



Office of Charter Schools

Renaissance Academy Charter School

2016-17 Charter Renewal Application

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INTRODUCTION

According to Indiana law, a charter school is established to provide innovative and autonomous programs that: 1) serve the different learning styles and needs of public school students; 2) offer public school students appropriate and innovative choices; 3) provide varied opportunities for professional educators; 4) allow public schools freedom and flexibility in exchange for exceptional levels of accountability; and 5) provide parents, students, community members, and local entities with an expanded opportunity for involvement in the public school system (IC 20-24-2-1). As an authorizer of charter schools, Ball State University is responsible for ensuring that its charter schools demonstrate that they are achieving academic, financial, and organizational outcomes.

Merit-based renewal decisions will be based on an analysis of a comprehensive body of objective evidence defined by the Performance Frameworks and gauged under standards developed under national principles and standards for quality authorizing. Renewals will be granted to each charter school that can demonstrate that it has achieved ongoing and continuous performance standards as stipulated in the Performance Frameworks (developed by OCS), and has been faithful to the terms of the contract and applicable laws.

The renewal process serves three purposes. First, it forms OCS' decision on whether to renew a school's contract by providing evidence of school performance in relation to the academic, financial, and organizational performance standards set out in the school's charter and in the Performance Frameworks. Second, the process through the renewal application provides the school a meaningful opportunity to present additional evidence regarding its performance. Third, it provides the school with an opportunity to outline – based on its past performance – a deliberate plan for sustaining success, addressing areas requiring improvement, and ensuring ongoing viability of the school.

RENEWAL TIMELINE

Release of Renewal Application..... August 31, 2016

Renewal Orientation: Meetings with School Leaders and Board Members.....May – August 2016

Letter of Intent to Renew due to OCS on or beforeOctober 1, 2016

Renewal Application Due to OCSOctober 1, 2016

Onsite School Visits.....June – December 2016

Renewal Decisions.....On or before January 15, 2017

RENEWAL DECISION OVERVIEW

The OCS intends to conduct a rigorous, transparent renewal decision process that leads to merit-based decisions consistent with national principles and standards for quality authorizing. In the OCS's process to make changes to its accountability framework and to align its processes with national principles and standards for quality authorizing, the Performance Frameworks and the OCS's Policy for School Assessment and Intervention will both be used to determine a school's eligibility for a charter renewal. The OCS will base its renewal decisions on the existing record of school performance including, but not limited to, the school's written response to the Renewal Narrative of the Charter Renewal Application and any additional performance data provided by the school.

The first stage of the process involves the OCS sharing with each school that is up for renewal the schools' data as evaluated through the Performance Frameworks. Additional data is gathered through site visits, desk audits, and the CSAPPHIRE database.

The second stage requires the school to prepare and submit the Charter Renewal Application. The Renewal Application provides schools an opportunity to present the school's existing record of performance and to outline plans for the school's next charter term. Within the Charter Renewal Application, schools will have an opportunity to comment on the data and provide factual corrections and/or supplement the record with information and data to explain academic results and demonstrate other academic measures that may provide evidence of the school's academic success and/or improvement (*e.g.*, individual student growth data, legacy/cohort group data, summer remediation and/or additional IREAD scores, etc.). The school's plans for the next charter term may affect the length of the renewal term/extension and may shape the development of a new charter contract.

The third stage is an evaluation of the data collected in the first stage and the second stage by the staff and contractors of OCS; and the determination by the Executive Director of OCS as to whether to extend or renew the school's charter and the duration of the renewal or extension.

2016-17 CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION – INSTRUCTIONS AND CSAPPHIRE SUBMISSIONS

INSTRUCTIONS:

The OCS will provide a Charter Renewal Application template to each school up for renewal. A school's Charter Renewal Application will have some data charts pre-filled by the OCS with the school's data; however, the school should fill in any empty boxes, as applicable. Charter Renewal Applications must be submitted to OCS **electronically through CSAPPHIRE no later than October 1, 2016.**

FORMAT FOR SUBMISSIONS:

- The Renewal Narrative should not exceed 25 pages, excluding attachments.
- Attachments to the Renewal Narrative (excluding the required CSAPPHIRE submissions and updates listed below) should not exceed 25 pages and should be **clearly** referenced in the Renewal Narrative.
- Any attachment should provide information that a) meaningfully augments the body of evidence that OCS has already collected on the school's performance, or b) illustrates or supports plans or strategies for the next charter term that would be material to the charter contract for the renewal term (*e.g.*, revised student handbook provisions, updated professional development plan, etc.).

CSAPPHIRE SUBMISSIONS AND UPDATES:

The following documents will be reviewed and verified by the OCS remotely through CSAPPHIRE during the renewal process. In order to make the process more efficient, please review and/or upload the school's *most current* version of each of the following documents. If any of these documents was submitted previously, please just be certain that the version in CSAPPHIRE is the most current version.

School Documents

Please review and verify the following "Plans and Policies" in CSAPPHIRE are the most current version. If such document listed below is not in CSAPPHIRE, please upload the required document.

- Organizational Chart (updated administrative organizational chart)
- Staffing Matrix
- General Descriptions of Responsibilities of Teachers and Staff
- School Calendar (current school year)
- Curriculum and Instructional Methods
- Methods of Promoting Parent and Community Involvement Practices
- Supplemental Programs (Information on Current Student Clubs, Organizations, and Other Extracurricular Activities Offered (including athletic teams))
- Methods of Pupil Assessments

Current School Policies and Plans

Please review and verify the following "Plans and Policies" in CSAPPHIRE are the most current versions. If such document listed below is not in CSAPPHIRE, please upload the required document.

- Staff Handbook
- Student Handbook
- Promotion/Retention Policy

- Elementary School Reading Plan
- Policy and Procedures for Special Education
- Policy and Procedures for ELL Students
- Performance Evaluation Plan for Administrators and Teachers
- Personnel Plan, including Methods of Selection, Retention and Compensation of Employees
- Teacher and Staff Compensation and Benefits Plans
- Professional Development Methods
- School Admission Policy
- Transportation Policy (if applicable)
- School Safety and Emergency Preparedness Plan
- Student Health Screening Policy
- Student Records Policy
- Medication Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Criminal Background Check Policy
- Graduation Requirements, including diploma types offered (if applicable)
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Fundraising Policy and Guidelines
- Deposit of Funds Policy
- Social Media Policy

Corporate Documents

Please review and verify the following documents in CSAPPHIRE are the most current versions. If such document listed below is not in CSAPPHIRE, please upload the required document.

- Articles of Incorporation (and any Amendments thereto)
- Any Fictitious Name Registrations filed with the Indiana Secretary of State
- Board By-Laws
- Board Member List (including Current Contact Information)
- Calendar of Board Meetings
- EMO Agreement (together with all Amendments thereto, if applicable)

Financials and Budgets

Please review and verify the following documents in CSAPPHIRE are the most current versions. If such document listed below is not in CSAPPHIRE, please upload the required document.

- School's Budgets for 2015-16 and 2016-17
- School's Audit (if not conducted by Fitzgerald Isaac) for the school years ended 6/30/2015 and 6/30/2016

Board – Agenda and Minutes

Please review and verify the following documents in CSAPPHIRE are the most current versions. If such document listed below is not in CSAPPHIRE, please upload the required document.

- Board Minutes approving School's Budgets for 2015-16 and 2016-17

Insurance

Please review and verify the following documents in CSAPPHIRE are the most current versions. If such document listed below is not in CSAPPHIRE, please upload the required document.

- Certificate of Liability Insurance
- Evidence of Property Insurance

Facility Documents

Please review and verify the following documents in CSAPPHIRE are the most current versions. If such document listed below is not in CSAPPHIRE, please upload the required document.

- Lease Agreement(s) or Deed(s) for All Occupied Facilities
- Certificate of Occupancy issued by the Indiana Department of Health

RENEWAL NARRATIVE

I. Enrollment and Demographic Overview

A. Provide the enrollment and demographic information for the current school year.

2016-17 ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION		
	#	%
Total Enrollment	247	
# of Students on Waiting List	26	
Gender		
# Male	131	53
# Female	116	47
Ethnicity/Race		
# White	192	77.7
# Black	26	10.5
# Hispanic	11	4.5
# Asian	5	2.0
# Native American	0	0
# Other	1	.4
Special Populations		
# Students with IEPs	29	11.7
# English Language Learners	0	0
# Homeless Students	0	0
# Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch	36	14.6

B. Provide enrollment information for length of current charter contract (ADM count).

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Total Student Enrollment	205	223	236	249	247

C. Provide the student attendance information for the length of the charter contract.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Grade	2012-13	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Kindergarten	27	36	34	36	36
Grade 1	31	22	35	33	28
Grade 2	22	29	22	37	26
Grade 3	21	25	33	27	31
Grade 4	30	21	25	32	25
Grade 5	19	28	22	26	31
Grade 6	23	18	30	22	26
Grade 7	17	27	15	24	21
Grade 8	15	17	20	12	23
All Grades	205	223	236	249	247

D. Provide the number and percentage of students eligible for special education by eligibility category for the length of the current charter contract based on the previous December 1 count.

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
	2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Autism Spectrum Disorder	2	1	2	1	1	<.5	2	1	2	1
Blind or Low Vision										
Cognitive Disability										
Deaf or Hard of Hearing										
Deaf-Blind			1	.5						
Development Delay (early childhood)										
Emotional Disability										
Language or Speech Impairment	13	6	13	6	10	4	16	6	16	6
Multiple Disabilities										
Orthopedic Impairment	1	.5								
Specific Learning Disability	15	7	13	6	14	6	13	5	14	6
Traumatic Brain Injury										

E. Provide the number and percentage of ELL students for length of the current charter contract.

ELL STUDENT POPULATION CHART									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

F. Provide the number and percentage of homeless students for the length of the previous charter contract.

HOMELESS STUDENT POPULATION									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

G. Provide the number and percentage of High Ability students for length of current charter contract.

HIGH ABILITY STUDENTS									
Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
2012-13		2013-14		2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
84	41	65	29	87	37	70	28	70	28

II. Executive Summary

Provide a brief description of the school, including an overview of the mission and vision, educational program, community and local partnerships, and the school's leadership and governance. The following sections will be entered into AdvancEd Assist.

Description of the school (6000 character limit)

- a. Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large.
- b. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

School's Purpose (6000 character limit)

- a. Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.
- b. Address why the school was founded? What educational need were the founders seeking to address in your community?
- c. Describe any changes to the school's mission or substantial revisions to the educational program as described in the current charter that the school proposes to make for the next charter term. Discuss any associated challenges or risks.
- d. Describe any substantial modifications pertaining to the educational program that the school intends to request should it be renewed for an additional charter term.

Achievements and Notable Improvements (6000 character limit)

- a. Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years.
- b. Describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.
- c. Note: consider both student and teacher recognition or achievements (e.g. teacher of the year awards, special certifications)

Additional Information (6000 character limit)

III. Self-Assessment

The following self-assessments will be completed in AdvancEd Assist.

- a. Purpose and Direction
- b. Governance and Leadership
- c. Teaching and Assessing for Learning
- d. Resources and Support System

e. Using Results for Continuous Improvement

IV. Academic Performance Overview

The chart below provides an overview of the school’s academic performance for length of charter contract. This snapshot of academic data provides information to assist schools in the process of completing Sections II and III of the Renewal Application.

Please **verify and, if necessary, denote changes** to the below academic data.

	PL 221/A-F	Data Results Under Intervention /Assessment Policy	NWEA % meeting reading growth target	NWEA % meeting LA growth target	NWEA % meeting math growth target	ISTEP % Passing Math	ISTEP % Passing ELA	ISTEP % Passing Math & ELA
SY 2011-12								
SY 2012-13								
SY 2013-14								
SY 2014-15								
SY 2015-16								

This section provides schools an opportunity to supplement the record of performance by submitting evidence that informs the school’s performance in relation to OCS’s Accountability Framework. Responses should reference the indicators and measures from the Accountability Performance Frameworks to which the information applies (e.g., 2.1 Student Progress Over Time, 2.4 Post-Secondary Readiness).

Responses may include, but are not limited to, information about interim assessments or progress reports; evidence of performance on school-or mission-specific goals; and evidence of progress for any areas in which the school has not previously met or is not currently meeting the performance standard. In answering this section, please refer to the School Data Summary Document attached to the renewal application.

Renewal recommendations will be based on all evidence of school performance in the record, including but not limited to the school’s responses in this part. For your convenience, please reference appropriately the sections from the **Academic Performance Framework**: <http://goo.gl/s8HZwH>.

The following information will be entered into the Student Performance Diagnostic in AdvancEd Assist.

Student Performance

- a. Assessment Data
- b. Areas of Notable Improvements
 - 1) To what do you attribute these improvements?
- c. Areas in Need of Improvement
 - 1) Do the areas of weakness affect many or few students? Is it a particular subgroup of students? Is there a trend in one content area or across all content areas?
 - 2) What progress monitoring tools do you have in place that provided this information?
 - 3) Based on the analysis of the academic data, what are the school’s next steps for improving academic indicators based on the Academic Performance Framework, and what are the strategies the school will employ to achieve the “Meets Standards” rating?

V. Stakeholder Assessment (optional)

VI. Organizational Performance

The OCS will review and verify the organizational documents submitted through CSAPPHIRE during the renewal process (see above for the specific list of required CSAPPHIRE submissions and updates). It is important for each school to upload the school's most recent version of each of the required documents in order for the OCS to make appropriate decisions related to Organizational Performance.

Along with the required CSAPPHIRE submissions, provide any organizational related evidence, supplemental data, or contextual information. Submissions may include evidence of current compliance in areas for which the school was found previously to be non-compliant or other updates relevant to previous school findings. Please reference appropriately the sections of the Organizational Performance Framework <http://goo.gl/0QvmDa>.

The following information will be entered into the Organizational Performance Diagnostic in AdvancEd Assist. **Responses required for Renewal Application:**

Provide a reflection of the school's governance and organizational performance over the past charter term. Describe any anticipated changes to the governance and management of the school, including but not limited to board composition, board member roles, member recruitment, committee structure, and/or amendments to by-laws.

Please specify whether the board intends to contract or terminate a contract with an education service provider (ESP), educational management organization (EMO), or charter management organization (CMO), and describe the nature of that contractual relationship.

If applicable, please provide evidence illustrating an effective working relationship with an ESP, and describe the ESP's roles and responsibilities in relation to the school's management and governing board; describe how the governing board holds the operator accountable for specific academic, operational or financial outcomes from the agreed upon contract.

Please describe any anticipated changes to service contract or provider over the next charter term, including, but not limited to, intentions to terminate your contractual relationship with your management organization. If terminating, describe in detail the plans for carrying out the primary operational and educational activities for which the service provider had been responsible.

Describe the current condition of the school's facility, and its capacity to serve students. Discuss any anticipated changes in facilities needs and/or location, which includes any changes to lease terms and/or building plan. If the facility is leased, how does the board oversee the terms of the lease agreement?

If any organizational deficiencies or findings were noted in any of the annual independent audits, prior notices of deficiencies, onsite reviews, or prior renewal letter, please note such deficiencies and how they were remedied.

Describe the plan for providing transportation to students to attend the school, including transportation to extra-curricular activities, if applicable.

VII. Financial Performance

The OCS will review and verify the financial documents submitted through CSAPPHIRE during the renewal process (see above for the specific list of required CSAPPHIRE submissions and updates). It is important for each school to upload the school's most recent version of each of the required documents in order for the OCS to make appropriate decisions related to Financial Performance. Please reference appropriately the sections of the Financial Performance Framework <http://goo.gl/vSOezX>.

Financial Assurance: With respect to financial performance, provide an assurance and any evidence, that the school is current in meeting its liabilities including, but not limited to, lease/mortgage, payroll taxes, debt service payments, and employee benefits.

Three-year Financial Projections: Complete a three-year projected budget for the campus and network level (if applicable). The budget detail should make clear the assumptions on which the school bases its key revenue and expenditure projections. The three year projected budget should include the Board of Directors' review and attached minutes. If there is intent to add to or change facilities, this should be included in the budget projection as well as new lease terms and/or building plans under Organizational Plans. Specific documents reviewed during the renewal process will include:

1. Current Board approved budget with minutes.
2. Prior year's Board approved budget with minutes.
3. Current facility/school lease term and conditions.
4. Applicable insurance policies, such as employee health insurance, facility insurance, liability, and their respective renewal dates
5. Current accrual-based audits
6. Enrollment plan for the next three years (*e.g.*, grade level and projected student enrollment). Identify how the school plans to sustain its enrollment and what plan(s) the school has to continue to recruit students.
7. Charter agreement
8. Documentation of other contracted services, including cost and scope of services (*e.g.* food service, marketing, legal, accounting).
9. Form 9

The following information will be entered into the Financial Performance Diagnostic in AdvancEd Assist.
Responses required for Renewal Application:

In what ways does the board assure that financial resources provide adequate support for the school's overall program and to improve student achievement? Please reflect on the allocation, challenges, trends and any shifts in resources directed toward Student Academic Achievement, Student Instructional Support, Overhead and Operational, and Nonoperational (See Form 9).

If any financial deficiencies or findings were noted in any of the annual independent audits, prior notices of deficiencies, onsite reviews, or prior renewal letter, please note such deficiencies and how they were remedied.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK BALL STATE UNIVERSITY			Meets
			Does Not Meet
			Falls Far Below
1. NEAR TERM INDICATORS			
1.a.	Current Ratio (Working Capital Ratio)	Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities	2.94
1.b.	Cash to Current Liabilities	Cash divided by Current Liabilities	2.76
1.c.	Unrestricted Days Cash	Unrestricted Cash divided by ((Total Expenses-Depreciation Expenses)/365)	79
1.d.	Enrollment Variance	Actual Enrollment divided by Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	92.86%
1.e.	Default		
2. SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS			
2.a.	Total Margin	Net Income divided by Total Revenue and Aggregated Total Margin: Total 3 Year Net Income divided by Total 3 Year Revenues	2.75 2.47 3yr
2.b.	Debt to Asset Ratio	Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets	.46
2.c.	Cash Flow	Multi-Year Cash Flow = (Year 3 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash); One-Year Cash Flow = (Year 2 Total Cash)-(Year 1 Total Cash)	\$163,435 Multi-yr \$160,082 1 yr
2.d.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	(Net Income + Depreciation + Interest Expense)/(Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments)	.92

Financial Performance Framework – Data Points	
Current Assets	\$377,252
Current Liabilities	\$128,254
Cash	\$354,336
Unrestricted Cash restricted cash (\$69,669) negative balance	\$354,336
Total Expenses	\$1,714,734
Depreciation Expenses	\$68,432
Enrollment Projection in Charter School Board-Approved Budget	266
Actual Enrollment	247
Default	NA
Net Income	\$48,405
Total Revenue	\$1,763,138
Aggregated Total Margin	2.75%
Total 3 Year Net Income	\$121,966
Total 3 Year Revenues	\$4,943,424
Total Liabilities	\$786,352
Total Assets	\$1,711,560
Year 1 Total Cash	\$190,901
Year 2 Total Cash	\$350,983
Year 3 Total Cash	\$354,336
Depreciation	\$489,418
Interest Income?	0
Interest Expense	\$63,259
Annual Principal, Interest, and Lease Payments	\$195,799

School Data Summary Document

**Renaissance Academy Charter School
LaPorte, IN
In Operation since 2007 (9 Years)
Independent School
Grade Range: K-8**

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Total Student Enrollment	95	117	150	184	175	205	223	236	249

2015-2016 YEAR ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION		
	#	%
Total Enrollment	249	
Ethnicity/Race		
White	194	77.9
Black	33	13.3
Hispanic	8	3.2
Asian	3	1.2
Native American		
Multiracial	10	4.0
Other	1	.4
Special Populations		
Students with IEPs	30	12
English Language Learners		
Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch	45	18.1

Math Growth:

2008: High growth, low achievement
 2009: High growth, low achievement
 2010: Low growth, low achievement
 2011: Low growth, low achievement
 2012: High growth, high achievement
 2013: High growth, high achievement
 2014: Low growth, high achievement
 2015: Low growth, high achievement

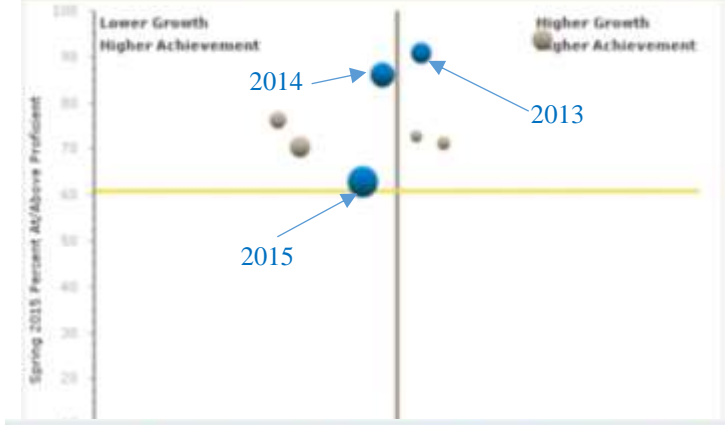
Year	# Tested	Pass %	Median Growth %
Spring 2008	54	72.2	53.5
Spring 2009	65	70.8	58.0
Spring 2010	79	75.9	30.5
Spring 2011	94	70.2	34.0
Spring 2012	94	93.6	74.0
Spring 2013	96	90.6	54.0
Spring 2014	114	86.0	47.5
Spring 2015	138	63.0	44.0

ELA Growth:

2008: High growth, low achievement
 2009: High growth, high achievement
 2010: High growth, high achievement
 2011: High growth, high achievement
 2012: High growth, high achievement
 2013: High growth, high achievement
 2014: Low growth, high achievement
 2015: Low growth, high achievement

Year	# Tested	Pass %	Median Growth %
Spring 2008	52	73.1	63.0
Spring 2009	65	80.0	67.0
Spring 2010	79	81.0	50.0
Spring 2011	94	87.2	57.0
Spring 2012	94	96.8	67.0
Spring 2013	100	92	53.5
Spring 2014	114	93	48
Spring 2015	138	74.6	38

RENAISSANCE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL (4711): SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT & GROWTH



RENAISSANCE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL (4711): SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT & GROWTH



	IREAD TEST N	IREAD PASS N	IREAD Pass %	% ELL	% F/R Lunch	Final Pass %
2011-12	25	20	80.0	0.0	20.0	90.9
2012-13	19	13	68.4	0.0	30.7	80.0
2013-14	23	22	95.7			95.65
2014-15	30	27	90.0			98.6
2015-16						

BSU Continuous Improvement Report

Renaissance Academy Charter School

Renaissance Academy Charter School

4093 W US Highway 20
Laporte, IN 46350-8269

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way a school stays faithful to its vision. Many factors contribute to the overall narrative such as an identification of stakeholders, a description of stakeholder engagement, the trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that a school implements to support student learning.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to provide a school with an opportunity to describe in narrative form the strengths and challenges it encounters. By doing so, the public and members of the school community will have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement. This summary is structured for the school to reflect on how it provides teaching and learning on a day to day basis.

Description of the School

Describe the school's size, community/communities, location, and changes it has experienced in the last three years. Include demographic information about the students, staff, and community at large. What unique features and challenges are associated with the community/communities the school serves?

Renaissance Academy is a small Montessori-based K-8 school in LaPorte, Indiana. The majority of students enrolled are from the Michigan City and LaPorte communities. Renaissance Academy fulfills a need in the surrounding community by providing a public option which has personalized lesson plans designed to challenge each student to reach his or her own highest potential, high teacher to student interaction, classrooms that are learner centered, and an environment where personal responsibility and safety is not a goal but a reality.

Since Renaissance Academy opened its doors 17 years ago, the school has been inundated by inquiries from parents whose children's needs were not being met by area schools. Many of the children were progressing significantly below grade level expectations, many other children were not achieving at their highest potential. Renaissance Academy's individualized curriculum, hands-on learning methods, comfortable atmosphere, and one-on-one attention helped all the children who enrolled make tremendous progress.

No public grade schools within a 30-minute radius of Renaissance Academy are specifically designed to cater to the individual needs of students. Yet, we have found that all children benefit from a curriculum designed to encourage their personal best. Renaissance Academy's curriculum is designed from the ground up to be learner directed, with instruction tailored to each individual student's personal ability and learning style. Students not only achieve more, they also experience greater joy in the process. We have both children and parents report a new excitement about attending school after transferring to Renaissance Academy. Even more significantly, this excitement is sustained throughout the student's career at the school.

Large traditional schools are less able to effectively address behavior issues. A large proportion of the inquiries about Renaissance Academy from parents with students in upper elementary grades are prompted by public school safety concerns. Renaissance Academy has earned a reputation as a safe place. Students are held to a high standard of personal responsibility. Because of our small multi-age classes, segregated social groups are not tolerated and so do not form. The school fosters a family-like atmosphere where every member of the community is included and appreciated as the important individual they are.

Students at Renaissance Academy are part of defining and governing the social rules and boundaries that their society will follow. Anti-social, clique-ish, or destructive behavior is rare, and is quickly addressed and resolved. Parents have commended the school's policy of gently and immediately attending to hurt feelings. This level of responsiveness is in tremendous need, not only in the area but also in the entire country, as demonstrated by books like *Queen Bees and Wannabes*. We take very seriously creating a culture of inclusiveness, because we recognize that children cannot learn, feel joy, or achieve their potential in an environment where they feel threatened physically or mentally.

Related to this, Michigan City and LaPorte Middle Schools both have had to deal with violence and drug issues. We have had calls from parents who were told that their child's safety could not be guaranteed. The extensive amount of one-on-one attention students receive at Renaissance Academy, and the "family" atmosphere of the school, has allowed it to avoid these issues.

School's Purpose

Provide the school's purpose statement and ancillary content such as mission, vision, values, and/or beliefs. Describe how the school embodies its purpose through its program offerings and expectations for students.

The purpose of Renaissance Academy Charter School is to create a superior system of education in which every child is helped to reach his or her greatest potential with confidence and joy. This purpose is carried out in our mission to serve kindergarten to eighth grade students in a small school that provides a supportive community atmosphere with a rigorous academic program based in the Montessori philosophy of education and supported by student exposure to a variety of enrichment classes and experiential learning activities.

Renaissance Academy Charter School provides a valuable alternative for public school students in the larger Michigan City /LaPorte area. It closed a gap in the area by providing a small kindergarten-through-eighth grade school that combines the Montessori philosophy of hands-on learning and individualized instruction with high quality academics, high student expectations, and a wide array of enrichment activities. It is a small public school where all students can feel good about themselves while learning at their own best pace.

Our goal is to give every child who enrolls a superior educational foundation, well-rounded experience, and a lifelong love of learning.

Children have opportunities to progress far beyond the usual expectations, without feeling out of place at their current level. Students are treated with respect and taught to respect others. Every child is exposed to a wide variety of subject areas, learning methods, and enrichment courses so each can grow in his or her own best way to be the best person he or she can be.

Renaissance Academy Charter School provides a thriving school community where children feel safe and welcomed, recognized and fully accepted as the individuals they are.

Kindergarten through eighth grade is offered in an environment where children are held to high standards for their behavior and learning. Renaissance Academy Charter School has improved student achievement throughout the community with its high standards and by providing an alternate public school option.

At Renaissance Academy Charter School, we believe in incorporating hands-on, abstract, traditional, and cutting-edge techniques to personally create each child's work plan focused on the ways that he or she best learns. We believe in an academically focused Montessori philosophy of education.

Notable Achievements and Areas of Improvement

Describe the school's notable achievements and areas of improvement in the last three years. Additionally, describe areas for improvement that the school is striving to achieve in the next three years.

Renaissance Academy has enjoyed great success in carrying out its purpose and mission. We have established a stable and successful K-8 charter school attracting students from a wide area and providing a challenging supportive educational experience. The school has earned accolades for academic growth and achievement: Just before the ISTEP change, Renaissance Academy was one of six schools honored by the Indiana Department of Education for having results that showed double digit increases in English/Language Arts and Math. Almost 97 percent of Renaissance's students passed the language arts testing and 94 percent passed the state math tests. In addition, student teams have earned repeated top places in Regional and State Team Chess Tournaments, Academic Bowl, Mathathon, and more. Renaissance students consistently show excellent growth each year. Just as importantly, students appear happy and at ease, they want to come to school and are excited about new learning, they demonstrate growth in responsibility, self-direction, academic and social skills, and they exude confidence both in school and on our many educational excursions.

Happily, in the last three years Renaissance Academy has grown to the target school size with two kindergarten classes, four lower elementary 1st-3rd grade classes, four upper elementary 4-6th grade classes, and two junior high 7th-8th grade classes.

In the next three years, we hope to stabilize the student population so that most are returning students moving up with very low numbers of new students entering in the upper grades.

In addition however, in the past several years the percentage of students in need of support services and remedial assistance has increased greatly and our programs targeting gifted students have decreased in size. In the next three years, we hope to reconfirm the school's reputation as a top choice for high ability students and increase the numbers of students coming to Renaissance Academy for our challenging high level curriculum.

Additional Information

Provide any additional information you would like to share with the public and community that were not prompted in the previous sections.

Self Assessment

Introduction

AdvancED's Self Assessment (SA) diagnostic is based on the AdvancED Standards of Quality, which serves as the foundation of the accreditation and continuous improvement process. The SA is a valuable tool for collaboratively engaging staff members and stakeholders in purposeful, honest dialogue and reflection to assess the institution's adherence to the Standards, and guide its continuous improvement efforts. The SA includes the institution's self-ratings of and the evidence cited for each of the indicators, comments that explain the indicator's ratings and an overall narrative for each Standard. The results of the SA are reviewed by the External Review Team as one essential component of the preparation process for the institution's External Review.

Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

The school maintains and communicates a purpose and direction that commit to high expectations for learning as well as shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Overall Rating: 3.0

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.1	The school engages in a systematic, inclusive, and comprehensive process to review, revise, and communicate a school purpose for student success.	The school's process for review, revision, and communication of the purpose statement is documented. The process is formalized and implemented on a regular schedule. The process includes participation by representatives from all stakeholder groups. The purpose statement focuses on student success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Examples of communications to stakeholders about the school's purpose (i.e. website, newsletters, annual report, student handbook) •Communication plan to stakeholders regarding the school's purpose 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.2	The school's leadership and staff commit to a culture that is based on shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning and supports challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students that include achievement of learning, thinking, and life skills.	Commitment to shared values and beliefs about teaching and learning is clearly evident in documentation and decision making. This commitment is always reflected in communication among leaders and staff. Challenging educational programs and equitable learning experiences are implemented in a measurable way so that all students achieve learning, thinking, and life skills necessary for success. Evidence indicates a strong commitment to instructional practices that include active student engagement, a focus on depth of understanding, and the application of knowledge and skills. School leadership and staff hold one another accountable to high expectations for professional practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The school's statement of purpose 	Level 4

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
1.3	The school's leadership implements a continuous improvement process that provides clear direction for improving conditions that support student learning.	School leaders implement a continuous improvement process for improving student learning and the conditions that support learning. Some stakeholder groups are engaged in the process. School personnel maintain a profile with data on student and school performance. The profile contains data used to identify goals for the improvement of achievement and instruction that are aligned with the school's purpose. The process includes action planning that identifies measurable objectives, strategies, activities, resources, and timelines for achieving improvement goals. Most interventions and strategies are implemented with fidelity. Some documentation that the process yields improved student achievement and instruction is available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •The school data profile •Communication plan and artifacts that show two-way communication to staff and stakeholders •Renaissance Academy charter school is a small school where we carry out our mission of focusing on each child to help every one reach his or her highest potential with confidence and joy. The staff works together to continuously find the best ways to accomplish this. We discuss individual children and group progress on a daily basis and during focused meetings, on a weekly basis in regular staff meetings, and throughout the year. We focus our energy on the process but less so on documentation. 	Level 2

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The purpose of Renaissance Academy is to create a superior educational system and with this in mind our staff is continuously striving to find the best ways to help every child reach his or her highest potential with confidence and joy.

Administrators, classroom teachers, special education teachers, and support staff regularly meet as teams to evaluate the success of our program and current student learning. The school boasts a highly engaged staff dedicated to the goal of continuously being the best we can be and providing the best possible learning experience for every individual child. We regularly adjust methods, rearrange groups, engage multiple support teachers, and do whatever else possible to improve learning. The results of this activity are clear and well demonstrated in the reality of what takes place. We also however are a small staff stretched to our capacity and focused on meeting the needs of students first so, as something must go, we do not spend much time on preparing agendas or recording the details of these meetings. We spend enormous time on enacting the decisions and carrying out the results.

Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

The school operates under governance and leadership that promote and support student performance and school effectiveness.

Overall Rating: 3.5

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.1	The governing body establishes policies and supports practices that ensure effective administration of the school.	Policies and practices clearly and directly support the school's purpose and direction and the effective operation of the school. Policies and practices require and have mechanisms in place for monitoring effective instruction and assessment that produce equitable and challenging learning experiences for all students. There are policies and practices requiring and giving direction for professional growth of all staff. Policies and practices provide clear requirements, direction for, and oversight of fiscal management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Student handbooks •Governing body policies, procedures, and practices •Staff handbooks •School handbooks 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.2	The governing body operates responsibly and functions effectively.	The governing body ensures that its decisions and actions are in accordance with defined roles and responsibilities, are ethical, and free of conflict of interest. Governing body members participate in professional development regarding the roles and responsibilities of the governing body and its individual members. The governing body complies with all policies, procedures, laws, and regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Assurances, certifications •Findings of internal and external reviews of compliance with laws, regulations, and policies •Historical compliance data •Governing body policies on roles and responsibilities, conflict of interest 	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.3	The governing body ensures that the school leadership has the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations effectively.	The governing body consistently protects, supports, and respects the autonomy of school leadership to accomplish goals for achievement and instruction and to manage day-to-day operations of the school. The governing body maintains a clear distinction between its roles and responsibilities and those of school leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Roles and responsibilities of school leadership •Survey results regarding functions of the governing body •Agendas and minutes of meetings 	Level 4

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.4	Leadership and staff foster a culture consistent with the school's purpose and direction.	Leaders and staff deliberately and consistently align their decisions and actions toward continuous improvement to achieve the school's purpose. They encourage, support, and expect all students to be held to high standards in all courses of study. All stakeholders are collectively accountable for student learning. School leaders actively and consistently support and encourage innovation, collaboration, shared leadership, and rigorous professional growth. The culture is characterized by collaboration and a sense of community among all stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Examples of collaboration and shared leadership •Survey results •Examples of decisions aligned with the school's statement of purpose 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.5	Leadership engages stakeholders effectively in support of the school's purpose and direction.	Leaders consistently communicate effectively with appropriate and varied representatives from stakeholder groups, provide opportunities for stakeholders to shape decisions, solicit feedback and respond to stakeholders, work collaboratively on school improvement efforts, and provide and support meaningful leadership roles for stakeholders. School leaders' proactive and persistent efforts result in measurable, active stakeholder participation; positive engagement in the school; a strong sense of community; and ownership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Minutes from meetings with stakeholders •Copies of surveys or screen shots from online surveys •Survey responses 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
2.6	Leadership and staff supervision and evaluation processes result in improved professional practice and student success.	The focus of the criteria and processes of supervision and evaluation is improving professional practice and improving student success. Supervision and evaluation processes are regularly implemented. The results of the supervision and evaluation processes are used to monitor and effectively adjust professional practice and improve student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Examples of professional development offerings and plans tied specifically to the results from supervision and evaluation 	Level 3

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

The Renaissance Academy Charter School Board of Directors gives school leadership the autonomy to meet goals for achievement and manage day today operations effectively. Renaissance has a strong leadership team that was central in designing the original purpose and mission of the school and obtaining the charter. The leadership is focused on carrying out this purpose to create a superior educational system in which every child can achieve his or her highest potential with confidence and joy. Stakeholders including all staff members and students are engaged in finding the best ways to carry out this mission. Renaissance Academy Charter School boasts a dedicated and committed staff working together to provide the best possible learning environment. Leadership is an area of strength from school.

An area in need of improvement is the level of Board involvement and the process of finding new board members outside of the school community to increase our profile in the area. The Board has informally decided to begin using Brian Carpenter's podcast at the beginning of SY 2016-2017

each board meeting as our new method of Board training. This will address concerns in this area. The Board is also undertaking out reach efforts to increase our number of applicants interested in serving.

Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

The school's curriculum, instructional design, and assessment practices guide and ensure teacher effectiveness and student learning.

Overall Rating: 3.5

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.1	The school's curriculum provides equitable and challenging learning experiences that ensure all students have sufficient opportunities to develop learning, thinking, and life skills that lead to success at the next level.	Curriculum and learning experiences in each course/class provide all students with challenging and equitable opportunities to develop learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills that align with the school's purpose. Evidence clearly indicates curriculum and learning experiences prepare students for success at the next level. Like courses/classes have the same high learning expectations. Learning activities are individualized for each student in a way that supports achievement of expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •Lesson plans •Learning expectations for different courses •Representative samples of student work across courses •Course schedules •Course descriptions •Descriptions of instructional techniques 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.2	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are monitored and adjusted systematically in response to data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice.	Using data from multiple assessments of student learning and an examination of professional practice, school personnel systematically monitor and adjust curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment and alignment with the school's goals for achievement and instruction and statement of purpose. There is a systematic, collaborative process in place to ensure alignment each time curriculum, instruction, and/or assessments are reviewed or revised. The continuous improvement process has clear guidelines to ensure that vertical and horizontal alignment as well as alignment with the school's purpose are maintained and enhanced in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A description of the systematic review process for curriculum, instruction, and assessment •Common assessments •Surveys results •Products – scope and sequence, curriculum maps •Lesson plans aligned to the curriculum 	Level 4

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.3	Teachers engage students in their learning through instructional strategies that ensure achievement of learning expectations.	Teachers are consistent and deliberate in planning and using instructional strategies that require student collaboration, self-reflection, and development of critical thinking skills. Teachers personalize instructional strategies and interventions to address individual learning needs of each student. Teachers consistently use instructional strategies that require students to apply knowledge and skills, integrate content and skills with other disciplines, and use technologies as instructional resources and learning tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Agenda items addressing these strategies •Professional development focused on these strategies •Authentic assessments •Student work demonstrating the application of knowledge •Findings from supervisor walk-thrus and observations •Surveys results •Interdisciplinary projects 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.4	School leaders monitor and support the improvement of instructional practices of teachers to ensure student success.	School leaders formally and consistently monitor instructional practices through supervision and evaluation procedures beyond classroom observation to ensure that they 1) are aligned with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning, 2) are teaching the approved curriculum, 3) are directly engaged with all students in the oversight of their learning, and 4) use content-specific standards of professional practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Curriculum maps •Documentation of collection of lesson plans and grade books •Peer or mentoring opportunities and interactions •Surveys results •Examples of improvements to instructional practices resulting from the evaluation process •Administrative classroom observation protocols and logs 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.5	Teachers participate in collaborative learning communities to improve instruction and student learning.	All members of the school staff participate in collaborative learning communities that meet both informally and formally. Collaboration often occurs across grade levels and content areas. Staff members have been trained to implement a formal process that promotes discussion about student learning. Learning from, using, and discussing the results of inquiry practices such as action research, the examination of student work, reflection, study teams, and peer coaching occur regularly among most school personnel. School personnel indicate that collaboration causes improvement results in instructional practice and student performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Calendar/schedule of learning community meetings •Examples of improvements to content and instructional practice resulting from collaboration 	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.6	Teachers implement the school's instructional process in support of student learning.	All teachers use an instructional process that informs students of learning expectations and standards of performance. Exemplars are often provided to guide and inform students. The process includes multiple measures, including formative assessments, to inform the ongoing modification of instruction and provide data for possible curriculum revision. The process provides students with specific and timely feedback about their learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Examples of learning expectations and standards of performance •Examples of assessments that prompted modification in instruction 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.7	Mentoring, coaching, and induction programs support instructional improvement consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching and learning.	School personnel are engaged in mentoring, coaching, and induction programs that are consistent with the school's values and beliefs about teaching, learning, and the conditions that support learning. These programs set expectations for all school personnel and include measures of performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Records of meetings and walk thrus/feedback sessions •Descriptions and schedules of mentoring, coaching, and induction programs with references to school beliefs and values about teaching and learning •Montessori Training and Certification programs 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.8	The school engages families in meaningful ways in their children's education and keeps them informed of their children's learning progress.	Programs that engage families in meaningful ways in their children's education are designed and implemented. School personnel regularly inform families of their children's learning progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •Volunteer program with variety of options for participation •List of varied activities and communications modes with families, e.g., info portal, online, newsletters, parent centers, academic nights, open house, early release days 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.9	The school has a formal structure whereby each student is well known by at least one adult advocate in the school who supports that student's educational experience.	School personnel participate in a structure that gives them long-term interaction with individual students, allowing them to build strong relationships over time with the student and related adults. All students participate in the structure. The structure allows the school employee to gain significant insight into and serve as an advocate for the student's needs regarding learning skills, thinking skills, and life skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Survey results •Curriculum and activities of formal adult advocate structure 	Level 4

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.10	Grading and reporting are based on clearly defined criteria that represent the attainment of content knowledge and skills and are consistent across grade levels and courses.	Teachers use common grading and reporting policies, processes, and procedures based on clearly defined criteria that represent each student's attainment of content knowledge and skills. These policies, processes, and procedures are implemented consistently across grade levels and courses. Stakeholders are aware of the policies, processes, and procedures. The policies, processes, and procedures are regularly evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Sample report cards for each grade level and for all courses•Policies, processes, and procedures on grading and reporting	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.11	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning.	All staff members participate in a continuous program of professional learning that is aligned with the school's purpose and direction. Professional development is based on an assessment of needs of the school. The program builds capacity among all professional and support staff. The program is systematically evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Results of evaluation of professional learning program.•Brief explanation of alignment between professional learning and identified needs•Crosswalk between professional learning and school purpose and direction	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
3.12	The school provides and coordinates learning support services to meet the unique learning needs of students.	School personnel systematically and continuously use data to identify unique learning needs of all students at all levels of proficiency as well as other learning needs (such as second languages). School personnel stay current on research related to unique characteristics of learning (such as learning styles, multiple intelligences, personality type indicators) and provide or coordinate related individualized learning support services to all students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•List of learning support services and student population served by such services•Training and professional learning related to research on unique characteristics of learning•Data used to identify unique learning needs of students	Level 4

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

Renaissance Academy Charter School's purpose and mission is focused on meeting the individual needs of children. Classes are mixed grade level to create positive learning communities where we eliminate the idea that everyone is supposed to be at the same place at the same time and instead support every student in learning at his or her own best pace. Every teacher in every classroom is regularly using multiple forms of assessment to guide and adjust each student's learning plan.

Professional development is provided to support staff members in carrying out the mission of the school. Classroom teachers as well as many support staff are sent for Montessori training with teachers required to obtain Montessori Certification in addition to State Certification and other staff provided with basic Montessori training classes. All reading group teachers are trained by the Great Books Foundation in Socratic dialogue / shared inquiry discussions. Early reading teachers are also trained in the Reading Reflex method of phonetic reading
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instruction. Yearly professional development is provided in perceived areas of weakness so that all staff can work together to create the best school possible.

Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

The school has resources and provides services that support its purpose and direction to ensure success for all students.

Overall Rating: 2.86

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.1	Qualified professional and support staff are sufficient in number to fulfill their roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school's purpose, direction, and the educational program.	Policies, processes, and procedures ensure that school leaders have access to, hire, place, and retain qualified professional and support staff. School leaders systematically determine the number of personnel necessary to fill all the roles and responsibilities necessary to support the school purpose, educational programs, and continuous improvement. Sustained fiscal resources are available to fund positions critical to achieve the purpose and direction of the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •School budgets for the last three years •Documentation of highly qualified staff 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.2	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are sufficient to support the purpose and direction of the school.	Instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are focused solely on supporting the purpose and direction of the school. Instructional time is fiercely protected in policy and practice. School leaders exhaust every option to secure material and fiscal resources to meet the needs of all students. School leaders measurably demonstrate that instructional time, material resources, and fiscal resources are allocated so that all students have equitable opportunities to attain challenging learning expectations. Efforts toward the continuous improvement of instruction and operations concentrate on achieving the school's purpose and direction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Examples of efforts of school leaders to secure necessary material and fiscal resources •School schedule •Alignment of budget with school purpose and direction •School calendar 	Level 4

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.3	The school maintains facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for all students and staff.	School leaders have adopted or created clear expectations for maintaining safety, cleanliness, and a healthy environment and have shared these definitions and expectations with stakeholders. School personnel and students are accountable for maintaining these expectations. Measures are in place that allow for continuous tracking of these conditions. Improvement plans are developed and implemented by appropriate personnel as necessary to improve these conditions. Results of improvement efforts are evaluated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Records of depreciation of equipment •Documentation of compliance with local and state inspections requirements •Documentation of emergency procedures such as fire drills, evacuation and other emergency procedures. 	Level 3

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Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.4	Students and school personnel use a range of media and information resources to support the school's educational programs.	Students and school personnel have access to media and information resources necessary to achieve the educational programs of the school. Qualified personnel are available to assist students and school personnel in learning about the tools and locations for finding and retrieving information.	•Budget related to media and information resource acquisition	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.5	The technology infrastructure supports the school's teaching, learning, and operational needs.	The technology infrastructure meets the teaching, learning, and operational needs of most stakeholders. School personnel have a technology plan to improve technology services and infrastructure.	•Survey results •Policies relative to technology use	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.6	The school provides support services to meet the physical, social, and emotional needs of the student population being served.	School personnel endeavor to determine the physical, social, and emotional needs of students in the school. School personnel provide or coordinate programs to meet the needs of students when possible. School personnel evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are sometimes designed and implemented to meet the needs of students.	•List of support services available to students	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
4.7	The school provides services that support the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students.	School personnel implement a process to determine the counseling, assessment, referral, educational, and career planning needs of all students. School personnel provide or coordinate programs necessary to meet the needs of students whenever possible. Measures of program effectiveness are in place, and school personnel use the data from these measures to evaluate all programs. Improvement plans related to these programs are designed and implemented when needed to more effectively meet the needs of students.	•Description of IEP process	Level 3

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

Renaissance Academy Charter School leaders consistently prioritize the student learning experience as primary and allocate resources accordingly. Funding is delegated to learning resources, classroom materials, educational experience first. As part of this focus on students, the school ensures that we have dedicated and capable teaching and support staff that help ensure the best learning environment for each of our students. However, funding is limited and we have to stretch far to cover all our needs. Our teachers are highly talented and highly qualified but not well paid. Everyone on staff wears multiple hats with teachers helping to oversee cleaning and maintenance as well as leading enrichment activities long after the school day. The school has a highly qualified special-education director and strong support staff

and contracts out for educational testing as needed so that we can fully meet the needs of our IEP students and any others in need of extra support. We have grown adept at using area resources as much as possible including reaching out for psychological counseling services in a crisis.

Limited funding is a problem as we must ask every person who works at the school to stretch far beyond the typical job description or workday to meet the needs of our students. Top administrative staff also play educational support roles and hiring additional help is needed. Facilities, equipment and technology suffer as they fall low on the priority list.

Renaissance Academy's area of greatest need is funding.

Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

The school implements a comprehensive assessment system that generates a range of data about student learning and school effectiveness and uses the results to guide continuous improvement.

Overall Rating: 3.0

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.1	The school establishes and maintains a clearly defined and comprehensive student assessment system.	School personnel use an assessment system that produces data from multiple assessment measures about student learning and school performance. The system generally provides consistent measurement across classrooms and courses. Some assessments, especially those related to student learning, are proven reliable and bias free. The system is evaluated for effectiveness in improving instruction, student learning, and the conditions that support learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief description of student assessment system including range of data produced from standardized and local assessments on student learning and school performance 	Level 2

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.2	Professional and support staff continuously collect, analyze, and apply learning from a range of data sources, including comparison and trend data about student learning, instruction, program evaluation, and organizational conditions.	Systematic processes and procedures for collecting, analyzing, and applying learning from multiple data sources are used consistently by professional and support staff. Data sources include comparison and trend data that provide a complete picture of student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and the conditions that support learning. School personnel use data to design, implement, and evaluate continuous improvement plans to improve student learning, instruction, the effectiveness of programs, and organizational conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples of use of data to design, implement, and evaluate continuous improvement plans and apply learning 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.3	Professional and support staff are trained in the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.	All professional and support staff members are assessed and trained in a rigorous professional development program related to the evaluation, interpretation, and use of data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional learning schedule specific to the use of data 	Level 3

Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.4	The school engages in a continuous process to determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	Policies and procedures describe a process for analyzing data that determine verifiable improvement in student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level. Results indicate improvement, and school personnel consistently use these results to design, implement, and evaluate the results of continuous improvement action plans related to student learning, including readiness for and success at the next level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agendas, minutes of meetings related to analysis of data Evidence of student readiness for the next level Evidence of student growth Evidence of student success at the next level 	Level 3

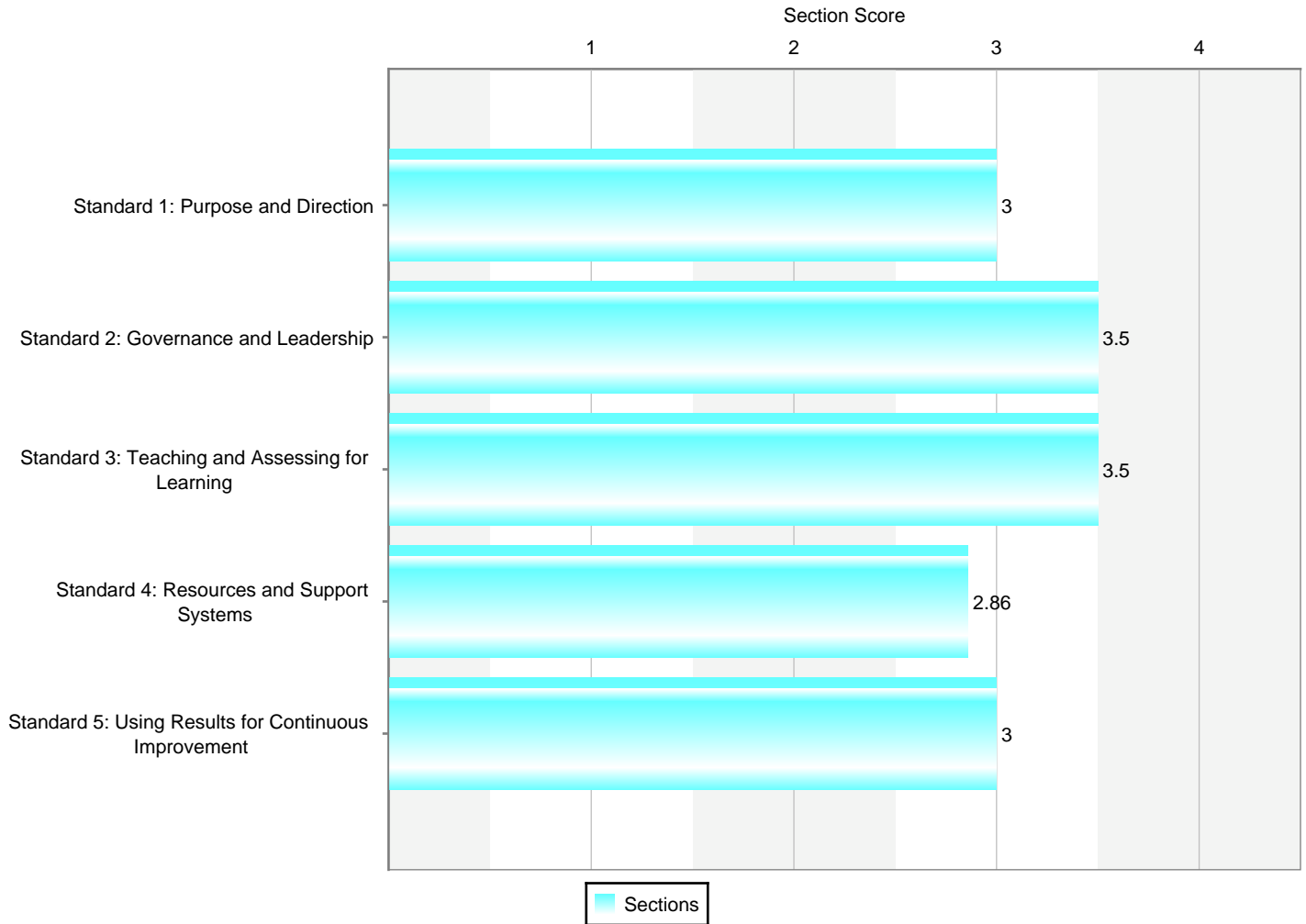
Indicator	Statement or Question	Response	Evidence	Rating
5.5	Leadership monitors and communicates comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders.	Leaders monitor comprehensive information about student learning, conditions that support student learning, and the achievement of school improvement goals. Leaders regularly communicate results using multiple delivery methods and in appropriate degrees of sophistication for all stakeholder groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Minutes of board meetings regarding achievement of student learning goals •Communication plan regarding student learning, conditions that support learning, and achievement of school improvement goals to stakeholders 	Level 4

Reflect upon your responses to each of the indicators and performance levels by considering and responding to the following questions when drafting your narrative response. Use language from the performance level descriptions to guide your writing. Cite sources of evidence External Review team members may be interested in reviewing.

As a small K-8 Montessori school with a mission to help every student reach his or her own highest potential with confidence and joy, constant evaluation of student achievement and response to demonstrated growth or areas of need is integrally weaved throughout the structure of Renaissance Academy Charter School. On the first day of school students are tested in reading and mathematics and placed into groups or on individual learning plans designed in response. Throughout the year students are tested constantly, both formally and informally, so the programs in learning can be an adjusted to their level. Individualized work plans are designed for each child, similar to others at the same grade level as they're working through the curriculum, but adjusted so that each can work at his or her own best pace. Classrooms are multi level so teachers work with small groups or individual children, regularly assessing their progress and responding accordingly. Renaissance educational leaders, special education, and classroom teachers look at ISTEP scores, NWEA scores, Gates reading, math placement, Individualized Reading Inventories and, as importantly, informal small group or individual assessments to determine each student's progress and best path.

Report Summary

Scores By Section



Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic

Introduction

The Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic is designed to analyze the institution's survey results in terms of areas of achievement and areas that need improvement. Further, the diagnostic is essential to the accreditation and continuous improvement processes in that it provides the institution with a comprehensive view of the aggregate scores of the surveys administered, and the actual total of respondents for each survey type to derive a single score for this diagnostic. The performance level score computed at the completion of the diagnostic is used to broaden and enhance the external review team's understanding of the stakeholder's perceptions of the institution; the diagnostic should be used in the same manner by the institution as it engages in improvement planning.

Stakeholder Feedback Data

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
1.	Did you complete the Stakeholder Feedback Data document offline and upload below?	Yes		Stakeholder Feedback Data Document

Evaluative Criteria and Rubrics

Overall Rating: 4.0

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
1.	Questionnaire Administration	All required AdvancED questionnaires were used by the institution to receive stakeholder feedback. The minimum response rate for each population was met (parent questionnaire: equal to or greater than 20%, student questionnaire(s): equal to or greater than 40%, staff questionnaire: equal to or greater than 60%). Questionnaires were administered with complete fidelity to the appropriate administrative procedures. In every instance, the stakeholders to whom these questionnaires were administered fully represented the populations served by the institution. Appropriate accommodations were provided as necessary for all participants.	Level 4

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
2.	Stakeholder Feedback Results and Analysis	Two or more of the stakeholder questionnaires had average item values of 4.30 or higher (on a 5.0 scale). All questionnaires had an average item value of 3.20 or above (on a 5.0 scale). Results of stakeholder feedback collected by the institution were well analyzed and clearly presented.	Level 4

Areas of Notable Achievement

Which area(s) indicate the overall highest level of satisfaction or approval?

High satisfaction overall and with school purpose and student learning.

Which area(s) show a trend toward increasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval?

Renaissance Academy Charter School has high stakeholder satisfaction

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?

This survey is consistent with regular feedback from Renaissance stakeholders - high overall satisfaction. The school maintains an 'open door policy' asking stakeholders to express any concerns and offer ideas directly, and is very responsive to that feedback.

Areas in Need of Improvement

Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest level of satisfaction or approval?

The lowest scores are in response to questions about technology in the classroom. This is no surprise because as a hands-on Montessori school it has been a conscious decision to limit technology. It is part of the overall school educational philosophy.

Which area(s) show a trend toward decreasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval?

Again, the pressure to add technology in the hands of young students is growing. Also, the buildings and grounds have served the school well but there is increasing anxiousness to build an on-site gymnasium and make additional facility improvements.

What are the implications for these stakeholder perceptions?

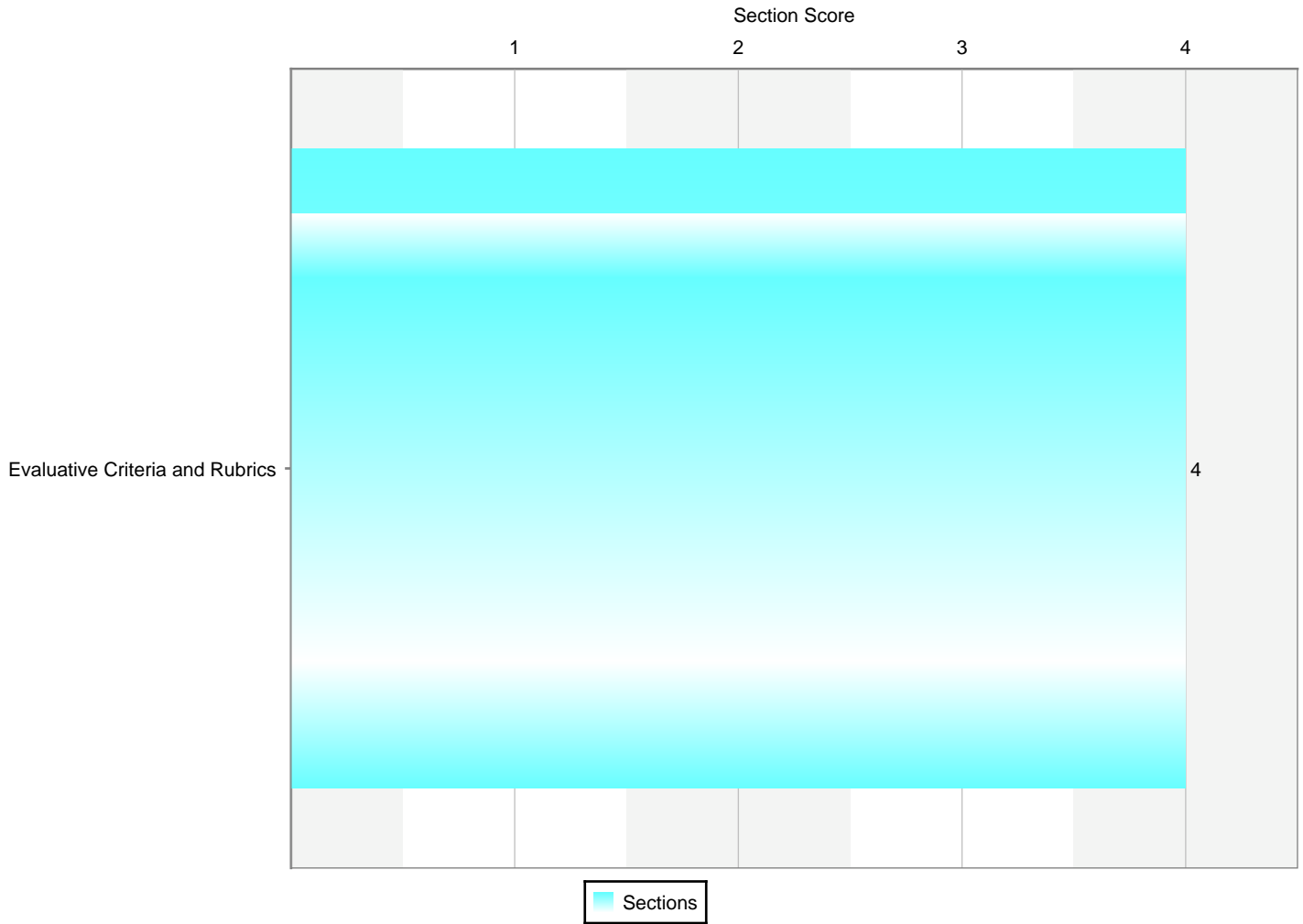
Both technology improvement and facility growth, specifically a physical and arts education building, are part of the long term goals for the school.

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?

This survey is consistent with regular stakeholder feedback. The school maintains an 'open door policy' asking stakeholders to express any concerns and offer ideas directly, and the school leadership is very aware of the perceptions and feedback.

Report Summary

Scores By Section



Student Performance Diagnostic

Introduction

The Student Performance Diagnostic provides an institution with a process to report summative student assessments. This diagnostic is significant to the accreditation and continuous improvement process as it serves as a resource for schools to view content area assessment results required by the state, district, or other entities, determine the quality and reliability of the given assessments, and show the alignment of the assessments to the school's curriculum. The performance level computed at the completion of the diagnostic is used by the external review team as a comprehensive report to understand fully the institution's assessment program; the diagnostic should be used in the same manner by the institution as it engages in improvement planning.

Student Performance Data

Label	Assurance	Response	Comment	Attachment
1.	Did you complete the Student Performance Data document offline and upload below?	Yes		Additional Assessment Data

Evaluative Criteria and Rubrics

Overall Rating: 4.0

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
1.	Assessment Quality	The array of assessment devices used by the institution to determine students' performances is sufficiently aligned so that valid inferences can be reached regarding students' status with respect to the entire set of curricular aims regarded as high-priority, "must accomplish," instructional targets. The documentation provided in support of this alignment is persuasive. All of the assessments used are accompanied by evidence demonstrating that they satisfy accepted technical requirements such as validity, reliability, absence of bias, and instructional sensitivity.	Level 4

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
2.	Test Administration	All the assessments used by the institution to determine students' performances, whether externally acquired or internally developed, have been administered with complete fidelity to the administrative procedures appropriate for each assessment. In every instance, the students to whom these assessments were administered are accurately representative of the students served by the institution. Appropriate accommodations have been provided for all assessments so that valid inferences can be made about all students' status with respect to all of the institution's targeted curricular outcomes.	Level 4

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
3.	Quality of Learning	Evidence of student learning promoted by the institution is well analyzed and clearly presented. In comparison to institutions functioning in a similar educational context, students' status, improvement, and/or growth evidence indicates that the level of student learning is substantially greater than what would otherwise be expected.	Level 4

	Statement or Question	Response	Rating
4.	Equity of Learning	Evidence of student learning indicates no significant achievement gaps among subpopulations of students, or the achievement gaps have substantially declined.	Level 4

Areas of Notable Achievement

Which area(s) are above the expected levels of performance?

Renaissance students score above the state average on required standardized tests. Student performance exceeds local Michigan City student scores by wide margin.

Describe the area(s) that show a positive trend in performance.

All. In the first year as a charter school the ISTEP was administered in the fall and we saw that incoming students scored significantly below state averages. Within two years, our school was well outperforming local schools. We continue to attract students that come in below grade level and show marked improvement while enrolled at Renaissance Academy Charter School.

Which area(s) indicate the overall highest performance?

Reading. Renaissance students demonstrate strong individual growth in all areas but reading is our area of greatest performance. Another area where Renaissance gets the strongest feedback is the growth of student verbal communication skills, confidence, and positive interaction with others, including new adults in various settings.

Which subgroup(s) show a trend toward increasing performance?

All.

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap closing?

As a small school our sub-groups are not statistically significant. To generalize however, the African American students and free lunch students are lower performing upon entrance to Renaissance Academy, but all show achievement growth while enrolled.

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other data sources?

All

Areas in Need of Improvement

Which area(s) are below the expected levels of performance?

NA. All groups show growth. The special education student population shows less growth at a slower pace.

Describe the area(s) that show a negative trend in performance.

NA

Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest performance?

The special education student population shows less growth at a slower pace.
The school's weakest subject area is science.

Which subgroup(s) show a trend toward decreasing performance?

None.

Between which subgroups is the achievement gap becoming greater?

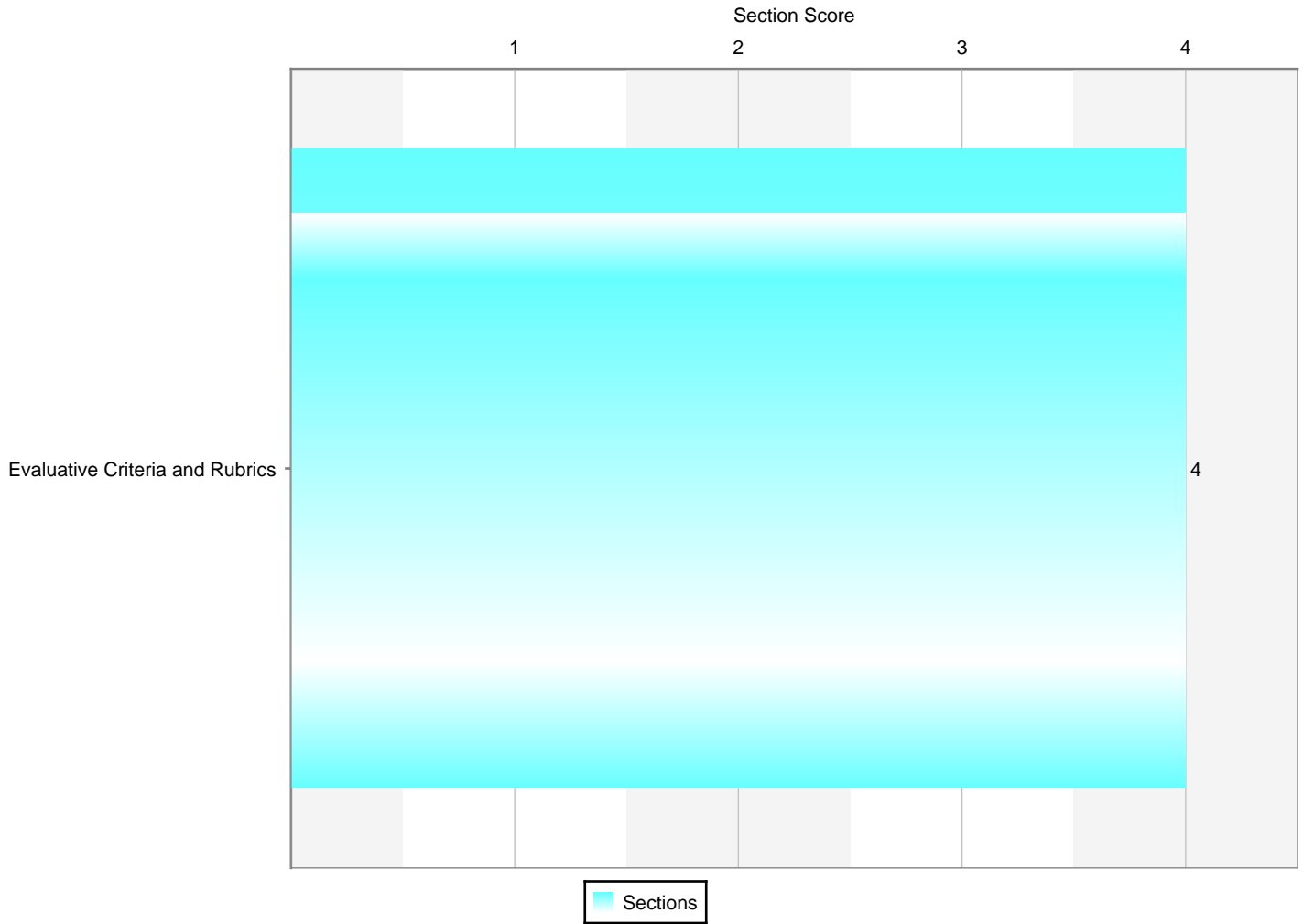
NA

Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other data sources?

All

Report Summary

Scores By Section



Organizational and Financial Performance Diagnostic

Introduction

BSU OCS will review and verify the organizational and financial documents submitted through by schools during the renewal process and evaluate a school's performance using the BSU Organizational and Financial Accountability Frameworks.

Organizational and Financial Strategic Planning-Required Responses

Provide a reflection of the school's governance and organizational performance over the past charter term. Describe any anticipated changes to the governance and management of the school, including but not limited to board composition, board member roles, member recruitment, committee structure, and/or amendments to by-laws.

The current governance structure and organization has performed well for the past charter term. As a school started by a strong leadership team, the Renaissance Academy Charter School Board of Directors has delegated much of its authority to the administrative leadership of the school and that has served the school purpose well. Moving into the future, the Board of Directors foresees taking an even more active role in the oversight of the school success.

Please specify whether the board intends to contract or terminate a contract with an education service provider (ESP), educational management organization (EMO), or charter management organization (CMO), and describe the nature of that contractual relationship. If no such relationship exists, please respond "Not Applicable."

Not Applicable

If applicable, please provide evidence illustrating an effective working relationship with an ESP, and describe the ESP's roles and responsibilities in relation to the school's management and governing board; describe how the governing board holds the operator accountable for specific academic, operational, or financial outcomes from the agreed upon contract. If no such relationship exists, please respond "Not Applicable."

Not Applicable

If applicable, please describe any anticipated changes to service contract or provider over the next charter term, including, but not limited to, intentions to terminate your contractual relationship with your management organization. If terminating, describe in detail the plans for carrying out the primary operational and educational activities for which the service provider had been responsible. If no such relationship exists, please respond "Not Applicable."

Not Applicable

Describe the current condition of the school's facility, and its capacity to serve students. Discuss any anticipated changes in facilities needs and/or location, which includes any changes to lease terms and/or building plan. If the facility is leased, how does the board oversee the terms of the lease agreement?

This is an area where our frugality and lack of sufficient funds means our facility does not take priority over student achievement and professional development. Renaissance Academy Charter School's current facility serves our purpose well and meets our basic needs, though many improvements are part of our long-term plan. The school facilities currently include 13 classrooms of children, a small library,
SY 2016-2017

computer lab, one classroom/multipurpose room, three small group spaces and four offices. As we grow closer to 300 students these buildings are stretched to the maximum capacity. It is a long-term goal to build a gymnasium /auditorium on the schools north property.

More urgently, plans include regular improvements to the facilities to make them more attractive, up to date, and secure but easily accessible.

The school facilities are partially owned by the school and partially leased on adjacent property. Renaissance Academy Charter School Board oversees the terms of this lease agreement, negotiated long term with only rate of inflation increases and giving full control over all changes or needs to the school.

The location of the school is easily accessible to students from a wide area which was a priority from the beginning. School administration and board members have worked diligently with local law enforcement and INDOT to bring about improvements in road safety near the school and for the area. While we have made great strides, this remains a goal of the school.

If any organizational deficiencies or findings were noted in any of the annual independent audits, prior notices of deficiencies, onsite reviews, or prior renewal letter, please note such deficiencies and how they were remedied.

We have had only minor findings or suggestions in the audits and we responded and addressed them immediately. No deficiencies were noted in reviews or prior renewal.

In what ways does the board assure that financial resources provide adequate support for the school's overall program and to improve student achievement? Please reflect on the allocation, challenges, trends and any shifts in resources directed toward Student Academic Achievement, Student Instructional Support, Overhead and Operational, and Nonoperational (See Form 9).

Renaissance Academy Charter School has maintained a strong financial picture despite limited funding.

School administration, teachers, staff and the Board of Directors have all worked to keep students as the number one priority in every decision made. This means the facilities may not always sparkle but the students do. Funding is always focused on meeting instructional needs first, and this includes classroom materials, enrichment activities, student support, and field trips.

In order to maintain the excellent programs that Renaissance Academy Charter School provides, and meet the long-term facility needs, increased funding will be necessary. It is the hope of the Renaissance Academy Charter School Board that the Office of Charter Schools efforts will help improve per pupil state funding, as well as grant opportunities

Organizational and Financial Strategic Planning-Optional Responses

Discuss how your charter school has avoided creating conflicts of interest where possible and, when necessary what policies has the school utilized to manage those conflicts of interest in a clear and transparent manner. Please address any related parties, including management company, landlord, and other associated non-profits, and overlapping Board members or employees.

How does the board ensure the charter school is meeting its legal obligations to students with special needs and English Language Learners? Please describe the board's role in responding to parent complaints with regards to these populations.

How does the board ensure that admission policies are legally compliant and promote equitable access to diverse student populations? How does the board address parent complaints with regards to admission policies?

How does the board ensure that discipline policies are legally compliant and promote equitable treatment of diverse student populations? How does the board address parent complaints with regards to discipline (e.g. bullying policy, expulsion policy)?

Provide evidence that illustrates how the school creates a professional working climate for all staff. Please describe the board's process for addressing teacher complaints or concerns.

Describe the plan for providing transportation to students to attend the school, including transportation to extra-curricular activities, if applicable.

Describe the charter school's food services program, indicating whether a food contractor is used and whether individuals on site preparing and serving food are employees of the contractor or school.

Please describe the health services offered to students, including medical examinations, dental examinations, vision screenings, mental health screenings, hearing screening, and height/weight measurements. Specify the frequency, grades, service providers, and follow up interventions based on student results or whole-school findings.

How does the school's board oversee the financial management of the school? Specify any relevant officers or committees. Provide evidence that demonstrates how the school operates in a financially sound and publicly accountable manner.

Who is responsible on a daily basis for the oversight and accountability of the school's budget? If there are multiple parties involved (i.e. board treasurer, finance committee, school administrators, management organization, business manager), explain how they work together to ensure a high level of budget oversight.

Describe the school's internal accounting procedures, addressing budget preparation and planning, bank accounts, purchase requests, authorized check signers, competitive bidding, credit/debit cards, and petty cash. Also provide details regarding the use of any accounting software or contracted services to track financial transactions.

Describe the regular review of lease/mortgage agreements, refinancing efforts or considerations, insurance revisions, human resource services, and/or Educational Management Organization contracts.

Describe the school's marketing plan and objectives. What have been successful and unsuccessful marketing strategies throughout the life of the school?

Please analyze and explain any financial challenges or trends that may be significantly different than originally proposed, including how projected and actual enrollment has influenced the school's budget.

