of 0.6. There were 33 fourth graders tested, and they made an average grade equivalency gain of 0.3. Twenty-three fifth grade students were tested, and they made an average grade equivalency increase of 0.5.

In middle school, 34 sixth graders were given the STAR Assessment, and they made an average grade equivalency of 0.3. Thirty-four seventh-grade students were tested, and they made a gain of 0.5. Eighth grade students struggled to make grade equivalency growth.

To continue the momentum toward meeting or surpassing our contract measures MESA has:

**Curriculum** - Continue the full implementation of the EL Education English Language Arts curriculum. The implementation of a project-based science curriculum called Amplify, which integrates technology as well as an outdoor classroom to support environmental education and implement Savvas Envision in collaboration with our EL partners.

**Professional Development** - Professional Development opportunities increased from 8 days to 18 days to equip the teachers with knowledge, strategies, and skills in the areas of instruction, curriculum, and EL standards. In alignment with the School Improvement Plan and the EL work plan, the first 90 days of the school year teachers, scholars, and staff are provided Professional Development on Crew.

This was the opportunity for the administration to model the crew concept so teachers are able to implement the concept with their scholars. Weekly Professional development was provided every Wednesday in addition to the targeted Professional Development for EL and support service staff teachers. This fostered collaborative discussion and implementation of IEPs with appropriate accommodations between regular education and support services teachers.

**Partnership** - In partnership with MESA, Milwaukee Public Schools and the EL Education Director, the School Improvement Plan and the EL Work Plan were aligned. The alignment allows

the MESA instructional and support staff to focus on culture, climate, and crew as well as learning intentions and student outcomes. These strategies foster a community of trust.

During the 2023 - 2024 school year MESA hired a full time Guidance Counselor. Our counselor is an advocate, leader, collaborator, and a systems change agent for our scholars. MESA's counselor supports our scholars in the areas of academic achievement, career, and social/emotional development ensuring that our scholars become productive, well-adjusted adults.

### **Financial Performance**

- 1. Explain how the school has met its financial performance standards. Describe how the school is financially sound.**

Through close and consistent budget management, administrative synergies with the parent organization ULC, and outside funding resources, MESA has met its financial performance standards. MESA continuously meets its target of a balanced MPS budget, and a clean audit, which is evaluated and reviewed by a third-party audit firm.

MESA's financial performance against the year to date and the annual budget is reviewed by the ULC Board and Finance Committee every other month, and spending is realigned as necessary to meet targets. Administrative synergies are maximized with ULC including shared resources in all key support efforts as well as Marketing and Communications. MESA continues to seek outside funding to enhance school programs that will benefit strategic planning projects.

MESA remains financially strong through close oversight by the ULC Board Chair and Treasurer, Executive Director, Principal, and Finance Director. In addition, the continued strengthening of ULC fiscal policies, procedures, and balance sheets provides a strong financial foundation for MESA. The oversight team continuously reviews materials and current resources for increased flexibility in managing expenses and improving cash flow management.

### **C. Organizational Performance**

- 1. Illustrate how the school has a well-functioning organizational structure. Include pertinent information about parental involvement, staffing, health and safety, school enrollment, discipline guidelines, and school facilities. Describe how the community partnerships have impacted students.**

MESA is a well-functioning organizational structure as demonstrated by ongoing parental involvement. Parents are expected to attend two annual student-led conferences and at least two academic-related events to remain informed regarding their child's academic and behavioral performance as well as the educational standards provided by the school.

**Parental Involvement** - Because families perform a vital role in the education of their children, MESA fosters tools for engagement between families and staff. The tool strategy allows for an equal partnership of families and staff to support student achievement and school improvement. Every Trimester, the Parent Leadership Team meets to discuss school issues, obtain updated information, and give feedback on school-related ideas. The Parent Leadership Team (PLT) meets once a trimester to discuss curriculum, school data, student achievement, and plan events. Student-led conferences are held twice during the year to inform parents about academic goals and achievements. Students also share with their parents their learning styles. Empowering

families is a part of how we build mutually beneficial partnerships and collective efforts to maximize resources that promote greater student outcomes.

**Staffing** - ULC in collaboration with the leadership team of Milwaukee Environmental Sciences Academy strives to hire highly qualified staff that support the social-emotional development of all students. They are committed to lifelong learning, and they participate in professional development for growth and well-being of self and the organization.

**Health and Safety** - The last two years highlighted the importance of self-care. MESA believes in order to take care of others we must take responsibility for our physical and mental health. We encourage staff to use their time off, embrace the true meaning of crew, and follow the CDC guidelines and recommendations to support the reduction in the spread of Covid19, flu and other communicable diseases. During the 2023-2024 school year, we hired a part time nurse four days a week. Our nurse was able to bring in other health programs such as visual and dental screening.

**School Enrollment** - MESA proposed school enrollment is a maximum of 500 scholars in grades K4-8. The current enrollment is 281. MESA continues to recruit families using multiple platforms to reach our proposed enrollment.

**Discipline guidelines** - MESA continues to follow Milwaukee Public School's guidelines for Student Discipline.

**School Facilities** - Milwaukee Environmental Sciences Academy is housed in the former Milwaukee Public Schools 65th Street School. During the past three years we have enhanced the site by painting the walls, updating our courtyard garden, and renewing the curb appeal at the front entrance. We have also upgraded our school signage in front of the building.

**Community Partnership** - Some of our community partners are Smart Smiles, Urban Ecology, and Conscious Community Curators. Community partnerships are essential to bringing module topics to fruition. In addition to planning field experiences, teachers contact local community partners related to the curriculum topics that they are studying. The community partners join the classroom and school community to serve as local experts to provide scholars with expertise so that they are able to become well versed on the content. Therefore, scholars will develop a well-rounded understanding of experiences inside and outside the classroom.

## **2. Provide evidence that parents and students are satisfied with the school.**

### **Parent Survey**

MESA parents were given several surveys from (Fall 2023 and Spring 2024). These surveys included : *Fall 2023 Parent Survey, MESA Family & Staff Input Survey, Return to School-Parent Survey and the School Start Time Survey.*

Parents were asked to respond to the Fall 2023 Parent Survey. Sixteen parents responded to the survey. Eighteen percent of parents who were surveyed were extremely satisfied with the school's academic program, while 18.8% were satisfied with the academic program. Fifty percent of the families would recommend MESA to other parents. Sixty-eight percent agreed that the communication with the teacher about the child's academic progress was good. Eighty percent will be returning in the Fall.

### **Student Survey**

Students were asked how much do you feel like you belong to your school Crew. There were 87 third through eighth graders who responded: 32% believed that they belonged; 24% felt like they completely belonged. Next students were asked if they had a teacher, crew leader or any other adult from school they could help them achieve no matter what: 85% agreed while 14% disagreed. Finally, students were asked if they could work through negative feelings (anger, etc.) in healthy ways: 24% were completely confident; while 29% were somewhat confident, 21% were quite confident and 18% were a little confident.

### **3. Demonstrate that the school has an active and effective school governance structure. Provide examples and explain.**

Founded in 1996, the former Milwaukee Teacher Education Center (MTEC), rebranded as the Urban Learning Collaborative (ULC) is a not-for-profit, results-oriented, teacher certification and professional development center designed to recruit, support, and retain teachers and school leaders in urban settings.

The Urban Learning Collaborative (ULC) Board of Directors governs the Milwaukee Environmental Sciences Academy. The ULC Board oversees the development of the school's policies and procedures, fundraising efforts and approves the budget. They also hire the school leader, in conjunction with the ULC Executive Director and community partners. Under the direction of the ULC Board of Directors, the ULC Executive Director, the principal is evaluated and offered support in the day-to-day leadership and management of the educational program.

The school leadership team, which includes the Principal, Assistant Principal, Instructional Coach, Dean of Family Engagement, and a Special Education Coordinator, oversee the day-to-day leadership and management of the educational program which includes addressing the needs of scholars and parental concerns.

## **II. Plans for Continued Success**

### **A. Academic Performance**

#### **1. Describe any proposed changes to the school's educational program for the term of the next charter school contract (up to five years).**

There are no proposed changes to the educational program. MESA will continue with the Amplify Science curriculum which includes hands-on science kits, software programs, and embedded professional learning opportunities. MESA will begin teaching the Savvaas Envision math curriculum in the 2024-2025 school year. MESA administration and staff will continue to implement the EL curriculum utilizing the Kiddom platform to aid with administration of the skills block at the primary level and all blocks for intermediate grades. We will continue to focus on becoming a credentialed EL school. Beginning in the Fall of 2024 MESA will have one full time Reading Corps tutor onsite and one part time Reading Corp tutor working with scholars in grades K-3.

#### **2. Provide the proposed enrollment and grade levels for the term of the next charter school contract.**

MESA proposed enrollment is a maximum of 500 scholars in grades K4-8 for the next charter school contract.

**3. Outline the school’s goals and measurable objectives for the term of the next charter and describe how the school intends to meet these goals.**

Appendix B provides an *At-A-Glance* of the school’s goals and measurable objectives. It gives a support calendar, a summary of the multi-year impact goals, annual performance benchmarks across all three dimensions, high-level data points, implementation priorities for the year, and the foundational leadership goals. How the school will meet its goals is shared in columns three and four of the chart. This summary is shared with our stakeholders and is used with staff in conjunction with a comprehensive work plan.

**B. Financial Performance**

**1. Explain the school’s financial plans and forecast.**

The immediate financial plans and forecast is to continue to work with a balanced budget along the current fiscal path. MESA plans to use academic and operational data to guide spending resources to areas of need. We also will use the resources to expand the educational program and provide professional development for staff as directed by the data results. The goal is to continue to work with our school partners with the budget forecast to afford and provide increased student achievement and opportunities.

**Organizational Performance**

**1. Illustrate plans for strengthening parental and community involvement in the school’s educational mission.**

MESA believes in enrolling families to increase participation as advocates, members of school councils, and learning support at home. The more often parents participate in their scholars' learning, the more likely scholars are to achieve at high levels. We believe community involvement also plays a vital role in building the success of scholars and relationships with families and staff.

The Dean of Family Engagement position gives families a liaison in the school and is available to meet their needs. As a result, parent relationships, support, and satisfaction increased. We will continue to strengthen our efforts to partner with families and the community. MESA strives to engage, guide, energize, and motivate our scholars to produce their academic and social, and emotional successes.

**Parent/Family/Community Volunteers**

All families/community members are encouraged to volunteer at MESA. These efforts are coordinated through the Dean of Family Engagement, the office staff, or a scholar’s teacher. In an effort to support volunteer’s skills and/or talents, multiple opportunities are available which includes:

- 1. Tutoring Help - Coppins Corner**, parents in collaboration with teachers, assistance with Reading/Math support.
- 2. Fieldwork/Special Projects**—Teachers create field experiences for scholars so that they are able to complete school projects including the MESA’s STEM Science Fair.
- 3. CREW** - Crew is a form of meeting that is facilitated by the teacher daily using the Habit Of Scholarship as theme of the meeting. Once a month Crew is led by the leadership team during staff meetings. We also use Crew during community events and parent meetings.

4. **Celebrations of Learning** - This is the opportunity for scholars to share their learning with their families and the larger community. Celebrations of Learning may take the form of book talks, student-led tours, demonstrations, or displays. These presentations are a team effort and each scholar's contribution to the success of the group will be part of their grade in the applicable subject area.

5. **Professional Services/Expertise** - Many times a family member has a special skill, expertise, experience, or hobby that can be brought into the classroom or contribute to a school-wide project. Examples of classroom contributions include a nurse providing feedback on a scholar's health care presentation, an artist teaching animation skills, or a war veteran discussing his or her experiences. These also assist MESA scholars in building their background knowledge in preparation for celebrations.

### **Newsletter**

*The Eagle's Nest* has critical information about upcoming school events (i.e. dress down days, incentive celebrations, parent tips, etc). Scholars who meet the criteria to participate in school-wide incentives have their names listed in the newsletter. In addition, the newsletter includes an overview from the school principal with detailed information and updates from the Dean of Family Engagement. Parents/guardians are expected and encouraged to read "*The Eagle's Nest*" carefully each week to remain informed of important information.

### **Parent Text Alerts**

In order to provide immediate communication, MESA continues to use a text alert system. This form of communication allows parents/guardians to receive text messages and sometimes voice recordings with important school notifications.

### **ClassDojo**

ClassDojo keeps parents/guardians informed of their scholar's academic and behavior, including uniforms, homework, character expectations and conduct. Teachers share photos from class, important updates, and wonderful moments. Additionally, we use ClassDojo so that scholars are regularly recognized and awarded for demonstrating strong character, academic effort, and achievement.

### **School-Based Incentives**

School-Based Incentives for Scholars will be awarded by members of the leadership team. The incentives may include dance parties, special treats, and field trips. Scholars who meet or exceed the school-wide goal will qualify for the incentives. The incentive dates will be shared in our parent newsletter including the names of scholars who qualify for participation. Scholars who are exhibiting Habits of Scholarship (HOS) can also earn rewards. Scholars will be invited to incentive-based celebrations monthly for earning it.

## **2. Describe any changes to the school's governance structure.**

There will be no changes in the school governance structure.