



HAPA
HMONG AMERICAN
PEACE ACADEMY

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RE: [unclear]

Hmong American Peace Academy
4601 North 84th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53225

September 6, 2017

Bridget Schock
Program Supervisor II of Contracted School Services
Milwaukee Public Schools
5225 W. Vliet Street, Room 204
Milwaukee, WI 53208

RE: Hmong American Peace Academy

Dear Ms. Schock,

This communication serves as the Charter Renewal Letter of Intent. Hmong American Peace Academy (HAPA) will seek a full-term Charter School Contract renewal with Milwaukee Public Schools for a five-year term.

HAPA's mission is to provide students with rigorous academics, character development, and Hmong cultural values, preparing them to excel in colleges, universities and careers. As a high-performing, award winning school, HAPA will continue to stand as a beacon of hope and inspiration, always ready to lead the way and guide others.

The renewal contact person is Ms. Chris Her-Xiong.

Forever Forward,

Chris Her-Xiong
Executive Director

Sincerely,

Jason Handal
Board Chair



Hmong American Peace Academy Charter Contract Renewal Application

September 29, 2017

MISSION

HAPA provides students with rigorous academics, character development, and Hmong cultural values, preparing them to excel in colleges, universities and careers.

VISION

HAPA students enjoy college and career success, value Hmong cultural heritage, and exhibit responsible and peaceful leadership in local and global communities.

I. Response to Current Charter School Performance

Educational Performance

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

Hmong American Peace Academy (HAPA, the Academy) is both a high-performing and award-winning school. HAPA has earned the distinguished honor of being nationally recognized by *U.S. News and World Report* in the 2015 and 2017 Rankings of Best High Schools with a Bronze Medal. Schools that receive the “Nationally Recognized” designation must qualify as high-performing schools based on state exam performance. Schools listed in this category are in the top 17% of high schools nationally. Also, according to an article published on April 30th, 2017 in the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Alan J. Borsuk wrote, “HAPA was the second highest rated high school in Wisconsin in the view of *U.S. News*.” In addition, HAPA has been named a School of Recognition by DPI in beating the odds for three years in a row. Another example of how HAPA has been faithful in implementing its educational program is the overall accountability ratings of earning an overall score of 75%, “Exceeds Expectations” in the 2015-2016 Report Card issued by DPI.

As HAPA continues to grow and expand as a high-performing and award winning school, the Academy is committed to advancing HAPA’s mission, vision and goals of rigorous education, cultural strengths, and peace for all people. HAPA is one of Milwaukee’s most successful charter schools, with nearly 100% attendance rate, test scores exceed the district averages, and nearly 100% college acceptance rate. Graduates are career and college-ready, with many attending Wisconsin’s most prestigious colleges and universities.

As an award winning school, HAPA was named Charter School of the Year in the spring of 2014 by the Milwaukee Charter School Advocates. The Academy continues to prepare students for success in college and careers despite the fact that nearly 90% of the student population lives below the federal poverty level (free or reduced lunch). Over 90% of the student body comes from homes where another language other than English is spoken. For the 2015-2016 school year, HAPA’s mobility rate is 0.0% as compared to the district’s rate of 13.2%.

For the past thirteen years HAPA has successfully designed and implemented a curriculum founded on three main components: Standards-Based Academics, Cultural Strengths, and Peace Education. To this end, each of these areas play an important role in a comprehensive educational plan designed to be integral in the academic, psychosocial, and civic development of HAPA's scholars.

For example, the Standards-Based component of the curriculum is a reflection of the core belief that strong programs in reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, technology, fine arts and recreations are fundamental in the successful education of all students. The content presented within each subject area has been designed and aligned with the Common Core Standards and College Readiness Standards.

HAPA is a school that builds pride, self-esteem, ownership, and dignity which challenges students to reach their highest potential. With HAPA's vision and educational goals, students are encouraged to seek the American educational opportunities that will provide a way for students to become successful and productive citizens. HAPA is able to serve the large Hmong population in the greater Milwaukee area by offering a unique and innovative Hmong program rich in language, culture and history to its students.

Furthermore, the Cultural Strengths component addresses issues of culture, language, values, and history specific to the Hmong heritage that the majority of the school's students share. This component offers children the opportunity to become bilingual and bicultural individuals, allowing them to fully value their personal backgrounds while also becoming active participants in their larger, mainstream communities.

The final component of our curriculum is Peace Education. HAPA fosters attitudes that serve and transform learners into citizens of the world, promote students to think and act critically, strive for a global mindset, and solve problems peacefully. Key elements of the PeaceBuilders program are to praise people, to give up put-downs, to seek wise people, to notice and speak up about hurts one has caused, to right wrongs, and to help others. All individuals at HAPA pledge to build peace at home, at school, and in the community each day. HAPA parents, staff, and students commit to a community whose members strive to practice a peaceful lifestyle at home, at school, and beyond.

Another preventative program HAPA utilizes in the Peace Education curriculum is the Capturing Kids' Hearts program. The heart of the program is where the adults capture the hearts of students by building positive and meaningful relationships. When we have their hearts, trusting, respectful, and caring relationships develop and flourish. In order to pave the way for high performance, it is the expectation that our staff members implement this program wherever the process can transform the classroom and the school environment. Capturing Kids' Hearts is the core of a powerful process that allows every member of the school to foster and become part of a high-performing, learning community.

HAPA is committed to documenting and monitoring students' academic progress. HAPA uses standardized tests and classroom assessments to measure progress. HAPA and the entire community are dedicated to educating the whole person - mind, body, and will for peace and fullness of life.

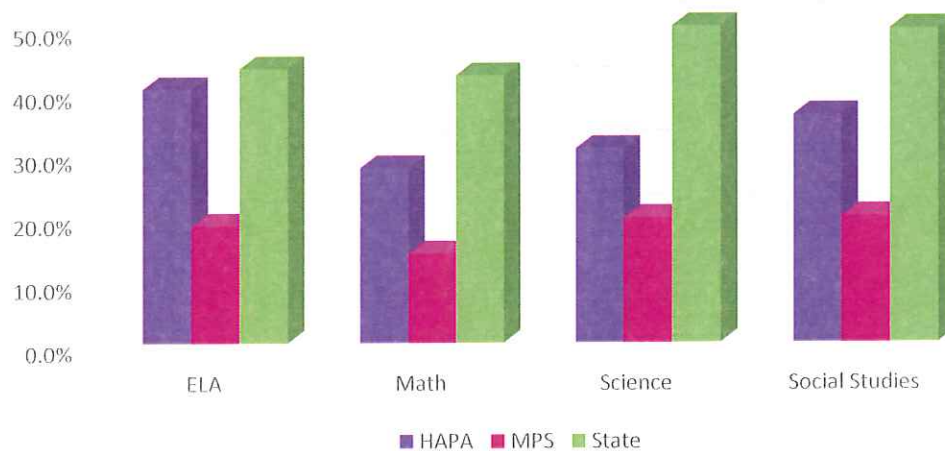
In the K4-12th grade classrooms, teachers use a backwards design model to create effective and engaging unit and daily lesson plans based on the Common Core State Standards and the College Readiness Standards. Differentiated instruction takes place in whole group and small group settings, as well as purposeful and flexible student groupings that help to meet the needs of our diverse learners. Lesson plans are reviewed by the instructional coaches, and the teachers receive instructional coaching and mentoring on best teaching practices. HAPA’s rigorous academic curriculum engaged students in authentic curriculum that prepares and challenges them to compete in an international society and workforce.

In the K4 to 8th grade programming, HAPA focused heavily on the literacy-based pedagogy centered around phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary development and reading comprehension. Students engaged in inquiry based themed units of learning. Students learn math through spiraled curriculum, and writing is infused throughout the curriculum. Students are asked to solve problems and create new solutions. Technology is integrated into the curriculum to enhance the overall instructional program through digital learning opportunities based on the ISTE Technology Standards.

In the 9th to 12th grade program, scholars are exposed to courses related to the fields of medicine, law, engineering, and business. Students are offered the opportunity to take courses in these fields of interest. The high school programming provided student internships, career exploration through ACP, research and project based learning, and college campus visits.

HAPA’s rigorous academic program has prepared our scholars to consistently score at or above the district and statewide assessments in the last four academic years. Below is a graph reflecting the Academy’s student achievement in the average Forward Exams scores for the past two years comparing HAPA with the district and state.

Avg. Forward Exam Scores FY15 - FY16 Comparisons



2. Explain how the school has met goals and measurable objectives during the term of this contract. Highlight growth in student achievement.

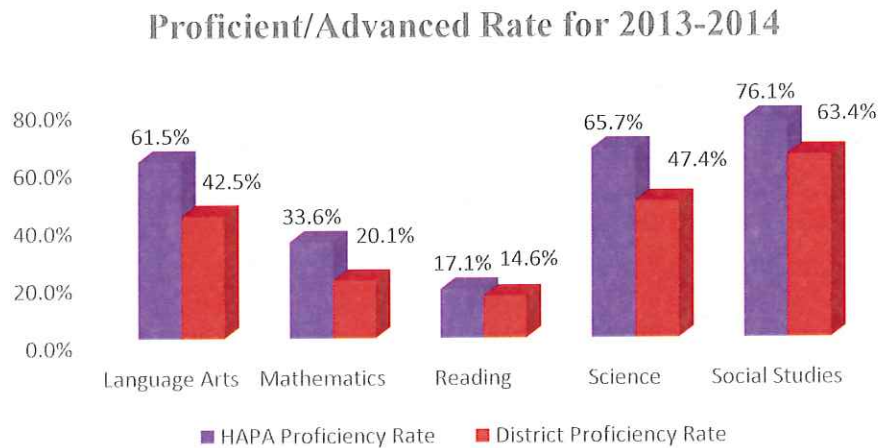
Summary:

HAPA has exceeded the goals and measurable objectives during the term of this contract. As evidenced in the state exams, HAPA exceeded proficiency/advanced in all areas of Reading, Language Arts, Science, Math, and Social Studies on the WKCE, Badger, and Forward Assessments from 2013-2017.

Highlights of Student Achievement:

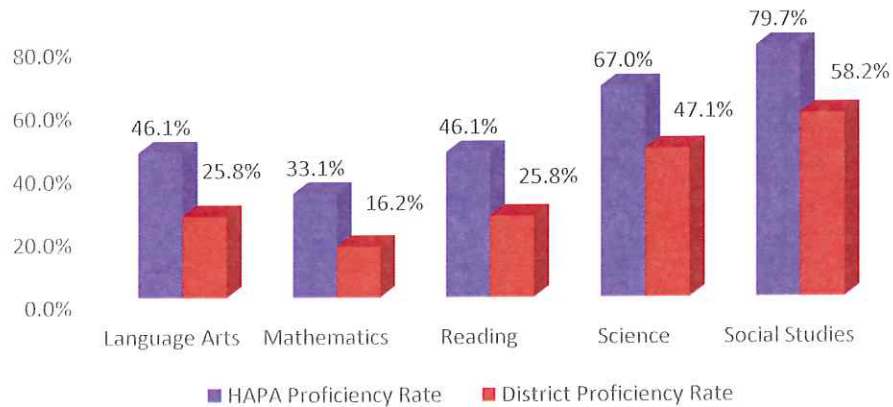
The DPI state-wide assessment data indicates that HAPA made growth from the 2013-14 school year to the 2014-2015 school year in the areas of Reading, Science, and Social Studies. In the area of Reading/Language Arts, HAPA students made 29.0% gains. In the area of Science, students made 1.3% gains. In the area of Social Studies, students made 3.6% gains.

During the 2013-2014 school year, HAPA students in grades 3-8 exceeded district performance on the WKCE assessment by 19% in Language Arts, 13.5% in Mathematics, and 2.5 % in Reading. Students in grades 4 and 8 exceeded district performance by 18.0% on the WKCE assessment in Science. Students in grades 4, 8, and 10 exceeded district performance by 12.7% on the WKCE assessment in Social Studies. The graph below reflects HAPA’s growth in student achievement for the 2013-2014 school year as compared to the district.



During the 2014-2015 school year, students in grades 3-8 exceeded district performance on the Badger assessment by 20.3% in Language Arts, 16.1% in Mathematics, and 25.8% in Reading. Students in grades 4 and 8 exceeded district performance by 19.9% on the Badger assessment in Science. Students in grades 4, 8, and 10 exceeded district performance by 21.5% on the Badger assessment in Social Studies. The following is a graph reflecting HAPA’s student achievement for the 2014-2015 school year as compared to the district.

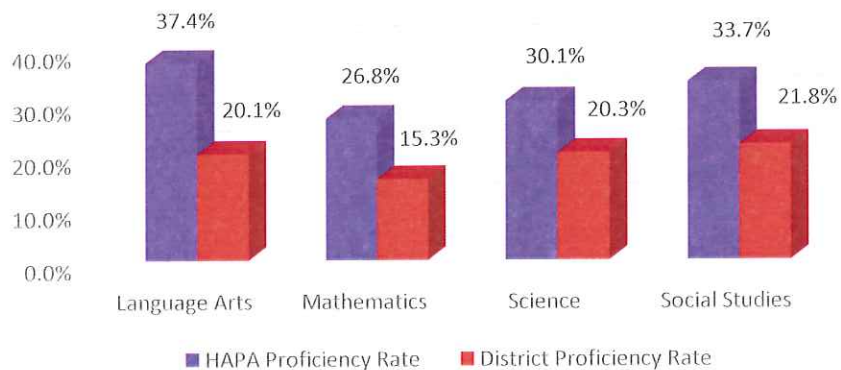
Proficient/Advanced Rate for 2014-2015



The state-wide assessment data for the Wisconsin Forward Exam indicates that HAPA made growth from the 2015-2016 school year to the 2016-2017 school year in the areas of Reading/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. In the area of Reading/Language Arts, students made 5.5% gains. In Mathematics, students made 1.6% gains. In Science, students made 1.1% gains. In the area of Social Studies, students made 4.4% gains.

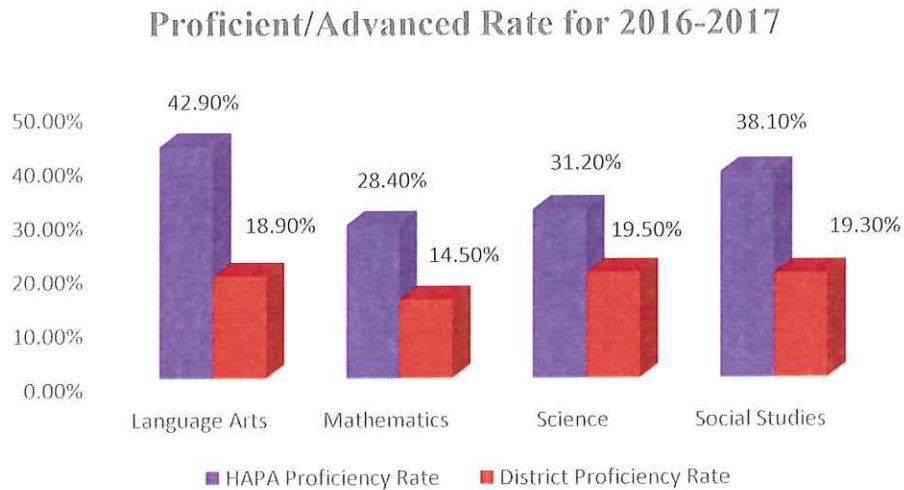
During the 2015-2016 school year, students in grades 3-8 exceeded district performance on the Forward Exam in English Language Arts by 17.3% and Mathematics by 11.5%. Students in grades 4 and 8 exceeded district performance on the Forward Exam in Science by 9.8% and Social Studies by 11.9%.

Proficient/Advanced Rate for 2015-2016



During the 2016-2017 school year, students in grades 3-8 exceeded district performance by 24% on the Forward Exam in English Language Arts and 13.9% in Math. Students in grades 4 and 8 exceeded district performance on the Forward Exam in Science by 11.7%. Students in grades 4, 8,

and 10 exceeded district performance on the Forward Exam in Social Studies by 18.8%. The students in grade 6 exceeded the state performance on the Forward Exam in English Language Arts by 1.1%, grade 7 by 18.8% and grade 8 by 9.6%. The graph below reflects HAPA’s student achievement as compared to the district.

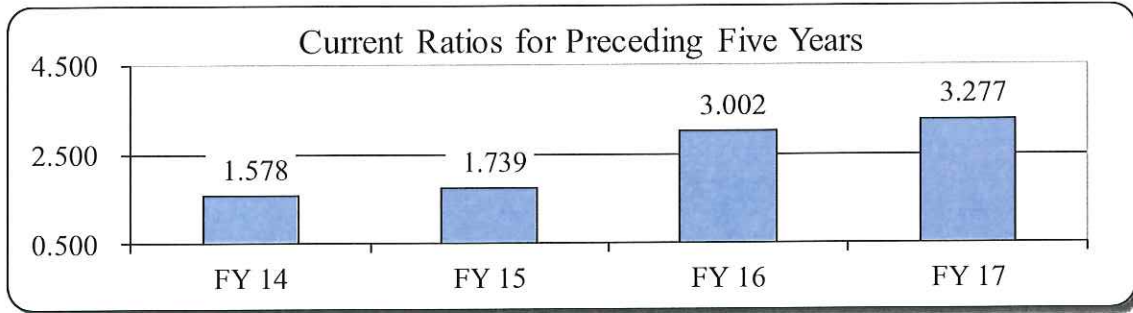


Financial Performance

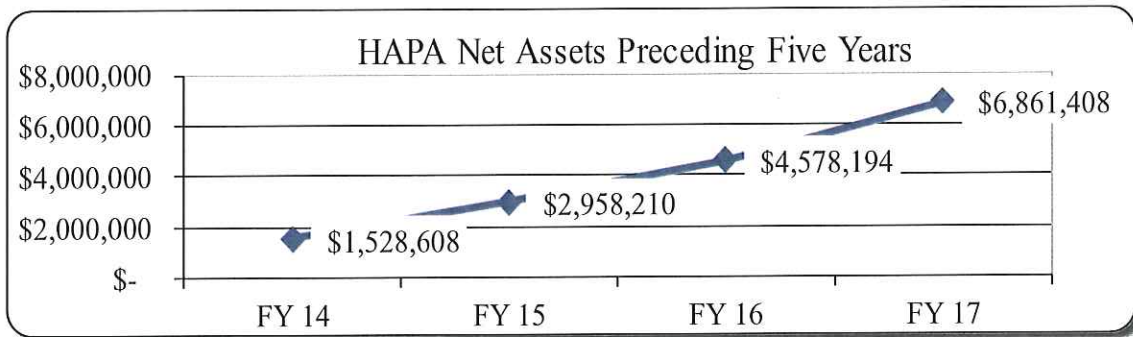
3. Explain how the school has met its financial performance standards. Describe how the school is financially sound.

The Hmong American Peace Academy’s financial goals include receiving annual unqualified audits and operating in a financial sound manner. The Hmong American Peace Academy has been audited every year since its inception as a not for profit corporation and has received an unqualified audit for each year of operation, indicative of proper accounting, management and financial stability.

The Hmong American Peace Academy’s Board of Directors reviews financial statements no less than quarterly. The board includes a CFO with an S&P 500 corporation and a partner of a “big 5” accounting firm. The board’s review includes the organization’s the Statement of Financial Position (also known as Balance Sheet) and the Statement of Financial Activities (also known as Income Statement). One of the multiple matrixes utilized by the board includes the current ratio. The current ratio is current assets divided by current liabilities and is a measure of the organization’s ability to successfully meet its financial obligations. The goal is to maintain at least a 1.0 current ratio and this has been accomplished since the inception of the organization. In addition, the organization has established an \$850,000 line of credit with a local lender to meet any unforeseen potential cash needs, should receipts be delayed. The current ratio for the charter school contract period was as follows.



The Hmong American Peace Academy Ltd.'s goal is to show growth in its net assets (also known as net worth). The net assets or net worth in the preceding four years were as follows.



In conclusion, the organization has established a 13 year proven record of financial stability and has met its financial goals as established by the Board of Directors.

4. Illustrate how the school has a well functioning organizational structure. Include pertinent information about parental involvement, staffing health and safety, school enrollment and discipline policies, and school facilities.

Hmong American Peace Academy is a well functioning organization which provides students with rigorous academics, character development, and Hmong cultural values, preparing them to excel in colleges, universities and careers. HAPA honors tradition, forges new ground and explores innovative ideas. It recognizes past history and looks forward to the journey that lies ahead. It is alive, empathetic, mindful and a servant leader. It builds bridges, mends fences, brings people together and creates new avenues toward success. HAPA stands as a beacon of hope and inspiration, always ready to lead the way and guide others.

The organization structure includes educational leaders to lead and manage the day to day operations of the teaching and learning of HAPA. The educational leaders are supported by the instructional coaches and impact coaches. Instructional coaches are master teachers who serve as mentors and supporters of teachers by providing them with best practices along with modeling of

instruction. Impact coaches serve in the capacity of providing social and emotional support to the students with desired outcome skills that help develop safe, nurturing/trusting and self-managing classrooms with improved attendance by building students' motivation and helping them take responsibility for their actions and performance. Very importantly, HAPA employed bilingual and bicultural office assistants to serve as a bridge between the school and home; thus, eliminating language and cultural barriers. In addition, HAPA's organizational structure includes other administrative support personnel to address the operational aspect of the Academy. Administrative personnel include HR Administrator, CPA, and a Director of Operations to name a few. This organizational structure allows HAPA to make programming impacts as well as operating a well run school for sustainability.

As a charter school, HAPA prides itself in parental involvement as parents are the foundation for student achievement. Thus, parental involvement is a top priority at HAPA. HAPA has an outstanding parental involvement rate of nearly 100% of the parents actively participated in the parent-teacher conferences. School functions are well attended by the families where typically the average attendance is over 1,000 participants. Parents' participations in workshops, meetings, student of the month activities, educational field experiences and school events are high in numbers.

HAPA offers students quality education. This is especially noteworthy considering: 90% of the student population comes from homes where another language other than English is spoken; 40% of the student body is made up of refugees; and nearly 90% of the students receive free or reduced lunch. Even with traditional challenges to academic success, HAPA students are succeeding due to largely parent involvement. In the spirit of continuous improvement mindset, HAPA conducted a parent survey and 99% of the parents surveyed were very satisfied with the Academy.

The school follows MPS's discipline policy. As proactive and preventative measures, HAPA also utilize the Peacebuilders and Capturing Kids Hearts programs to support the social/emotional growth of our students in making positive choices. As a culture, HAPA has high expectations for its scholars and staff. These high expectations are carried through the Covenant of Excellence where each group (teachers, scholars, parents/guardians) pledges to ensure the academic and social achievement of every child. For example, as staff members in the HAPA community, it is our goal to ensure the academic success of our scholars. We will promote lifelong learning through reading in all subject areas. As a scholar within the HAPA community, it is my goal to ensure my academic success and that of my fellow students. I will take ownership of my learning. As parents/guardians in the HAPA community, it is our goal to ensure the academic success of our children. We will create an environment that deeply instills a love and joy for reading at home. As a result, HAPA has experienced low student mobility and nearly zero suspension rates with nearly 100% attendance rate.

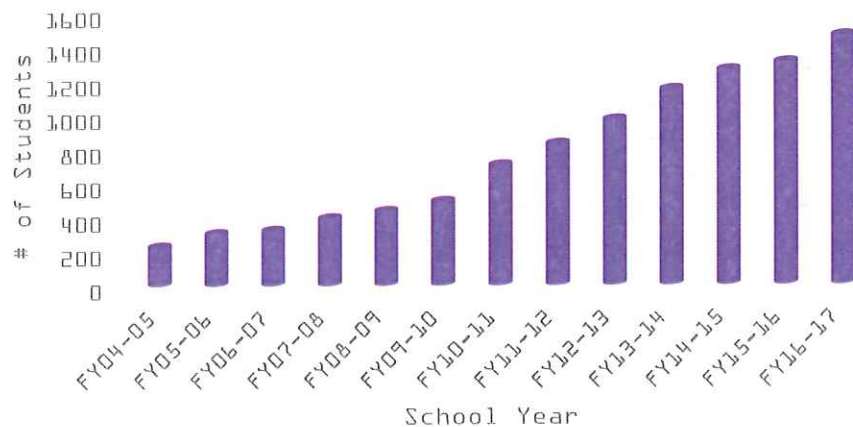
Assuring the health and safety of HAPA's staff, students, and partners are top priority. Staff are provided professional development sessions several times throughout the year on safety issues such as slips, trips, and falls. Ladders are easily accessible on each floor of HAPA so staff can use them to safely hang items on the walls. Cones and dry mops are available at entrances to the building so wet spots can be wiped up quickly to prevent slips and falls. Training is provided for individuals to properly lift heavy objects in order to prevent from being injured.

Kitchen staff are trained on how to properly use kitchen equipment such as warmers and ovens as well as the use of chemicals such as bleach. The janitorial staff are trained on how to safely use the cleaning products. Kitchen and janitorial staff are aware of the Safety Data Sheets and how to deal with situations should there be an emergency with chemicals. Janitorial staff are also trained on identification of asbestos material and how to report it so it can be handled in a timely and safe manner. They are also trained on how to use the maintenance machines such as floor and wax strippers. In addition, they are trained to use the personal protective equipment (PPE) in order to be safe when handling hazardous situations or chemicals.

Staff who are first responders are trained on how to react in a medical emergency. Classroom teachers and students are informed about their responsibilities as well. Drills (fire, tornado, AED, lockdown) are performed regularly throughout the school year. Staff are provided with the information and trained on how to quickly react in a safe manner when the need should arise. In order to create a safe and secure learning environment, staff are trained to look for a visitor's pass when they see any unfamiliar individuals in the school. Secretaries are trained to ask pertinent questions of visitors before allowing them to enter the facilities. School doors are not to be propped open and staff are to report any suspicious activities to the facilities manager or director of operations.

HAPA is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment, free from any threats or acts of violence. Staff are provided a personnel policies manual each year. The Human Resources Administrator speaks to the staff in regards to safety rules dealing with concealed weapons, dress code (proper footwear), not using candles, and other health and safety issues. An anti-harassment policy is shared and discussed with the staff. This policy reinforces HAPA's strong tradition of developing and maintaining a professional work environment comprised of people who respect one another and who believe in HAPA's high ideals.

HAPA is Milwaukee's fastest-growing charter school and a tremendous success story. Its enrollment is up by 700 percent. Founded in 2004 with about 200 students, currently enrollment is about 1,600 student strong representing over 750 families. Below is a graph reflecting HAPA's student enrollment since the beginning.



HAPA is the proud owner of the North 84th Property located at 4601 North 84th Street. This property is designed as the “main campus”. The main campus currently house about 1,030 students in 3rd to 12th grades. Due to the large enrollment growth, HAPA has secured a second campus with a lease agreement with the MPS for its programming needs. The second campus is located at 7171 West Brown Deer Road, called Happy Hill Elementary School. This campus houses over 560 students in grades K4 to 2nd.

5. Provide evidence that parents and students are satisfied with the school.

HAPA believes that parents are valuable partners in the Academy’s mission. The community is HAPA’s greatest resource in supporting the children and their families. HAPA believes that when parents are involved in meaningful ways, the Academy improves and children do better. HAPA believes that the parents are the children’s first teachers. In addition, when students leave the classrooms, it is the parents who continue to encourage and support their child in the learning process. HAPA believes strongly that it is only through the partnership of school, family, and community that the children can truly make both academic and social gains. Hence, children at HAPA will achieve high levels of success with parental and community involvement and support. HAPA’s Family Involvement Smart Goal is that school, families, and community will continue to work collaboratively in support of school goals and educational activities.

Hmong American Peace Academy’s educational mission is to provide students with rigorous academics, character development, and Hmong cultural values, preparing them to excel in colleges, universities and careers. Throughout the years, HAPA has initiated and nurtured numerous events and activities to strengthen parental and community involvement.

As evidenced of satisfactory from our stakeholders, HAPA conducted interviews and surveys with parents, alumni and the businesses community to find out how satisfied parents, alumni and the community were with the education at the Academy and what improvements can be made to further the education of the student population. In the parent interviews/survey, an overwhelming 99% parents rated their satisfaction with Hmong American Peace Academy. Parents felt that Hmong American Peace Academy’s strongest aspects are the curriculum, staff/teachers and the Hmong culture. The Alumni rated their satisfaction with Hmong American Peace Academy at a high rate. Also, as evidenced of alumni satisfactory of the Academy, regularly during HAPA’s Homecoming events, Winter and Spring Breaks, the alumni returns to network with the current seniors and juniors as well as offer words of wisdom to the seniors as they make their final decisions regarding college choices. These actions reflect the alumni’s support, dedication, pride and satisfactory for the school.

According to the survey conducted, both funders and community leaders expressed their admiration for Hmong American Peace Academy’s engagement in the community and encouraged HAPA to continue to cultivate community involvement. Hmong American Peace Academy’s reputation is also supported by Superintendent Driver and Thornton and their positive comments have been referred to in conversations with other stakeholders. Several stakeholders have also commented that Hmong American Peace Academy has gained the trust and respect of the community and should maintain that by continuing to cultivate more community awareness.

In order to facilitate parental involvement, HAPA organizes a variety of social events where parents and students alike can participate in. As evidenced of parental satisfactory with HAPA, parental involvement at a variety of educational and social events is highly attended. For example, in the fall, HAPA hosts and introduces parents to American harvest activities, such as Bobbing for Apples, caramel apples, apple cider and other iconic American foods. In turn, the Academy has an annual Hmong New Year, where the school introduces the Hmong traditional New Year to our students, staff, parents and the community. These events are highly attended which reflect parental involvement and support as well as satisfactory with HAPA.

As part of the goals of parental and community involvement and providing enrichments to our families, HAPA partnerships with local community businesses, such as Walgreens, Cardinal Stritch, Alverno College, MSOE, and UW Milwaukee to provide social services free of charge to the parents and students, and staff of HAPA. For example, Walgreens provide immunizations, such as the flu shot to our teachers, staff, parents and students during the parent events throughout the academic year.

In the spirit of continued success, HAPA is committed to parental involvement along with partnering with community organizations to provide support, services and opportunities for the parents to be involved in the learning of their children's education as parents are the children's first teachers in guiding and nurturing the educational success of the students.

6. Demonstrate that the school has an active and effective school governance structure. Provide examples and explain.

HAPA Board of Directors is currently made up of 10 members strong. All members of the Board of Directors have a "duty of care" obligation. All positions are nominated by the Board through the Governance Committee where it's submitted for approval of the Board of Directors for the positions. Each member serves a three year term and the member is eligible for re-appointment at the conclusion of a term.

The Officers of the Board of Directors is made of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. The term of all Officers is two years. Officers are elected from the Board of Directors. Each Officer is eligible to be re-elected by the Board of Directors. The Officers made up the Executive Board Committee.

The Board of Directors manages the affairs of Hmong American Peace Academy, Ltd. The Board of Directors meets bi-monthly and the committee structure includes charters for clear role and responsibility per each committee. The HAPA Committee Structure includes the following: Executive Board; Governance; Resource Development with an Ad Hoc: Marketing and Public Relations; Finance with an Ad Hoc: Facility Development; Human Resources; and Education. The Committees are commissioned by and accountable to the Board of Directors. For example, the Governance Committee is chaired by the board chair and is comprised by board members and has primary responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of the responsibilities of the Board of Directors and all the activities necessary to ensure appropriate governance of the organization.

However, the committee does not have power to act on its own, but, makes recommendations to the full Board of Directors for its approval.

In addition, the By-Laws of the Hmong American Peace Academy, Ltd. clearly define the responsibility of duties and powers, number and qualifications of the Board of Directors. This includes a well established conflict of interest policy for the Board.

**II. Plans for Continued Success
Educational Performance**

1. What is school’s proposed enrollment and grade levels for the term of the next charter?

The following chart reflects the grade level distribution and FTE enrollment numbers for each year of the contract term:

Academic Year	# of FTE Students/ Year	Grade Levels
2018 - 2019	1715	K4 to 12 th
2019 - 2020	1820	K4 to 12 th
2020 - 2021	1900	K4 to 12 th
2021 - 2022	1960	K4 to 12 th
2022 - 2023	2010	K4 to 12 th

2. Describe any proposed changes to the school’s educational program for the term of the next charter.

HAPA plans to continue its educational program for the term of the next charter.

3. Outline the school’s goals and measurable objectives for the term of the next charter.

Below is the outline of the school’s local assessment goals and measurable objectives for the term of the next charter:

HAPA shall demonstrate an increase in the percentage of students within grades 9th, 10th and 11th cohorts meeting College and Career Readiness as they progress from year to year, using the HAPA ACT-styled prep exam data as described in Appendix A.

- a. At least 65% of students in a tested cohort will demonstrate an average achievement growth of one point or higher on the ACT-styled exams using the HAPA data in English as described in Appendix A.

- b. At least 65% of students in a tested cohort will demonstrate an average achievement growth of one point or higher from on the ACT-styled exams using the HAPA data in Math as described in Appendix A.
- c. At least 65% of students in a tested cohort will demonstrate an average achievement growth of one point or higher on the ACT-styled exams using the HAPA data in Reading as described in Appendix A.
- d. At least 65% of students in a tested cohort will demonstrate an average achievement growth of one point or higher on the ACT-styled exams using the HAPA data in Science as described in Appendix A.

Financial Performance

4. Explain the school's financial plans and forecast.

The Hmong American Peace Academy Board of Directors intends to continue to expand its educational services as future enrollment is expected to continue to grow.

Due to increased enrollment the Hmong American Peace Academy Board of Directors has developed a strategic plan to address near as well long-term future facility needs.

In conclusion, the organization is well positioned for future growth by additional development of its campus at 4601 N 84th to service the students of Milwaukee. The costs of such additional development are financially feasible through the utilization of new market tax credits. The organization will continue to be financially prudent and the future promises to enhance HAPA's financial capabilities and stability.

Organizational Performance

5. Illustrate plans for strengthening parental and community involvement in the school's educational mission.

This is an exciting time for the Hmong American Peace Academy. The school continues to achieve positive results and attracts a substantial waiting list and community partnerships. HAPA's Strategic Business Plan aims to leverage these strengths and raise the profile of the school to best serve the community and increase the impact for years to come. The strategic direction of HAPA is to focus on increasing both the quality and size of our K-12 education and in partnership with parents and other communication organizations, offering an array of services to strengthen the HAPA community.

HAPA's strategic direction lays a foundation from which the organization will move into implementing, creating detailed plans and making adjustments to the overall strategy in addressing parental and community involvement in the school's educational mission.

As the Hmong population in Milwaukee continues to grow, it faces a higher than average poverty rate. Powerful evidence has shown one of the best ladders out of poverty is a college degree. Unfortunately, in Milwaukee reaching this ladder is difficult at best. For the past 13 years, HAPA has been working with students and parents to change this trend. With rising test scores and succeeding alumni, the K-12 charter school has grown into a shining example of academic success.

As HAPA looks to the future, it offers an updated vision and intended impact. HAPA envisions an expanded school connecting more students to their Hmong culture (parents and grandparents) and the community and providing them the social and academic skills and support necessary to go to and through college. Hence, together with the parents and community partners, HAPA will offer more resources and opportunities (education) necessary to rise out of poverty.

The proposed intended impact of HAPA's strategic plan in strengthening parental and community involvement in the school mission is to prepare youth with the academic and social skills necessary to go to and through college. The long-term intended impact is that HAPA will facilitate the improve life opportunities for the families by providing a ladder to the middle class.

Research shows obtaining a college degree is one of the primary influences in a person moving out of poverty. HAPA today provides an excellent resource for students to achieve this as evidenced by test scores and college placement. However, other barriers remain for students in obtaining a college degree and fully realizing the path out of poverty. These include: 1) Unfamiliarity with process—parental involvement in a child's education, through college, is an important indicator of educational success. Many parents of first generation college students may not know what is expected or how to support. Additionally, aging or unemployed parents add additional stress and barriers to success; 2) Community connection—we're increasingly seeing that connection to the broader community and network is essential in securing jobs out of college. Having a quality education is an important first step, but developing networks is an important second component. Additionally, current parents of HAPA students expressed the importance of the connection to the Hmong culture for their children; 3) Career support—career success depends in part on lifelong learning as technology and demand reshapes the skills needed today. K-12 education and a college degree lay a foundation, but learning must be a lifelong journey.

To address the barriers and accomplish the long-term impact of providing a ladder to the middle class, HAPA will work with parents and community partners over time to develop a strong community-based educational center with HAPA's quality K-12 education as the core value of the organization.

6. Describe any changes to the school's governance structure

Currently, HAPA does not plan to make changes to the school's governance structure. However, should HAPA move into that direction, the Academy will communicate the changes to the Office of Contracted School Services.