



**CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT**

between

Volunteers of America-Minnesota, Authorizer

and

BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL (#4145), School

WHEREAS, the primary purpose of mission-driven charter schools is to improve the learning, achievement, and success of all students.

WHEREAS, the additional purpose of the School is to increase quality learning opportunities for all students.

NOW, THEREFORE, Volunteers of America-Minnesota grants this Contract conferring certain rights, privileges, and obligations of a charter school and confirms the continued status of a charter school to the School. In addition, the parties agree that the granting of this Contract is subject to the following terms and conditions.

**ARTICLE 1**

**TERM OF CHARTER CONTRACT**

1.1 Effective date: July 1, 2021, Amended February 2025.

1.2 Expiration date: June 30, 2026.

1.3 Survival of Terms. The following clauses survive the expiration or cancellation of this contract: 1. Liability; 2. State and Federal Audits; 3. Government Data Practices and Intellectual Property; 4. Publicity and Endorsement; 5. Governing Law, Jurisdiction, and Venue; 6. Data Disclosure; and 7. Dissolution.

**ARTICLE 2**

**DEFINITIONS**

2.1 "Charter Contract" means this contract between the Authorizer and the School as required by Minnesota Charter School Law, Minn. Stat. § 124E.10.

2.2 "Applicable Law" means all state and federal laws and rules applicable to Minnesota charter schools and any regulations and guidelines issued pursuant to those laws and rules. This includes changes made to Applicable Law by Congress, Minnesota Legislature and/or appropriate federal and state agencies.

2.3 "School Program Description" means the school program parameters agreed upon by the Authorizer and the School for the length of this Contract, as evidenced by Addendum A ("Charter School Program").

2.4 "Charter Law" means the Minnesota Statutes § 124E.10 *et seq.*, as amended, and any rules or regulations adopted by the Education Commissioner relating to this law.

2.5 "Charter School Board" means the Board established to govern the School, as required under Minnesota Statutes § 124E.07.

2.6 The "Authorizer" refers to the Volunteers of America of Minnesota.

2.7 The "School" refers to Birch Grove Community School.

2.8 "Education Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education or his or her designee.

2.9 "Department" means the Minnesota Department of Education.

2.10 “State” means the State of Minnesota.

2.11 “School information” includes all educational data, as defined in Minnesota Statutes §13.32; any and all data related to employees; any and all complaints filed by the School as required by federal and state law and all complaints filed against the School or any of its employees; any and all investigative files and the results of any investigations; any and all financial information as required to be disclosed under the Minnesota Data Practices Act; and any data or other information that the Authorizer deems reasonably necessary to carry out its role.

**ARTICLE 3**  
**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND**  
**VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA OF MINNESOTA**

3.1 Voluntary Authorization. Volunteers of America of Minnesota qualifies as an authorizer pursuant to Minnesota Statute 124E.10 Subd.3. In granting this Contract, Volunteers of America of Minnesota voluntarily exercises powers given to Volunteers of America of Minnesota pursuant to Applicable Law to authorize charter schools. Nothing in this Contract shall be deemed to be any waiver of Volunteers of America of Minnesota’s autonomy or power.

3.2. Independent Status of the School. The School is not and shall not be deemed to be a division or part of Volunteers of America of Minnesota. The relationship between the School and Volunteers of America of Minnesota is based solely on the applicable provisions of the Charter School Act and the terms of this Contract or other written contracts or written agreements between Volunteers of America of Minnesota and the school. Except as otherwise provided in this Contract, Volunteers of America of Minnesota shall have no authority or control over operational, administrative, or financial responsibility for the School.

3.3. Financial Obligations Are Separate. Any contract or other instrument of indebtedness entered into by the School and a third party shall not in any way constitute an obligation, either general, special, or moral, of Volunteers of America of Minnesota. The School will never pledge the full faith and credit of Volunteers of America of Minnesota for the payment of any School contract, loan, or other instrument of indebtedness.

Any contract or other instrument of indebtedness entered into by Volunteers of America of Minnesota and a third party shall not in any way constitute an obligation, either general, special, or moral, of the School. Volunteers of America of Minnesota will never pledge the full faith and credit of the School for the payment of any Volunteers of America of Minnesota contract, loan, or other instrument of indebtedness.

3.4 No Authority to Obligate or Bind Other Party. The School has no authority whatsoever to enter into any contract or other agreement that would financially obligate Volunteers of America of Minnesota, nor does the School have any authority whatsoever to make any representations to lenders or third parties, that Volunteers of America of Minnesota in any way guarantees, is financially obligated, or is in any way responsible for any contract, loan or other instrument of indebtedness entered into by the School.

Volunteers of America of Minnesota has no authority whatsoever to enter into any contract or other agreement that would financially obligate the School, nor does Volunteers of America of Minnesota have any authority whatsoever to make any representations to lenders or third parties, that the School in any way guarantees, is financially obligated, or is in any way responsible for any contract, loan or other instrument of indebtedness entered into by the Volunteers of America of Minnesota.

3.5 Limited Use of Volunteers of America of Minnesota Name. The School may not use the name of the Volunteers of America of Minnesota or any assumed name, trademark, division or affiliation of Volunteers of America of Minnesota in any of the School’s promotional advertising, contracts, or other materials without Volunteers of America of Minnesota prior written consent, except that the School may include the following statement in such materials “Birch Grove Community School is authorized by Volunteers of America-Minnesota.” Pursuant to Minnesota Statute § 124E.07, Subd.8, the School shall identify Volunteers of America of Minnesota as the authorizer and provide contact information.

## **ARTICLE 4 LEGAL STRUCTURE**

- 4.1 Nonprofit Status. The Charter School Board is organized and operated as a nonprofit corporation under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 317A.
- 4.2 Articles of Incorporation. The Charter School Board is organized and operated as a nonprofit and within the parameters of their state approved Articles of Incorporation under and by virtue of Minnesota Statutes Chapter 317A. The School must notify the Authorizer of any changes to the Articles of Incorporation approved by the Minnesota Secretary of State.
- 4.3 Bylaws. The Charter School Board is organized and must operate within the parameters of their approved bylaws. The School will notify the Authorizer of any amendments to the bylaws. At its discretion, the Authorizer may provide review and comment on the proposed amendments. The School will consider the Authorizer's review and comment.
- 4.4 Lease Space. The School may lease space from any public or nonsectarian private organization as it deems necessary. If the School intends to lease from a private sectarian organization, it will comply with the provisions of the Charter Law, specifically Minnesota Statutes § 124E.22. Prior to finalizing a lease for space, the School will submit an application to the Department for approval. The School will provide a copy of the Department's decision, to the Authorizer within thirty days of receipt.
- 4.5 Authorized Grades. The School is authorized to serve grades K-5. The School will not expand its present grade levels without approval by the Authorizer and the Education Commissioner, consistent with the Charter Law or Minnesota Statutes § 124E.06, subd.5.

## **ARTICLE 5 SCHOOL LOCATION**

- 5.1 The location of the School is 9 Goodneighbor Hill Road, Tofte, MN 55615.
- 5.2 The School will notify the Authorizer of any anticipated change in geographical location. At its discretion, the Authorizer may provide review and comment on the proposed change in location. The School will consider the Authorizer's review and comment.
- 5.3 The School will not expand to additional school sites beyond the present location(s) without approval by the Authorizer and the Education Commissioner, consistent with the Charter Law or Minnesota Statutes § 124E.06, subd.5.

## **ARTICLE 6 OPERATING REQUIREMENTS**

6.1 Governance Structure. The School shall be governed by a Board of Directors. The School will file changes in the membership of the Board with the Authorizer and Department. The Board will be composed of at least five nonrelated members and include: (1) at least one licensed teacher employed as a teacher at the school or providing instruction under a contract between the charter school and a cooperative; (2) at least one parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in the charter school; and (3) at least one interested community member who resides in Minnesota and is not employed by the charter school and does not have a child enrolled in the school. The board may include a majority of teachers or parents or community members, or it may have no clear majority. The chief financial officer and the chief administrator are ex-officio nonvoting board members. No charter school employees shall serve on the board other than licensed teachers employed as a teacher at the school. Board bylaws shall outline the process and procedures for changing the board's governance model, consistent with Chapter 317A and Charter Law.

Contractors providing facilities, goods, or services to a charter school may not serve on the board of directors of the charter school. A board may change its governance structure only: (1) by a majority vote of the board of directors and a majority vote of the licensed teachers employed by the school as teachers, including licensed teachers providing instruction under a contract between the school and a cooperative; and (2) with the authorizer's approval. Any change in board governance structure must conform with the composition of the board established under Charter Law.

6.2 Charter School Board Election. Charter School Board elections will be conducted as provided in the Charter Law. Board elections must be held during the school year but may not be conducted on days when the school is closed for holidays, breaks, or vacations. The charter school will notify eligible voters of the school board election dates at least 30 days before the election.

6.3 Background Checks. Prior to the time such persons are seated as members of the Charter School Board, the School will conduct a criminal background check identical to those required by Minnesota Statutes § 123B.03, subd.1. The Charter School Board will certify to the Authorizer that background checks have been completed. Consistent with data practices law, the Charter School Board will provide to the Authorizer any adverse information that is revealed as part of the background checks and will evaluate, on a case-by-case basis, membership on the Charter School Board where the background check revealed adverse information.

6.4 Training. Every charter school board member shall attend annual training throughout the member's term on the board. Prior to beginning their term, a new board member must complete training on a charter school board's role and responsibilities, open meeting law, and data practices law. An ex-officio member, who is a charter school director or chief administrator, must complete this training within three months of starting employment at the school. A new board member must complete training on employment policies and practices under chapter 181; public school funding and financial management; and the board's roles and responsibilities regarding student success, achievement, and performance within 12 months of being seated on the board or the individual is automatically ineligible to continue to serve as a board member. A board member who does not complete training within the 12-month period is ineligible to be elected or appointed to a charter school board for a period of 18 months.

Every charter school board member must complete annual training throughout the member's term based on an annual assessment of the training needs of individual members and the full board. Ongoing training includes but is not limited to budgeting, financial management, recruiting and hiring a charter school director or chief administrator, evaluating a charter school director or chief administrator, governance-management relationships, student support services, student discipline, state standards, cultural diversity, succession planning, strategic planning, program oversight and evaluation, compensation systems, human resources policies, effective parent and community relationships, authorizer contract and relationships, charter school law, legal liability, board recruitment and elections, board meetings and operations, policy development and review, and school health and safety. The charter school is responsible for covering the costs related to board training. The charter school must include in its annual report the training each board member completed during the previous year. The board must ensure that an annual assessment of the board's performance is conducted, and the results are reported in the school's annual report.

6.5 Powers. The Charter School Board will provide policy leadership including, but not limited to, long range planning and goal-setting for the School consistent with the school's approved mission; holding the School accountable for meeting its goals; and overseeing and approving an annual budget. The board may not levy taxes or issue bonds.

6.6 Board Operations. All meetings and business of the Charter School Board will comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13 and the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 13D.

6.7 Frequency of Board Meetings. The Charter School Board will meet as provided in the bylaws. A copy of the agenda, minutes and all related documents will be provided to the Authorizer at least three days prior to the public meeting. At the request of the Authorizer, the Charter School Board will provide the Authorizer an opportunity to address the Charter School Board regarding matters determined by the Authorizer.

6.8 Board Responsibilities. The board of directors shall decide and be responsible for policy matters related to the operation of the school, including budgeting, curriculum programming, personnel, and operating procedures. The board shall maintain a policy on nepotism in employment and other policies required by state or federal law. Charter Law requires that the board maintain personnel evaluation policies and practices that, at a minimum: (1) carry out the school's mission and goals; (2) evaluate the execution of charter contract goals and commitments; (3) evaluate student achievement, postsecondary and workforce readiness, and student engagement and connection goals; (4) establish a teacher evaluation process; and (5) provide professional development related to the individual's job responsibilities.

6.9 School Web Site. The Charter School Board shall publish and maintain on the school's official Web site all items required by state and federal law and Authorizer, including, but not limited to: (1) the minutes of meetings of the board of directors for at least one calendar year from the date of publication; (2) directory information for members of the board of directors, (3) names of members of committees having board-delegated authority, (4) board meeting calendar, (5) board-approved school budget, (6) School Annual Report, (7) school admissions policy including lottery process that it must use when accepting pupils by lot and early admissions requirements when applicable, (7) Authorizer name and contact information, (8) the name, mailing address, bylaws, minutes of board meetings, and names of the current board of directors of the affiliated nonprofit building corporation.

6.10 Employment Terms and Conditions. The Charter School Board is subject to section Minnesota Statutes Chapter 181.932. When offering employment to a prospective employee, a charter school must give that employee a written description of the terms and conditions of employment and the school's personnel policies.

6.11 Authorization of Employment. The Charter School Board will employ and contract with necessary teachers, as defined by Minnesota Statutes § 122A.15, subd.1, who hold valid teaching licenses issued by the State to perform the particular service for which they are employed at the School.

6.12 Non-Licensed Personnel. The Charter School Board or its delegate may employ necessary employees who are not required to hold teaching licenses to perform duties other than teaching, and may contract for other services.

6.13 Administrative Leadership. A person, without holding a valid administrator's license, may perform administrative, supervisor, or instructional leadership duties. The Charter School Board will establish and maintain qualifications for persons that hold administrative, supervisory or instructional leadership roles. The qualifications will include at least the following areas: instruction and assessment; human resource and personnel management; financial management; legal and compliance management; effective communication; and board, authorizer, and community relationships. The Charter School Board will use those qualifications as the basis for job descriptions, hiring, and annual performance evaluations of those who hold administrative, supervisory, or instructional leadership roles. The Charter School Board and an individual who does not hold a valid administrative license and who serves in an administrative, supervisory, or instructional leadership position shall develop and maintain a professional development plan. Documentation of the implementation and maintenance of the professional development plan of these persons shall be included in the school's Annual Report.

6.14 Collective Bargaining. If employees of the School choose to engage in collective bargaining, the School will comply with Minnesota Statutes Chapter 179A, the Public Employment Labor Relations Act ("PELRA").

6.15 Non-Sectarian Operation. The School will be non-sectarian in its program, admission policies, and employment practices, and for all other purposes.

6.16 Home School Students. The School will not be used as a method of generating revenue for students who are being home schooled pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 120A.22.

6.17 School Admissions. The School may not limit admission to pupils on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability, nor may it condition admission on criteria or take any action that would violate the Minnesota Human Rights Act, Minnesota Statutes Chapter 363A. The charter school shall not distribute any services or goods of value to students, parents, or guardians as an inducement, term, or condition of enrolling a student in a charter school.

A charter school shall enroll an eligible pupil who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. In this case, pupils must be accepted by lot. The charter school must develop and publish, including on its Web site, a lottery policy and process that it must use when accepting pupils by lot.

A charter school shall give enrollment preference to a sibling of an enrolled pupil and to a foster child of that pupil's parents and may give preference for enrolling children of the school's staff before accepting other pupils by lot. A charter school may give enrollment preference to children currently enrolled in the school's free preschool or prekindergarten program under section 124E.06, subdivision 3, paragraph (a), who are eligible to enroll in kindergarten in the next school year.

A person shall not be admitted to a charter school (1) as a kindergarten pupil, unless the pupil is at least five years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences; or (2) as a first grade student, unless the pupil is at least six years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences or has completed kindergarten; except that a charter school may establish and publish on its Web site a policy for admission of selected pupils at an earlier age, consistent with the enrollment process in this section.

Once a student is enrolled in the school, the student is considered enrolled in the school until the student formally withdraws or is expelled under the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act in sections 121A.40 to 121A.56. A charter school is subject to and must comply with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, sections 121A.40 to 121A.56.

#### 6.18 Reporting to the Authorizer.

(a) Reports. The School will file reports with the Authorizer regarding the program and financial status of the school according to the terms of this Contract and the Volunteers of America of Minnesota Annual Submission Calendar.

(b) Other Reports. The School and the Authorizer will file all reports with the Education Commissioner consistent with the procedures established by the Department.

(c) Violations of Law. The School will promptly notify the Authorizer of all complaints that allege that a violation of state or federal law or regulation has been committed by the School, its employees or agents, unless such reporting would be in non-compliance with a state or federal law.

#### 6.19 Financial Management.

(a) Financial Reports. The School will provide the Authorizer a copy of the annual budget for review and comment prior to its approval by the Charter School Board, if requested by the Authorizer. The School also will provide the Authorizer periodic reports of the financial status of the School.

(b) UFARS and MARSS. The School will utilize the UFARS financial accounting principles and MARSS student accounting requirements.

(c) Audits. The School will comply with the same financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements of school districts required in Minnesota Statutes §§ 123B.75-.83. The School will be audited annually by a public accounting firm hired by the Charter School Board and the annual audit will be submitted to the Department and Authorizer no later than December 31 of each year. The School will make available for review by the Authorizer all financial records at such times as requested by the Authorizer.

(d) Creditors. The School will pay all creditors within 30 days of receipt on an outstanding invoice, pursuant to the State's prompt payment law, Minnesota Statutes § 16A.124, subd.3. If the School has any payments to creditors for which there is an outstanding liability of over 90 days, the School will provide the Authorizer a written statement explaining the reasons for the delay and a proposal for payment of the outstanding liability.

6.20 Transportation. Transportation will be provided for students enrolled at the School in accordance with the Charter Law and other applicable state and federal laws.

6.21 Insurance. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Charter Contract, the School is considered a school district for the purposes of tort liability under Minnesota Statutes Chapter 466. The School Board of Directors shall acquire and maintain at least the amount and types of insurance coverage up to the applicable tort liability limits under Chapter 466.04. The School agrees to provide the Authorizer with certificates of insurance at least annually or as otherwise requested by the Authorizer. The board must submit changes in its insurance carrier or policy to its Authorizer within 20 business days of the change.

## **ARTICLE 7 SCHOOL PROGRAM, PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND EVALUATION**

7.1 Academic Program and Curriculum. The school will implement and adhere to the academic program and curriculum set forth in Addendum A (“School Program Description”).

7.2 Methods of Assessment. The School shall evaluate student’s work based on the assessment strategies identified in this Contract and in its annual report. The School and the Authorizer agree that the School’s operation under the Charter Contract shall be measured by the school performance indicators set forth in this Contract, including academic outcomes, standards for governance, financial management, and school operation as set forth in state and federal law and Addendum B (“School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System”).

- (1) Regular Assessments. Volunteers of America will monitor student academic achievement by reviewing student testing and assessments.
- (2) Government Required Assessments. School students will take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment tests and any other testing required by Applicable Law.

The School will comply with the requirements of the Minnesota Graduation Standards, as defined by Minnesota Statutes §§ 120B.02 and 120B.024; and Minnesota Rules parts 3501.0010–.0280.

- (3) District Assessment Plan. The School will annually adopt a Board-approved Assessment Plan. The Plan will utilize a variety of assessment techniques to measure student progress towards state standards. These measures include internal and external assessments. The School will submit the board-approved school Assessment Plan to the authorizer by September 1<sup>st</sup> annually.
- (4) Test Results. The School will provide the Authorizer results of the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments at such time they are available.

7.3 Professional Development. The School will ensure that each teacher at the School has a professional development plan that focuses in part on developing quality assessments, measures of student outcomes, and effective teaching strategies. The School will provide the Authorizer with a calendar for planned staff development according to the Volunteers of America-Minnesota Annual Submission Calendar.

7.4 Contract Amendments. The charter contract will be amended as warranted by Minnesota Department of Education approval of an additional school site(s) and/or additional grade levels served, or significant changes in state law. The charter contract may be amended during the term of the contract if the Authorizer and School mutually agree that the school specific academic goals (performance targets) are not attainable.

7.5 VOA-MN Charter School Network Meetings. The School agrees to participate in Volunteers of America of Minnesota Charter School Network Meetings and the Authorizer will monitor the School’s attendance at Network Meetings. The goal of participation in the Network Meetings is to share information and resources, and identify resources, and School agrees to do so. The Network Meetings are comprised of two representatives from each Volunteers of America Minnesota authorized charter school (one person in an administrative position and one person from the Charter School Board). The Authorizer will convene Network Meetings no more than twice annually.

7.6 Service Learning. The Authorizer requires that the School annually engage in planned and meaningful service learning activities. The school will have a Service Learning Plan. The school reserves the right to amend the annual plan as needed. The school should develop a corresponding locally determined method of evaluation to measure the level of student and community engagement and benefit from each service learning opportunity. The school shall include their annual plan for service learning and related evaluation results in the school Annual Report of the following year.

## **ARTICLE 8 COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS**

8.1 State Laws. The School shall comply with applicable state laws.

- (1) Students with a Disability. The School shall comply with Minnesota Statutes Chapters A charter school must comply with sections 125A and 124E and rules relating to the education of pupils with a disability as though it were

a district. Consistent with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes, the financial parameters within which the School will operate to provide special education instruction and related services to students with disabilities will be based on the individual needs of the student, as defined by the student's evaluation and by the instruction and related services specified in the student's Individual Education Plan ("IEP"). Refer to Addendum C ("Special Education Services").

- (2) Health and Safety. The school will meet all applicable federal, state, and local health and safety requirements applicable to school districts. (Minnesota Statutes § 124E.03, subd.2).
- (3) Immunizations. The School shall comply with Minnesota Statutes § 121A.15, requiring proof of student immunization against measles, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, mumps, and hemophilia influenza type B prior to enrollment.
- (4) Human Rights Act. The School shall comply with the Minnesota Human Rights Act, Chapter 363A, which prohibits unfair discriminatory practices in employment, public accommodations, public service, or education; and comply with Minnesota Statutes § 121A.04, which governs provisions of equal opportunities for members of both sexes to participate in athletics.
- (5) Student Discipline and Dismissal. The school will comply with the Pupil Fair Dismissal Act.
- (6) Fee Law. The school shall comply with the Minnesota Public Schools Fee Law, Minnesota Statutes §§ 123B.34-.39, which governs authorized and prohibited student fees.
- (7) Annual Report. The School will publish an Annual Report approved by the Board. The report will contain all information required by the Authorizer and the Education Commissioner consistent with the provisions of the Charter Law at § 124E.16, subd.2. The Annual Report will be filed in a timely manner. The School may include other information in the Annual Report. The School will distribute the Annual Report by publication, mail, or electronic means to the Authorizer, school employees, and parents and legal guardians of students enrolled in the charter school and must also post the report on the charter school's official Web site. The reports are public data under Chapter 13.

8.2 Federal Laws. The School shall comply with applicable federal laws.

## **ARTICLE 9 AUTHORIZER DUTIES**

9.1 Oversight Plan. The Authorizer will implement a plan to provide ongoing oversight to determine whether the School is complying with the terms of this Charter Contract and to meet its responsibilities under the law regarding Authorizer oversight. Refer to Addendum A ("School Program Description") and Addendum B ("School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System"). The Authorizer will use the following five criteria in determining the School's compliance with this Charter Contract:

- (a) Mission and Program Model Implementation. The Authorizer will evaluate whether the School has been faithful to the terms of this Agreement regarding the implementation of the School's design pursuant to the Application submitted to the Department.
- (b) Governance. The Authorizer will evaluate whether the Charter School Board is performing its governance responsibilities.
- (c) Student and school performance. The Authorizer will evaluate whether the performance of the students and the School meet the Authorizer expectations as provided in this Contract and Addendum B ("School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System").
- (d) Finance. The Authorizer will evaluate whether the School is using its resources in compliance with the law and is engaging in adequate fiscal planning for future years.

(e) Operation of the School. The Authorizer will evaluate whether the School is meeting the administrative requirements of the Charter Law.

9.2 Site-Visits. The Authorizer will conduct a minimum of one formal site visit and one informal site visit in the course of an academic year. Formal site visits will be guided by the Volunteers of America of Minnesota Formal Site Visit Rubric. Volunteers of America of Minnesota may engage in scheduled and unscheduled site-visits at such frequency as determined necessary or prudent by Volunteers of America of Minnesota.

9.3 Authorizer Fee. The Authorizer shall monitor and evaluate the academic, financial, operational, and governance performance of the school (refer also to Addendum B and F), and may for this purpose annually assess a charter school a fee. The School shall pay a fee for Volunteers of America of Minnesota execution of its oversight duties. The fee shall be the maximum fee provided by the Charter Law, except that if Minnesota law is amended to increase this fee, the school will pay the increased fee.

9.4 Liaison. The Authorizer will designate a liaison for the School and will inform the School if the liaison changes. The name of the liaison and the liaison's duties are included in Addendum B ("School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System").

## ARTICLE 10

### CAUSES FOR NONRENEWAL OR TERMINATION

10.1 Grounds. The Authorizer may or may not renew the Agreement at the end of the term for any ground listed in Article nine of the Charter Contract. The Authorizer may unilaterally terminate the Agreement during the term of the Agreement for any ground listed in Article nine of the Charter Contract and Addendum B ("School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System"). The grounds for non-renewal or termination for cause must be consistent with Charter Law.

10.2 Formal Notice. At least 60 business days before not renewing or terminating the Agreement, the Authorizer shall notify the Charter School Board of the proposed action in writing. The notice shall state the grounds for the proposed action in reasonable detail and that the Charter School Board may request in writing an informal hearing before the authorizer within 15 business days of receiving notice of nonrenewal or termination of the Agreement. Failure by the Charter School Board to make a written request for an informal hearing within the 15-business-day period shall be treated as acquiescence to the proposed action. Upon receiving a timely written request for a hearing, the Authorizer shall give ten business days' notice to the Charter School Board of the hearing date. The Authorizer shall conduct an informal hearing before taking final action. The Authorizer shall take final action to renew or not renew a contract no later than 20 business days before the proposed date for terminating the contract or the end date of the contract.

10.3 Termination and Nonrenewal. The Charter Contract may be terminated or not renewed upon any of the following grounds:

- (1) failure to demonstrate satisfactory academic achievement for all students, including the requirements for pupil performance contained in the contract;
- (2) failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management;
- (3) violations of law; or (4) other good cause shown.

If a contract is terminated or not renewed under this paragraph, the school must be dissolved according to the applicable law and the terms of the Charter Contract.

10.4. Mutual Nonrenewal or Termination. If the Authorizer and the Charter School Board mutually agree not to renew the Agreement, a change in authorizers is allowed. The Authorizer and the Charter School Board must jointly submit a written and signed letter of their intent to the Commissioner to mutually not renew the Agreement. If no change in authorizer is approved by the Commissioner, the School and the Authorizer may withdraw their letter of nonrenewal and enter into a new Agreement. If the transfer of authorizers is not approved and the current Authorizer and the School do not withdraw their letter and enter into a new Agreement, the school must be dissolved according to applicable law and the terms of the Charter Contract.

10.5 Commissioner Termination for Cause. The Commissioner, after providing reasonable notice to the Charter School Board and the Authorizer, and after providing an opportunity for a public hearing, may terminate the existing contract

between the Authorizer and the Charter School Board if the charter school has a history of:

- (1) failure to meet pupil performance requirements consistent with state law;
- (2) financial mismanagement or failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or
- (3) repeated or major violations of the law.

10.6 Dissolution. In the event that the Charter School Board unilaterally votes to close the School or the school must be dissolved under section 10.3 or 10.4 of the Charter Contract, the school must be dissolved according to applicable state and federal laws and the terms of the Agreement. Refer to Addendum E (“School Closure Plan”).

**ARTICLE 11  
GENERAL TERMS**

11.1 Amendments. The Charter Contract may only be amended by written agreement executed by both parties.

11.2 Authorizer Authority. Except as otherwise provided by the Charter Contract or Applicable Law, the Authorizer has no authority, control, power, administrative or financial responsibility over the School. This provision does not prohibit the parties from contracting for any services deemed appropriate in the future.

11.3 Assumption of Liability. The School and the Charter School Board may sue and be sued. The School and the Charter School Board accept liability for all actions arising out of, or in any manner connected with, the School's operations.

11.4 Indemnification. The School will assume full liability for its activities and indemnifies and holds harmless the Authorizer. The Authorizer, the Authorizer's board members and employees, are immune from civil and criminal liability with respect to all activities related to the School. The School agrees not to sue the Authorizer or any of its representatives for any matters that may arise under the Charter Contract. The School and Authorizer acknowledge and agree that the Commissioner, Authorizer, members of the board of the Authorizer in their official capacity, and employees of the Authorizer are immune from civil or criminal liability with respect to all activities related to a charter school they approve or authorize. Notwithstanding Minn. Stat. 3.736, the School shall assume full liability for its activities and indemnify and hold harmless the Authorizer and its officers, agents, and employees from any suit, claim, or liability arising from any operation of the School and the Commissioner and Department officers, agents, and employees.

11.5 Severability. If any provision in the Charter Contract is held to be invalid or unenforceable, it will be ineffective only to the extent of the invalidity, without affecting or impairing the validity and enforceability of the remainder of the Agreement.

11.6 Non-agency. It is understood that the School is not the agent of the Authorizer.

11.7 General Compliance and Assurances. The School and the Authorizer agree to comply with all Applicable Laws including, but not limited to, the Charter Law. In addition, the School and the Authorizer assure that they are eligible entities under the Charter Law.

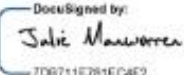
As the authorized representative for the Birch Grove Community School, I hereby certify that the school is able to comply with the contract and all applicable law and that the school, through its governing board, has approved and agreed to comply with and be bound by the terms and conditions of this contract.

[SCHOOL]

By:  Position: Board Chair  
DATE: JUNE 1, 2021

As the designated representative for Volunteers of America of Minnesota, I hereby issue this contract to the School.

[AUTHORIZER]

By:  Position: President / Chief Executive Officer  
DATE: JUNE 1, 2021

The charter contract addendums are as follows:

- |  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| A. School Program Description                          | D. Signed Board Assurances   |
| B. School Accountability & Authorizer Oversight System | E. School Closure Plan       |
| C. Special Education                                   | F. Authorizer Renewal Report |
| D. Signed Board Assurances                             |                              |

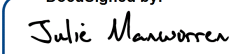
**CHARTER CONTRACT AMENDMENT**

*As the designated representative for BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL, we hereby agree to the contract amendment(s).*

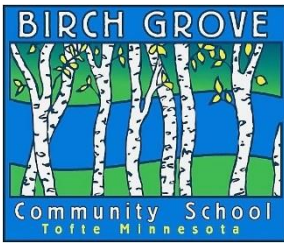
  
Signature

BOARD CHAIR  
Date: February 27, 2025

*As the designated representative for Volunteers of America of Minnesota Charter Authorizing Program, I hereby agree to the contract amendments.*

DocuSigned by:  
  
7DB711E781EC4F2...  
Signature

PRESIDENT / CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
Date: February 24, 2025



**ADDENDUM A**

**DATE CHARTER WAS STATE APPROVED:** 2004  
**FIRST SCHOOL YEAR SERVING STUDENTS:** 2005-2006

**GRADES SERVED:** K-5                      **GRADES APPROVED TO SERVE:** K-5

**SCHOOL ADDRESS:** 9 Goodneighbor Hill Road, Tofte, MN 55615  
Mailing: Post Office Box 2383 Tofte, MN 55615

**SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER:** 218-663-0170 **SCHOOL WEBSITE:** [www.birchgroveschool.com](http://www.birchgroveschool.com)

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**SCHOOL MISSION:** Birch Grove Community School will promote academic excellence utilizing our unique natural setting allowing students to reach their potential, preparing them to become socially and environmentally responsible, self-directed, life-long learners.

**SCHOOL VISION:** Birch Grove Community School envisions *quality* curriculum, *excellent* staff, and *committed* families and community members.

Our vision also includes:

- A K-5 educational program in multi-grade classrooms
- Low student/teacher ratios
- A focus on: reading, writing, and mathematics
- Preparing students to be active and responsible citizens in their community
- Encouraging student/parent/community ownership in *their* community school

Birch Grove Community School will provide a nurturing and safe environment where:

- Parents and community members are actively engaged in student learning
- High expectations for students and staff are modeled and clearly defined
- Quality programs are developed, evaluated and continuously improved
- All students' needs are met
- Student-teacher ratios in the classroom are low
- Students' lives are further enriched through active partnership with local citizens

**SCHOOL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Birch Grove Community School works hard to ensure a productive academic environment where students feel safe, comfortable, respected, and challenged. The start of each year requires much attention directed to new students who aren't accustomed to Birch Grove. Birch Grove integrates respect and responsibility into everyday life of the school. We start every morning the same – all staff and students are gathered to listen to daily announcements, recite the Pledge of Allegiance and set a positive, “let’s get to learning” tone.

At Birch Grove, we come to know our students very well. Our low student to teacher ratio, multi-grade classrooms (students have the same teacher for at least two consecutive years) and the staff concern and care for our students contributes to a family atmosphere that we are proud of. Because we know our students well, we are better able to gauge what their specific abilities and needs are, allowing us to serve our students better.

Birch Grove Community School has 3 multi-grade classrooms: Kindergarten/First grade, Second/Third grade and Fourth/Fifth grade.

Some of the benefits of multi-grade classes are:

**Instructional Flexibility** – In a multi-grade classroom the teacher has the possibility of allowing a child to read with students in higher grades while, for example, the same child does math with the lower grades. One can more easily gear the work to individual needs.

**Social Skills** – A classroom with children of several ages enables students to gain a perspective on what is happening in the lives and education of children both younger and older. It helps them gain a more accurate sense of the past and future in terms of experiences and interest and stimulates the entire learning environment. **Peer Tutoring** – In multi-age classrooms, the children generally have more opportunity to help one another than in a single grade classroom. Such peer teaching aids the slower and younger children in ways often beyond the communicative ability of adults, since adults have generally forgotten the problems they had in learning a particular concept or skills in the remote past.

#### Outdoor Experience and Learning

Birch Grove is located in one of the most beautiful natural environments in the state, and we take advantage of it! Included in our program is the opportunity to go cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, and ice skating. Visits to Lake Superior are just a short hike away. Not only do these activities promote physical activity, but it creates bonds between student, staff and volunteers.

Birch Grove has a nature trail in the woods behind Birch Grove. The nature trail, completed in September 2009, runs throughout the woods behind the building. The trail has 10 interpretive signs focusing on: owls, wetlands, deer rubs, tree identification, fungus, tree rings, ants and anthills, woodpeckers, a deer enclosure, and one sign that introduce the trail system. All of the signs can be changed and moved to create different focal points from year to year, or season to season.

Also located behind school in the Great Northwoods is a camping site that is equipped with picnic tables and a bonfire pit. Students often visit to track animals, eat lunch, read, or do other academic work. Other areas of the woods have been claimed by each classroom.

The students in second through fifth grade visit Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center each year for a 3 day/2 night stay. Students engage in a variety of activities and learning experiences with the guidance of the Wolf Ridge staff.

#### Community Lunch:

Birch Grove Community School holds Community Lunch the second Tuesday of each month. This is a chance for parents, grandparents and community members to interact with our students and staff and to enjoy a great meal and conversation! This is also a monthly service learning opportunity for our 2/5 grade students who set up and tear down for each event, including setting up displays of student work/projects. Contact with the community is a priority, and this event gives that opportunity on a monthly basis.

### **ACADEMIC EVALUATION**

Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) is the creator of Measures of Academic Progress System (MAPS), our chosen method to test our students. This computer-based testing system is built on 30 years of research and refinement and adapts to the child in real-time as the test progresses for a pinpoint picture of learning achievement and readiness.

Testing is conducted on computers three times yearly for all of our students in Kindergarten through fifth grade. MAP testing supplies us with instant and complete data on student growth. This data is used to guide instruction, helps to determine appropriate action for the academic growth of each student, and is the basis for our Goal Setting Contracts. Every student at Birch Grove has a Goal Setting Contract. At the beginning of each school year, students partake in the NWEA Measurement of Academic Progress System (MAPS) testing for both math and reading and receive an initial RIT score. Utilizing data provided from NWEA, a year end RIT score (the goal) is determined based on the students beginning RIT. The initial RIT score and the year end RIT goal are recorded in a contract for each student. Contracts are presented at the first conference of the year. The classroom teacher discusses the contract with both the student and the parents, discusses the initial score, and what the end goal is. Contracts are signed by all three parties. The overall goal is student academic growth.

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE AND ELECTION PROCESS**

The Charter Law requires the board of directors to decide and be responsible for policy matters related to the operation of the school, including budgeting, curriculum programming, personnel, and operating procedures. The board shall maintain a policy on nepotism in employment. The board shall maintain personnel evaluation policies and practices that, at a minimum: (1) carry out the school's mission and goals; (2) evaluate the execution of charter contract goals and commitments; (3) evaluate student achievement, postsecondary and workforce readiness, and student engagement and connection goals; (4) establish a teacher evaluation process; and (5) provide professional development funding related to the individual's job responsibilities.

Charter School Law requires that every charter school board member attends annual training throughout the member's term on the board. All new board members are required to attend initial training on the board's role and responsibilities, employment policies and practices, and financial management. A new board member who does not begin the required initial training within six months after being seated and completes that training within 12 months of being seated on the board is automatically ineligible to continue to serve as a board member. The school board maintains a record of member board training and sends copies to Authorizer VOA-MN. In summary, the school board is responsible for: Hire/evaluate director; Set & maintain & promote mission, vision, strategic plan; Sign contracts and approve employment matters; Provide oversight of state/MDE, federal and charter authorizer requirements.

Consistent with the Charter School Law, the school notifies eligible voters of the school board election dates at least 30 days before the election. School elections are held on an annual basis at a time and date set by the board and in accordance with statutes. Staff members employed at the school, including teachers providing instruction under a contract with a cooperative, members of the board of directors, and all parents or legal guardians of children enrolled in the school are the voters eligible to elect the members of the school's board of directors.

The Board will be composed of 5-7 qualified members who are passionate about the school's success and demonstrate professional expertise in curriculum, instruction, assessment, finance, facilities, law, business management, governance, administration, management, and experience in working with targeted student population. Additionally, the Board will be composed of officers including Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. Standing committees may include Budget and Finance, Audit, Marketing and Recruitment, and Academic Performance. The Board Chair will convene special advisory committees as deemed necessary by the Board.

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION / MANAGEMENT TEAM**

POSITION TITLE	SUMMARY OF POSITION DESCRIPTION / RESPONSIBILITIES
School Director/Business Manager	See Position Description Below
	<p>The school director/business manager is responsible to embrace the school mission, implement the goals of the school board, and provide leadership and strategic vision in the areas of academics, finance and operations.</p> <p>Major responsibilities, essential functions and regular activities</p> <p>Contribute to a healthy learning environment by modeling behavior expectations for social interactions in school and community.</p> <p>Willingness to take ownership in the development and long-term stability of the school</p> <p>Open to work with volunteers</p> <p>Motivate Faculty and Students to achieve success by maintaining an atmosphere with active learning opportunities and appropriate assessment tools</p> <p>Develop professionally and be involved by planning and participating in workshops, in-services and staff development opportunities, staff meetings, serving on committees and attending special events</p> <p>Facilitate appropriate student supervision and guidance as assigned or needed in the classroom as well as in the school</p> <p>Maintain appropriate communication with all stake holders / constituencies, i.e. staff members, board of directors, students, parents, authorizer, community members who have rights and responsibilities to know about the school program and maintain a sense of trust and security</p>

Understand and fulfill all aspects of school policies and procedures as outlined in the Birch Grove Community School Handbook  
 Avail oneself of technology opportunities for skill advancement.  
 Oversee teachers, paraprofessionals, preschool teacher, paraprofessionals, transportation staff, lunch staff, computer tech, and maintenance staff  
 Staff meetings  
 School filing system  
 Background checks  
 Performance Reviews  
 Secure, implement, compliance, reporting, budget/finance for school and Community Education programming

**SCHOOL FACULTY**

POSITION TITLE	SUMMARY OF POSITION DESCRIPTION / RESPONSIBILITIES
Elementary Teachers	Embrace Birch Grove Community School’s Mission Commit yourself fully to the school year at Birch Grove Implement appropriate school curriculum in compliance with the Minnesota state standards and benchmarks Maintain ongoing positive communication with parents through conferences, report cards, newsletters and other means Ensure timely completion of report cards, test scores, lesson plans, etc. Create and maintain public relationships with individuals and organizations that can be integrated into the classroom Build and maintain positive relationships/communications with students, parents, staff and the public Participate in the Quality Compensation Program Attend and participate in staff and IEP meetings Initiate new and exciting additions to classroom curriculum Utilize time wisely to ensure preparedness for student contact time Maintain and post student expectations Bring energy and enthusiasm to students everyday Communicate with Special Education staff/School Director with appropriate student concerns/issues Attend at least one school board meeting during the school year Participate in school programs, events and fund raising initiatives Serve on a school board committee Promote student recruitment publically Communicate often with the School Director concerning school and student status Be flexible and cooperative with all school staff and with occasional changes in programming/scheduling Other requirements and responsibilities may be added at the School Board/School Director discretion
Special Education Teacher	Embrace Birch Grove Community School’s Mission Commit yourself fully to the school year at Birch Grove Comply with all Special Education rules, regulations and laws Develop and implement appropriate IEP’s Maintain positive communication and collaboration with service providers Maintain positive communication with the Special Education Director Build and maintain positive relationships/communications with students, parents, staff and the public Communicate with the School Director concerning program and student status Speech Therapy assistance Schedule appropriate student services Attend and participate in staff meetings

	<p>Inform the School Director of all student status changes for MARSS reporting (via email)</p> <p>Participate in the Quality Compensation Program</p> <p>Attend at least one school board meeting during the school year</p> <p>Participate in school programs, events and fund raising initiatives</p> <p>Ensure timely preparation of lesson plans, progress reports, etc.</p> <p>Promote student recruitment publically</p> <p>Bring energy and enthusiasm to students everyday</p> <p>Participate in the Birch Grove activities</p> <p>Other requirements and responsibilities may be added at the School Board/School Director's discretion</p> <p>All employees will follow the policies, practices and procedures as detailed in the Birch Grove Community School Handbook and Employee Handbook, as well as all of Birch Grove's school policies.</p>
<p>Sped Paraprofessionals</p>	<p>To assist, support, and work closely with teachers, school administration and other team members in providing educational benefit for students.</p> <p><u>Position Content:</u> Major responsibilities, essential functions and regular activities</p> <p>Work with individual students or small groups of students to reinforce learning of materials or skills initially introduced by licensed staff</p> <p>Assists as directed by the special education/classroom teacher in the effort to successfully maintain students with special needs as determined by the student IEP</p> <p>Assist the teachers in devising special strategies for reinforcing learning materials and skills based on sympathetic understanding of individual students, their needs, interests and abilities</p> <p>Consultation and collaboration with Special Education and Regular Education Teachers as well as related service staff</p> <p>Alert the Special Ed/classroom teacher or school director to any problem or special information about an individual student or about an incident</p> <p>May perform supervision of students during lunch, recess and field trips/special events</p> <p>May perform non-instructional classroom duties such as snack time, clothing routines, transition periods, etc. as directed by school staff</p> <p>Demonstrates ethical behavior and confidentiality of information about students in the school environment and community</p> <p>Provide a safe and nurturing environment for students</p> <p>Additional responsibilities may be given at the discretion of teachers/ school director</p> <p>Understand and fulfill all aspects of school policies and procedures as outlined in the Birch Grove Community School Handbook, Employee Handbook, and Policy Manual</p>
<p>Gen Ed Paraprofessional</p>	<p>To assist, support, and work closely with teachers, school administration and other team members in providing educational benefit for students.</p> <p><u>Position Content:</u> Major responsibilities, essential functions and regular activities</p> <p>Work with individual students or small groups of students to reinforce learning of materials or skills initially introduced by licensed staff</p> <p>Assist the teachers in devising special strategies for reinforcing learning materials and skills based on sympathetic understanding of individual students, their needs, interests and abilities</p> <p>May perform some clerical or classroom maintenance as needed</p> <p>Alert the classroom teacher or school director to any problem or special information about an individual student or about an incident</p> <p>Performs supervision of students during lunch, recess and field trips/special events</p> <p>May perform non-instructional classroom duties such as snack time, clothing routines, transition periods, etc. as directed by the classroom teacher or school director</p>

	<p>Demonstrates ethical behavior and confidentiality of information about students in the school environment and community</p> <p>Additional responsibilities may be given at the discretion of the classroom teacher/school director</p> <p>Understand and fulfill all aspects of school policies and procedures as outlined in the Birch Grove Community School Handbook</p>
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**STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT:** Minnesota Statue 124E, set forth certain requirements the School must follow when enrolling students. The School may limit admission to:

- (1) pupils within an age group or grade level;
- (2) pupils who are eligible to participate in the graduation incentives program; or
- (3) residents of a specific geographic area in which the school is located when the majority of students served by the school are members of underserved populations.

The School shall enroll an eligible pupil who submits a timely application, unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or building. In this case, pupils must be accepted by lot. The charter school must develop and publish, including on its Web site, a lottery policy and process that it must use when accepting pupils by lot. The School shall give enrollment preference to a sibling of an enrolled pupil and to a foster child of that pupil's parents and may give preference for enrolling children of the school's staff before accepting other pupils by lot.

A person shall not be admitted to the School (1) as a kindergarten pupil, unless the pupil is at least five years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences; or (2) as a first grade student, unless the pupil is at least six years of age on September 1 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the pupil seeks admission commences or has completed kindergarten; except that a charter school may establish and publish on its Web site a policy for admission of selected pupils at an earlier age, consistent with the enrollment process in the aforementioned paragraphs.

The School may not limit admission to pupils on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability and may not establish any criteria or requirements for admission that are inconsistent with this subdivision. The School shall not distribute any services or goods of value to students, parents, or guardians as an inducement, term, or condition of enrolling a student in a charter school. The School will abide by the board approved school enrollment policy and procedures and applicable laws.

**STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS**

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
K	8	6	6	6	6
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	9	5	6	6	6
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	7	7	5	6	6
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	8	6	7	5	6
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	5	5	6	7	5
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	6	3	5	6	7
TOTAL	43	32	35	36	36

**SCHOOL CALENDAR:** In compliance with Minnesota Code §120A.41, the school calendar will include no fewer than 165 instructional days and will meet the following hours of instruction requirements: 425 hours for Kindergarten; 935 hours for grades 1-6; and 1020 hours for grades 7-12. Snow days will be made up as indicated on the attached calendar.

**DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM:**

BGCS will promote Service learning by coordinating a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection with the purpose of enriching the students learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. BGCS will involve students in community service activities combined with facilitated means for applying the experience to their academic and personal development. Learning objectives will be linked to meaningful human, safety, educational, and environmental needs that are co-determined with community partners and service recipients.

**DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION PLAN:**

BGCS will fully contract for transportations services for all routes.

**DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOL FACILITY PLAN:**

BGCS will continue to lease space at the Birch Grove Community Center. It is anticipated that the current dedicated leased space will continue to be adequate for the school’s needs.

## Birch Grove Community School | 2020-2021 CALENDAR

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 Staff Workshop</li> <li>11 1/2 Day Staff Workshop 3-7:00</li> <li>12 Open House 4:00-7:00pm</li> <li>13 Staff Workshop/PD</li> </ul> <p>Staff Days: 2.5</p>	<b>AUGUST '20</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: 8px;"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						<b>FEBRUARY '21</b> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: 8px;"> <thead> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>Th</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Staff Days: 19 Students Days: 18</p>	S	M	T	W	Th	F	S		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No School-President's Day</li> <li>Teacher PD/Workshop- No School</li> </ul>							
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If a loss of instructional days occurs 10 or more days prior to the following days, school will be made up on:  
January 18, February 22, March 12, April 30

**FUTURE PLANS:** Birch Grove Community School will continue to work on increasing the school fund balance.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET:** The Board will have a standing Budget and Finance Committee which will be tasked with ensuring the school's financial plans are prepared for launch. The school's fiscal year will run from July through June each year, and the final budget will be approved no later than the June Board meeting annually. Budgets will be designed to yield positive net income each year to strengthen the school's fund balance.

	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
Revenue (No increase in per pupil formula)	654,563	677,800	685,545	700,545
Expenditure (3% annual increase)	637,600	656,728	676,429	696,721
EOY	16,963	21,072	9,116	3,824



## School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System

### SCHOOL STATUTORY PURPOSES:

- **PRIMARY PURPOSE (M.S. 124E.01):** The primary purpose of mission-driven charter schools is to improve the learning, achievement, and success of all students.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS / EXPECTATIONS: VOA-MN Academic Performance Standards 1-3.

MEASURE: MCA exams and locally determined supplemental data based on nationally normed assessments.

REPORTING: Progress meeting these expectations is a required element of the Annual Report and Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan.

- **STATUTORY PURPOSE II (MS 124E.01):** Increase quality learning opportunities for all pupils.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD / EXPECTATIONS: VOA-MN Academic Performance Standard 6. Locally determined, board approved annually.

MEASURE: Locally determined, board approved annually.

REPORTING: Progress meeting these expectations is a required element of the Annual Report and Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan.

- **ADDITIONAL PURPOSE (M.S. 120B.11):** The school is to meet the outcomes adopted by the Commissioner for all public school students under Minnesota Statutes § 120B.11 (Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness), applicable to elementary schools, specifically: all children are ready for school; all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

PERFORMANCE STANDARD / EXPECTATIONS: VOA-MN Academic Performance Standard 7. Locally determined, board approved annually.

MEASURE / GOALS: locally determined, board approved annually for each of the outcomes.

REPORTING: Element of the Annual Report and Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Plan.

### Introduction

As a leading authorizer, Volunteers of America–Minnesota builds its portfolio of high-performing charter schools by only selecting proposals with a strong potential for success. It then ensures that such potential is realized through a unique system of accountability that begins even before a school opens its doors.

VOA-MN is committed to fulfilling its role as a charter school authorizer by holding its schools accountable for a range of results. The accountability system presented in this document ensures that VOA-MN will uphold its legal obligation to make sure the schools it authorizes are reaching (or making adequate progress toward) the goals and benchmarks outlined in its charter contract and Minnesota statute.

VOA-MN uses a standard charter contract with unique school-specific terms that capture different approaches to achieving student success. The individuality of each school will be preserved in the “Academic Program Description” addendum to the charter contract.

**Volunteers of America of Minnesota Accountability Plan**

According to Minnesota Statute § 124E.01, subd.1, *The primary purpose of charter schools is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement.* VOA-MN holds the schools it authorizes accountable in five major areas: academic performance, fiscal management, board governance, management and operations, and legal compliance. Each area may have multiple indicators of success and the charter school’s performance on each indicator will be rated as:

- Does Not Meet Standard
- Partially Meets Standard
- Meets Standard

**Rating Scale: For each standard, a school earns points for contract renewal as follows:**

- 0 = Does Not Meet Standard
- 1 = Partially Meets Standard
- 2 = Meets Standard

**Weighting of Performance Measures used during the contract renewal process is as follows:**

- 50% weighting: Academic Program (statutory purposes, including primary purpose)
- 20% weighting: Financial Sustainability
- 30% weighting: Organization
  - 15% governance
  - 15% management & compliance

**Combining Data Over the Contract Term**

Annual school performance results will be combined each successive year of the contract term wherever possible so that fluctuation due to small group size will be minimized and overall performance is accurately reflected.

**Contract Renewal Eligibility**

VOA-MN schools must achieve at least a Satisfactory Rating (70% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area (Academic, Financial, Organizational Performance) to be eligible for a three-year contract renewal and at least an Exemplary Rating (80% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area to be eligible for a five-year contract renewal. All contract renewals will be for either three or five years. Fewer than three years does not provide enough information on which to make a renewal decision.

Progress meeting VOA-MN Standards is monitored and communicated to schools annually through the school Formal Site Visit Reports and three VOA-MN Charter School Network Reports (academic, finance, governance) and the school specific Annual Scorecards. Renewal contract length is based on an average of school’s performance over the term of the contract. Renewal decisions for a three-year or five-year contract term will be based on two and four fiscal years of data respectively.

If a school is performing below standard to receive a three-year renewal contract but has agreed to the authorizer terms and conditions set forth in the School Improvement Plan to correct areas of deficiency, VOA-MN may agree to extend a school’s contract (not to exceed five years) to provide additional time for a school to improve performance as an alternative to termination. If sufficient school improvement is not being made by the end of the 1st year of the extension, termination proceedings will commence.

The following is an example of a five-year contract term renewal calculation:

ANNUAL AND CONTRACT RENEWAL CALCULATIONS TABLE					
	YR 1 Rating	YR 2 Rating	YR 3 Rating	YR 4 Rating	Average Rating
ACADEMIC (50%)	%				
FINANCE (20%)	%				
ORGANIZATION (30%)					
BOARD GOVERNANCE (15%)					

	MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS (15%)					
	<b>TOTAL</b>					
<b>CUMULATIVE TOTAL AVERAGE</b>						

**Intervention and Corrective Action**

VOA-MN schools that, prior to their year of contract renewal, fall below a Satisfactory Rating in the Performance Framework overall and/or in any performance area (Academic, Finance, Governance, Management/Operations) must enter into a School Improvement Plan that addresses the specific standards in the Performance Framework where the school performance is below Satisfactory.

**Closure Plan**

If the school does not meet the terms of the School Improvement Plan and attain a Satisfactory Rating by the end of the contract term, the school is a candidate for nonrenewal. If the school’s contract is not renewed, the school must implement the Closure Plan as described in the school’s charter contract.

**Three essential questions guide our VOA-MN authorizer oversight and charter school accountability plan.**

- **ACADEMIC PROGRAM PERFORMANCE - Is the school’s Learning Program a Success?**

**Academic Performance-** All public schools, including charters, must fully participate in the state assessments - Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. Data from state assessments as well as Title 1 Designation consistent with the state North Star system will be compiled and evaluated in the Annual VOA-MN Authorized Charter Schools Academic Performance Report by the authorizer. Charter schools are required to meet the academic performance standards for which they agree to be held accountable in their charter contract. The extent to which a school is meeting their Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness requirements, and additional statutory purposes are also measured in the Learning program section.

**The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program publishes annually an Academic Performance Report on their network of authorized charter schools.** The report serves as a single annual source of academic program and performance information for all of our VOA-MN operational charter schools. The report contains an analysis of annual and cumulative academic program, performance, and professional development data for each school.

Content from the annual Academic Performance Report also serves as the basis for the school academic performance analysis contained in the statutorily required Contract Renewal Evaluation Reports, including evaluation of the extent to which the school has met their primary purpose, “to improve the learning, achievement, and success of all students” during the contract term.

The VOA-MN determined academic performance standards contained below are uniform for all VOA-MN charter schools. The standards are contained in VOA-MN Charter Contract Addendum B (School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System) and serve as the basis for both annual authorizer monitoring of school academic performance and contract renewal determinations. *The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to reasonably amend these standards /expectations as needed (example: based on cell size being to small). One sample rating scale is imbedded below to provide the reader with context.*

**VOA-MN’s academic performance standards/expectations include the following:**

Academic Standard 1 - Students are performing well on state examinations in comparison to students at schools they might otherwise attend (with similar demographics) as evidence of meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving the learning, achievement, and success of all students. Imbedded Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report standard. A school may also use a nationally normed exam as a supplemental indicator. The “comparison” group will be the nationally-normed group. Data Source: Evidence / Source: Minnesota Department of Education. Scale:  
 2 = School’s average proficiency rate exceeds the average performance of students in schools they might otherwise attend.

1 = School's average proficiency rate meets or exceeds the average performance of students in schools they might otherwise attend in one or two subjects (math, reading and science) but not all three.

0 = School's average proficiency rate is less than the average performance of students in schools they might otherwise attend.

Academic Performance Standard 2 - Over the term of the contract, the school will maintain an average state-determined minimum achievement level of (Improved + Maintained) in math and reading as evidence of meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving the learning, achievement, and success of all students. Evidence / Source: North Star Academic Progress A school may also use a nationally normed exam as a supplemental indicator. The minimum growth level will be the nationally-normed expected growth. Scale:

2 = School's achievement level of "increased and maintained" is equal to or higher than the statewide average in both math and reading.

1 = School's achievement level of "increased and maintained" is equal to or higher than the statewide average in either math or reading but not both.

0 = School's achievement level of "increased and maintained" is below the statewide average in both math and reading.

***Alternative Standard 2 for school's grades 9-12 only***

Academic Standard 2 (alternative) - Over the term of the contract, the school's four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate will remain above 80%. \*Imbedded Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report standard: All students graduate from high school. Evidence / Source: Minnesota Department of Education. Scale:

2 = School's four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is 80% or higher.

1 = School's four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is between 75.1%-79.9%.

0 = School's four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate is below 75%.

Academic Standard 3 - The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate in the School and any reportable student group proficiency rate will be reduced over the term of the contract in both reading and math using state examination data as evidence of the School meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving the learning, achievement, and success of all students. Imbedded Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report standard: all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed. Evidence / Source: Minnesota Department of Education. A school may also use a nationally normed exam as a supplemental indicator. Scale:

2 = The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate and all student group proficiency rates has been reduced.

1 = The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate and at least one student group proficiency rate has been reduced.

0 = The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate and all reportable student group proficiency rates has increased.

Academic Standard 4: All teachers are supported through a school-wide professional development plan that is based on analysis of assessment data and directly linked to improving the learning, achievement, and success of all students. Data / Source: The teacher development plan submitted to VOA-MN by September 1. VOA-MN needs a copy of the report to evaluate this standard. Scale:

2 = The school has adopted and followed a school-wide, data-driven professional development plan.

1 = The school has a school-wide professional development plan, but the reviewer could not conclude that the plan was tied to data-driven decision-making.

0 = The school has not adopted a school-wide professional development plan.

Academic Standard 5: The school is meeting their additional purposes (MS 124E.01, Subd 1; Charter Contract Addendum B). Data Source: School Annual Report. Scale:

2 = The school has a plan and is meeting their additional statutory purposes.

1 = The school has a plan for meeting their additional statutory purposes and is partially meeting them.

0 = The school does not have a plan for meeting their additional statutory purposes and measuring progress.

Academic Standard 6: The school is meeting the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness goals (MS 120B.11; Charter Contract Addendum B). Data Source: School Annual Report. Scale:

2 = The school has a plan for meeting their Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) goals. The school met all its CACR goals as reported in the annual summary report submitted to MDE by the deadline established by MDE.

1 = The school has a plan for meeting their CACR goals. The school met some, but not all its CACR goals as reported in the annual summary report submitted to MDE by the deadline established by MDE.

0 = The school does not have a plan for meeting their CACR goals. The school did not meet any of its Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness goals as reported in the annual summary report submitted to MDE by the deadline established by MDE; or did not submit the annual summary report to VOA-MN.

- **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY – Does the School Exhibit Strong Financial Health?**

Charter schools receive public funds and must meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management. It is VOA-MN's duty to ensure that the schools are responsible stewards of public funds. The charter school shall provide VOA with a copy of its draft and final annual budgets and monthly cash flow projections for each fiscal year by July 1 of each fiscal year. VOA-MN shall use submitted budget and cash flow statements, along with any other relevant information, to determine if the charter school has a realistic balanced budget plan for the current year. VOA-MN shall use the financial statements presented in the charter school's annual financial audit, along with any other relevant information, to determine if the charter school maintained a balanced budget during the prior-year. Schools are expected to have audits that are free of all findings.

**The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program publishes annually a School Financial Oversight Report on their network of authorized charter schools.** The parties acknowledge that the Minnesota Charter Schools Law requires a charter school to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management. This requirement has two underlying purposes: to monitor the financial health of the school and compliance with state and federal laws, including proper use of public funds. The report will contain an evaluation of school performance meeting the VOA-MN financial standards.

The VOA-MN determined school financial standards contained below are uniform for all VOA-MN charter schools. The standards are contained in VOA-MN Charter Contract Addendum B (School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System) and serve as the basis for both annual authorizer monitoring of school financial health and contract renewal determinations. The authorizer will monitor school performance meeting these standards on an ongoing basis and the standards will be evaluated in the annual VOA-MN Network Finance Report. The standards also serve as the criteria for contract renewal determinations. *The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to reasonably amend these standards /expectations as needed (example: fund balance standard may be negotiated based on school length of operation or size). One sample rating scale is imbedded below to provide the reader with context.*

VOA-MN's school financial standards/expectations include the following (authorizer reserves the right to amend standards or scale as needed/warranted):

Finance Standard 1: The school maintains a balanced budget (not including a board-approved General Fund balance spend down). Data Source: Original and revised budgets, annual financial audit report, monthly income statements. Scale:

2 = surplus position

1 = NA

0 = deficit position

Financial Standard 2: The school is compliant with state and federal financial reporting deadlines and laws (including the proper use of public funds) and the submission of financial items on the VOA-MN Annual Submissions Calendar, excluding the financial audit covered in Standard Three. Data Source: MDE reports including: Preliminary UFARS data, Student ADM, Final UFARS data. Scale:

2 = never missed

1 = missed 1 time

0 = missed > 1 time

Finance Standard 3: The School's financial audit is submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education, Office of the State Auditor and the authorizer by December 31. Data Source: Email from the School with attached MDE documentation. Scale:

- 2 = submitted
- 1 = n/a
- 0 = not submitted

Financial Standard 4: Schools are expected to have audits that are free of all findings. (If the school receives a legal compliance finding for late payment of bills that is also uncovered in the financial analyst's review of the check registers, it will be rated in Standard Four and noted in Standard Five.) Data Source: The School's financial audit report. Scale:

- 2 = no findings
- 1 = 1 or more "significant deficiency" finding(s)
- 0 = 1 or more "material weakness" or legal compliance finding(s)

Finance Standard 5: The School is current on all financial obligations, including, but not limited to: pension payments, payroll taxes, insurance coverage and loan payments. The school reports late payments in the monthly financial reports. Data Source: Monthly check registers, cash flow projections, board meeting agendas and minutes. Scale:

- 2 = never late
- 1 = late 1-2 times
- 0 = late > 3 times

Finance Standard 6: The school provides VOA-MN and school board members with monthly financials. June financial reports may be delayed until year-end journal entries are completed. Monthly financials include at least the following: 1) detailed income/expense report, 2) cash flow projection, 3) check register, and 4) current enrollment (Average Daily Membership). The board should review and approve the financials at each board meeting. (The school is responsible for including a description for each item on the check register and an explanation for any check sequence gaps.) Data Source: Board packets. Scale:

- 2 = never missed
- 1 = missed 1-2 times
- 0 = missed > 2 times

Finance Standard 7: The School develops and maintains a targeted General Fund balance determined by the School Board. For the finance report, VOA-MN also determines a standard for fund balance annually based on items such as school funding trends and funding hold-backs. Data Source: The school's General Fund balance policy, monthly financial reports, board meeting agenda & minutes. Scale:

- 2 = 20% or >
- 1 = 15-20%
- 0 = < 15%

Finance Standard 8: The School Board has a finance committee that meets regularly to review financial reports. Data Source: Board meeting packets, agendas, and minutes. Scale:

- 2 = 8-12 meetings/year
- 1 = 5-9 meetings/year
- 0 = 0-4 meetings/year

Finance Standard 9: All finance committee members exhibit working knowledge of financial oversight. Data Source: School board members queries, board meeting agendas and minutes. Scale:

- 2 = All committee members have received formal/informal training during the year relating to their roles and responsibilities on the finance committee.
- 1 = NA
- 0 = Some committee members have not received formal/informal training during the year relating to their roles and responsibilities on the finance committee.

Finance Standard 10: The school is not in Statutory Operating Debt (SOD). Data Source: School's budget, board meeting agendas and minutes, financial audit. Scale:

- 2 = not in SOD

1 = n/a

0 = in SOD

## **SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS - Is the organization effective and well run?**

- SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE
- SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS
  
- **SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE**

Effective board governance is essential to the successful start-up and operation of a public charter school. The diversity of charter school board memberships – teachers, parents, community leaders, and volunteers – heightens the importance of consistent expectations and development activities.

The authorizer regularly monitors the performance quality of the school board based on authorizer observations; interviews with the director, board and faculty; and the review of school policies, reports and board meeting minutes. A school must have a governance model that provides quality oversight by ensuring that there are checks and balances between the board and the school administrators.

A school board is responsible for developing, implementing, and assessing policy; defining sound employee relations; conducting open meetings; recognizing and conforming to the legal mandates imposed by state and federal laws; and governing within the limits of a delegation of state authority – as a nonprofit and public-school board. Additionally, the board has an obligation to assess its successes and failures; inform the public of all deliberations and decisions; promote accountability; enhance public understanding of its mission; conform to standards of ethical behavior; provide a framework for setting goals; and develop strategic plans for the accomplishment of those goals.

**The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program publishes annually a School Board Governance Report on their network of authorized charter schools.** The purpose of this report is to be a single annual source on the board operations and compliance of the eighteen VOA-MN- authorized charter schools. Authorizer VOA-MN also observes a minimum of two school board meetings annually.

The VOA-MN determined school board governance standards contained below are uniform for all VOA-MN charter schools. The standards are contained in VOA-MN Charter Contract Addendum B (School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System) and serve as the basis for both annual authorizer monitoring of school board performance and contract renewal determinations. The authorizer will monitor school performance meeting these standards on an ongoing basis and the standards will be evaluated in the annual VOA-MN Network Governance Report. The standards also serve as the criteria for contract renewal determinations. *The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to reasonably amend these standards /expectations as needed (example: based on length the school has been in operation). One sample rating scale is imbedded below to provide the reader with context.*

VOA-MN's school board governance standards/expectations include the following (authorizer reserves the right to amend standards or scale as needed / warranted):

Governance Standard 1: The Board of Directors met its governance model requirements laid out in its bylaws and membership requirements as required by Minnesota Statute\*. Data Source: The school submits a completed VOA-MN Board Roster Table (template provided by VOA-MN) twice a year to demonstrate compliance with statute and bylaws. The first is submitted by January 15. The second is sent at the end of the fiscal year by June 30. (See the Annual Submissions document.) Scale:

2 = The Board structure meets bylaws and state statute.

1 = The Board did not meet requirements for the entire fiscal year.

0 = The Board's structure does not meet bylaws and/or state statute.

Governance Standard 2: The Board of Directors has the necessary knowledge to carry out the responsibilities contained in Minn Stat § 124E.07, Subd. 6. (Duties), including knowledge in finance/budget, policy/legal, personnel/employment, and education. Data Source: Development/Training Plan (template provided by VOA-MN) including summary of a needs assessment and a calendar of planned board training to meet those needs submitted to VOA-MN by January 5. Scale:

2 = The Board has a plan with evidence of training consistent with the plan to ensure members have the necessary knowledge in the areas of finance/budget, policy/legal, personnel/employment, and education.

1 = The board has a plan but is unable to provide evidence of completion of board member training to ensure members have the necessary knowledge in the areas of finance/budget, policy/legal, personnel/employment, and education.

0 = The Board does not implement a plan to ensure Board members have the necessary knowledge.

Governance Standard 3: The board adheres to an orientation process for bringing on new members. Data Source: The school submits a completed Board Roster Table twice a year that includes information confirming that new board members received orientation. The first is submitted by January 15. The second is sent at the end of the fiscal year by June 30. Scale:

2 = The Board adheres to a thorough process for the orientation of new board members.

1 = The Board has a process for the orientation of new board members, but it is not consistently followed.

0 = The Board does not have a membership orientation process for new board members.

Governance Standard 4: The Board of Directors complies with initial and ongoing training requirements set forth in Minn. Stat 124E.07, Subd 7 (Training): governance, financial, and employment policies and practices. Data Source: The school submits a completed Board Roster Table twice a year that includes information confirming that provides evidence of board training. The first is submitted by January 15. The second is sent at the end of the fiscal year by June 30. Scale:

2 = All Board members comply with Minnesota law regarding board training requirements.

1 = One Board member did not fully comply with Minnesota law regarding board training requirements and was removed.

0 = More than one Board member did not fully comply with Minnesota law regarding board training requirements.

Governance Standard 5: The Board of Directors completes a self-evaluation each year. Data Source: The results of the board's formal self-evaluation are submitted to VOA-MN by June 30. Scale:

2 = The Board completes a formal self-evaluation each year.

1 = The Board completes informal self-evaluations during one or more board meeting(s).

0 = The board did not complete a self-evaluation.

Governance Standard 6: The Board of Directors will comply with MN Open Meeting Law, Chapter 13D, and maintains a quorum for all board meetings. Data Source: The results of the board's formal self-evaluation are submitted to VOA-MN by June 30. Scale:

2 = The Board has no infractions of MN Open Meeting Law.

1 = The Board has 1 infraction of MN Open Meeting Law.

0 = The Board has 2 or more infractions of MN Open Meeting Law.

Governance Standard 7: The board regularly reviews, updates, and approves its bylaws. The bylaws are consistent with state law. Data Source: School Website, Board Minutes, Bylaws, Interview. Scale:

2 = Bylaws are consistent with state law and the board reviews them regularly.

1 = Bylaws are consistent with state statute but have not been reviewed regularly.

0 = Bylaws are inconsistent with state statute.

Governance Standard 8: The Board of Directors adheres to board member election requirements set forth by state statute\*. Data Source: Board Minutes, Bylaws, Board Policies, Interview. Scale:

2 = All requirements were met.

1 = NA

0 = Election requirements were not met.

Governance Standard 9: The Board conducts an annual evaluation (including all aspects of the position description) of the performance of the school leader through a defined annual evaluation process. Data Source: Board Minutes, Evaluation Documentation. Scale:

2 = The Board completed a formal evaluation of the school leader including all aspects of the job description.

1 = The Board completed an evaluation of the school leader but not on all aspects of the job description.

0 = The Board did not complete an annual evaluation of the school leader.

Governance Standard 10: The Board has a board-approved professional development plan for the school director (if applicable as required by Minn. Stat. 124E.12, Subd. 2\*). Data Source: School Annual Report. Scale:  
2 = A professional development plan for the non-licensed individual(s) was documented in the School's Annual Report or the School's Director holds an administrative license.  
1 = NA  
0 = A professional development plans for the non-licensed individual(s) was not documented in the School's Annual Report.

Governance Standard 11: The Board of Directors monitors the organization's adherence to school board policies. Data Source: Board Meeting Minutes, Interview. Scale:  
2 = Meeting minutes include three or more examples of the Board monitoring the organization's adherence to school board policies.  
1 = Meeting minutes includes one or two examples of the Board monitoring the organization's adherence to school board policies.  
0 = Meeting minutes include no evidence of the Board monitoring the organization's adherence to school board policies.

Governance Standard 12: The Board of Directors provides ongoing oversight of school academic performance. Data Source: Board Meeting Minutes. Scale:  
2 = Meeting minutes include evidence of regular oversight of school academic performance.  
1 = At least half of the Board meeting minutes include evidence of oversight of school academic performance.  
0 = Less than half of the Board meeting minutes or less include evidence of oversight of school academic performance.

Governance Standard 13: The school maintains a high level of parent, teacher and student satisfaction rates based on school conducted surveys and student/faculty retention rates. Data Source: school Annual Report, board minutes, school data, interviews with school leadership. Scale:  
2 = All of the following criteria are met: high levels of satisfaction of parent satisfaction is based on survey results of over 80%; high levels of student satisfaction based on achieving over 80% retention rates; and high levels of teacher satisfaction based on achieving over 80% staff retention rates.  
1 = Two of three criteria are met: high levels of satisfaction of parent satisfaction is based on survey results of over 80%; high levels of student satisfaction based on achieving over 80% retention rates; and high levels of teacher satisfaction based on achieving over 80% staff retention rates.  
0 = Less than two of three criteria are met: high levels of satisfaction of parent satisfaction is based on survey results of over 80%; high levels of student satisfaction based on achieving over 80% retention rates; and high levels of teacher satisfaction based on achieving over 80% staff retention rates.

Governance Standard 14: Board documents are distributed to all board members and VOA-MN at least 3 days prior to a board meeting. Data Source: VOA-MN Authorizing Program Submission Tracking Sheet. Scale:  
2 = Board documents were distributed to all Board members and VOA-MN at least 3 days prior to each board meeting.  
1 = Board documents were not distributed to all Board members and VOA-MN one or two times.  
0 = Board documents were not distributed to all Board and VOA-MN members three or more times.

Governance Standard 15: The Board of Directors maintains a Board Documents Binder which includes meeting minutes, bylaws and articles of incorporation and financial statements; and statutory requirements for posting board related information on the school's website\*. Data Source: School Website and Interview. Scale:  
2 = A complete Board Documents Binder is kept includes meeting minutes, bylaws and articles of incorporation and financial statements; and the school's website includes the statutory requirements for posting board-related information.  
1 = Complete information is available both in a binder and on the school's website; but there are 1-2 incidents of minutes not being posted after board approval.  
0 = Information is incomplete in the binder or on the school's website.

Governance Standard 16: The board has a policy review calendar and reviews and updates its policies as needed or required by state law. Data Source: Board Minutes, Policy Review Calendar, Interview. Scale:

2 = The Board has a thorough policy review calendar/plan and review policies as a regular component of regular board meetings.

1 = The Board has a policy review calendar/plan and reviews policies at half or fewer of the regular board meetings.

0 = The Board does not have a calendar/plan for policy review and/or reviews policies at half or fewer of the regular meetings.

- **SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS** - Effective day-to-day operations of a charter school support the Learning Program. A well-run school provides an environment in which staff and students can perform at the highest possible level and more effectively reach the school's goals. Management and operations of the school will be monitored and reported by the authorizer using the Formal Site Visit Rubric. The standards also serve as the criteria for contract renewal determinations. The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to reasonably amend these standards /expectations as needed (example: based on cell size being too small). One sample rating scale is imbedded below to provide the reader with context.

Authorizer standards / expectations for school management and operations include:

M/O Standard 1: Mission and vision are central to the school's identity and inform all decision-making processes. The school's learning program exemplifies the mission and vision of the school. Data Source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = Mission and vision are central to the school's identity and inform all decision-making processes. The school's learning program exemplifies the mission and vision of the school.

1 = Mission and vision are displayed in the facility, on website and in annual report, but evidence that they guide decision-making and programming are missing.

0 = Mission and vision are not used to guide school's decision-making.

M/O Standard 2: The school has a plan for Service Learning that connects classroom learning with real life lessons that come through service. Data source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar, document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school has a plan for Service Learning that connects classroom learning with real life lessons that come through service.

1 = The school has a service-learning plan, but without evidence of a connection between the plan and service activities.

0 = The school does not have a plan for service learning. School does not engage in service.

M/O Standard 3: The school maintains a safe and healthy environment per state and federal guides and board policy. (e.g., facility /ADA, building inspections, student medical / health matters, school drills). Data Source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar, document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school can provide evidence that it complies with health and safety requirements for public schools.

1 = The school is making progress approaching standard.

0 = The school could not provide evidence of compliance with health and safety requirements for public schools.

M/O Standard 4 - The School complies with state and federal laws pertaining to data collection, storage, distribution, and privacy. (Minn. Stat. Chapter 13 and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and Contract Article 8). Data Source: Annual school site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school has required Data Practice policies with evidence that they are implemented in accordance with federal data practices law and the Minnesota Data Practices Act. There is evidence that board and faculty are trained in Data Practices. There were zero incidents of not following state and federal data practices policies and privacy laws.

1 = The school has required Data Practice policies with evidence that they are implemented in accordance with federal data practices law and the Minnesota Data Practices Act. There is evidence that board and faculty are trained in Data Practices. There was one incident of noncompliance with state and federal data practices policies and privacy laws.

0 = The school does not have one or more required Data Practice policies in place and/or there was insufficient evidence that board and faculty are trained in Data Practices. There has been two or more incidence of noncompliance with federal data practices law and the Minnesota Data Practices Act.

M/O Standard 5: Evidence suggests that the school engages parents and students in ways that build positive relationships and engages them as partners in their child's learning. Data Source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school provides ample evidence that the organization engages parents and students in ways that build positive relationships and engages them as partners in their child's learning.

1 = The school is making progress approaching standard.

0 = The school could not provide evidence that it has a plan or activities to engage parents and students in ways that build positive relationships and engages them as partners in their child's learning.

M/O Standard 6: Evidence suggests that the school-teachers are covering the scope and sequence of the state academic standards and engaging in data-driven decision-making. Data Source: annual school site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = Evidence suggests that the school has established a uniform system to ensure that the school-teachers are covering the scope and sequence of the state academic standards and monitoring student progress toward comprehension.

1 = The school leadership provided some examples of how he/she provides oversight that school-teachers are covering the scope and sequence of the state academic standards, but systemic plan for monitoring progress and data-driven decision-making was lacking.

0 = The school does not have a system established to ensure that school-teachers are covering the scope and sequence of the state academic standards &/or does not engage in data-driven decision-making.

M/O Standard 7: The school employs highly qualified, appropriately licensed teachers. Data Source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school provides evidence of exemplary hiring processes that ensure teachers are properly credentialed. There have been no license infractions over the contract term.

1 = The school has had two or fewer teacher license infractions and they were swiftly resolved. Evidence suggests that the school has systems to recruit quality licensed teachers.

0 = The school has had multiple license infractions over the contract term.

M/O Standard 8 (former academic standard 4): The school has adopted a formal teacher evaluation process and adheres to the requirements set forth in Minnesota Statute § 122A.40. Data/Source: The teacher evaluation plan submitted to VOA-MN by September 1 and interviews. Scale:

2 = Meets all criteria and is adhered to.

1 = Meets some of the criteria, but no evidence that process is followed.

0 = School has not adopted a teacher evaluation process.

M/O Standard 9: Criminal background checks are conducted on all persons per the board policy and Minn. Stat. 123B.03, Subd.1. Data Source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school provided evidence that it adheres to statute and policy pertaining to conducting criminal background checks on employees and school volunteers.

1 = NA

0 = The school could not provide evidence that it adheres to statute and policy pertaining to conducting criminal background checks on employees and school volunteers.

M/O Standard 10: The school meets / maintains its enrollment goals. Data Source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school could provide evidence that it is meeting its annual student enrollment goals.

1 = NA

0 = The school is not meeting its student enrollment goals.

M/O Standard 11: The school institutes a fair and open student admission process that complies with Minnesota law. Data Source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school provides evidence of adherence with state laws and guidelines pertaining to student admission.

1 = The school provides evidence of adherence with state laws and guidelines pertaining to student admission with 1-2 findings.

0 = The school could not provide evidence of adherence with state laws and guidelines pertaining to student admission.

M/O Standard 12: The school's employment process complies with state and federal law. Data Source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school provides evidence that its employment process complies with state and federal law.

1 = The school is making progress meeting standard.

0 = The school could not provide evidence that its employment process complies with state and federal law.

M/O Standard 13: The school has defined job descriptions and defined evaluation process for all personnel. Data Source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school could provide evidence of job descriptions for all employee positions and aligned to an evaluation process.

1 = The school could provide evidence of job descriptions for most employee positions but did not have a defined evaluation process.

0 = The school could not provide evidence of job descriptions for all employee positions and aligned to an evaluation process.

M/O Standard 14: The school complies with IDEA, special education laws and school's TSES plan, including "Child Find." Applicable training is provided to faculty annually. Data Source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership, MDE communications. Scale:

2 = The school could provide evidence of compliance with IDEA, special education laws and school's TSES plan, including "Child Find."

1 = The school could provide evidence of compliance with IDEA, special education laws and school's TSES plan, including "Child Find." However, the school has been the subject of MDE complaint investigation with findings.

0 = The school could not provide evidence of compliance with IDEA, special education laws and school's TSES plan, including "Child Find."

M/O Standard 15: The school is not subject to special education investigations by MDE and is not in Corrective Action. Data Source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership, MDE communications. Scale:

2 = The school is not subject to special education investigations by MDE and is not in corrective action or is adhering to their plan to resolve concerns.

1 = The school has been the subject of MDE investigations with findings. Progress has been observed to resolve findings.

0 = The school has been the subject of MDE investigations with findings. Findings have not been resolved.

M/O Standard 16: The school is compliant with laws pertaining to special education directors and Advisor Council (SEAC). Data Source: annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school leadership. Scale:

2 = The school could provide evidence that it is compliant with laws pertaining to special education directors and Advisor Council (SEAC).

1 = The school contracts with a special education director but could not provide evidence that it has a SEAC that meets at least annually.

0 = The school could not provide evidence that it is compliant with laws pertaining to special education directors and Advisor Council (SEAC).

M/O Standard 17 - The charter school disseminates information about the school's offerings and enrollment procedures in accordance with Minn. Stat. 124E.17. The school documents its dissemination activities in the school's annual report and in their VOA-MN compliance binder. Data Source: Annual site visits, annual submission calendar document review, discussions with school faculty.

2 = The school could provide evidence of compliance with laws and documentation regarding dissemination of information

1 = The school could partially provide evidence of compliance with laws and documentation regarding dissemination of information.

0 = The school could not provide evidence of compliance with laws and documentation regarding dissemination of information.

**Legal and Contractual Compliance** - Charter schools are required to follow many state and federal laws pertaining to all public schools and are expected to uphold all provisions of the charter school contract. VOA-MN expects compliance with legal and contractual obligations. Each VOA-MN authorized charter school shall maintain a Compliance Binder on site that includes VOA-MN defined evidence of compliance with state and federal statutes organized in the manner prescribed by VOA-MN. Additionally, VOA-MN authorized charter schools shall submit information to the authorizer in accordance with the VOA-MN prescribed Annual Submission Calendar. Management and operations of the school will be monitored by the authorizer and reported in the Formal Site Visit Report and additionally as needed. *This section is not scored individually. The compliance binder and submission calendar are systems for ongoing monitoring of school performance and compliance and compliance requirements are imbedded in previous sections.*

## **ONGOING AUTHORIZER SCHOOL MONITORING**

### **SITE VISITS**

One of the most important ways VOA-MN gathers information about the schools it authorizes is through on-site visits. Site visits allow the authorizer to observe the school and engage in discussions with school management. VOA-MN conducts two different types of site visits: Formal and Informal.

- **Formal Site Visit-** Formal Site Visits are typically conducted once per year by a member of the VOA-MN Authorizing Program Leadership Team who interviews key stakeholders and conducts observations. Written feedback is provided to the Board of Directors and school leadership guided by the Site Visit Rubric. VOA-MN staff will provide formal written feedback summarizing observations. The feedback will identify areas of strength and areas that require improvement. If a more serious issue arises from a site visit, VOA-MN may implement an intervention based upon the “Range of Interventions” table.
- **Informal Site Visit-** VOA-MN may conduct informal site visits at any time to fulfill its duties as an authorizer. Reasons for informal site visits may include: investigation of a complaint, determination of readiness to open, follow up on implementation of improvement plans, or documentation of best practices. These visits are typically less formal and may be without notice.

### **BOARD MEETINGS**

Another important component of VOA-MN authorizer oversight is board meeting observations conducted at least twice per year and more often for schools within their first two years after initial charter approval. Authorizer VOA-MN uses the Board Meeting Observation Rubric and provides timely feedback to the school boards. VOA-MN also closely monitors the monthly board meeting minutes and financials of each authorized school and provides feedback to the school as needed.

### **SCHOOL PUBLISHED ANNUAL REPORTS**

The Charter School Law (Minn. Stat. 124E.16) includes requirements for a charter school annual report. Additionally, VOA-MN requires that annual reports include specific elements defined by VOA-MN annually. VOA-MN required elements include how the school is performing based on the three essential questions: Is the student learning program a success? Does the school exhibit strong financial health? Is the organization effective and well-run? The final draft be board approved and posted to the school’s official website. The VOA-MN Annual Report criteria may contain the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report.

### **AUTHORIZER PUBLISHED SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORTS**

In addition to the Formal Site Visit Report that each school is provided, VOA-MN will also annually publish three VOA-MN Charter School Network Reports: Academic Performance, Board Governance, and Financial Management. Each school also receives a VOA-MN Annual School Scorecards that measures the extent to which the school is meeting VOA-MN performance standards and “on-track” for renewal. The cumulative purpose of these reports is to assess the ongoing performance of VOA-MN authorized schools regarding academic success, financial sustainability, and organizational

effectiveness. The combination of school performance based on the three VOA-MN Annual School Performance Reports / Scorecards, annual Formal Site Visit Reports, informal site visit observations, authorizer observations of board meetings, and ongoing monitoring of school reporting and compliance provides an accountable oversight mechanism for the authorizer, schools, and other organizations. This collective body of evidence will also form the basis for contract renewal decisions.

**ANNUAL VOA-MN SUBMISSION CALENDAR**

The authorizer will publish an “Annual Submission Calendar” no later than July 1<sup>st</sup> annually. The Annual Submission Calendar is a document that contains deadlines for various submissions required by the state and/or authorizer VOA-MN and serves as a primary source for evidence of school compliance with statute and VOA-MN standards. The authorizer monitors school compliance with submission calendar deadlines.



**Addendum BII**

<b>RANGE OF POSSIBLE INTERVENTIONS</b>		
<p>If VOA-MN has a concern about the School, or if the School fails to make adequate progress towards achieving authorizer contractual standards/expectations for school performance, or to comply with Applicable Law, or other requirements of this contract, VOA-MN shall determine the appropriate intervention. The interventions below need not be implemented sequentially, and VOA-MN will implement these as it sees fit and at its sole discretion.</p>		
<b>Status</b>	<b>Triggered By</b>	<b>May Result In</b>
<p><b>INTERVENTION LEVEL ONE</b></p> <p><b>Notice of Concern</b></p>	<p>Signs of weak performance identified through routine monitoring; through implementation, compliance, or performance reviews; or by other means.</p> <p>Lack of progress towards meeting contractual performance standards / expectations.</p> <p>Failure to submit required documents on a timely basis.</p> <p>Failure to comply with applicable law or the conditions of the charter contract.</p> <p>Signs of poor financial health or management.</p>	<p>Letter from the Authorizer to the charter school’s Board of Directors detailing areas of concern.</p> <p>Authorizer recommendation that the school board institute an oversight plan for performance improvement in the areas where standards were not met.</p>
<p><b>INTERVENTION LEVEL TWO</b></p> <p><b>Notice of Deficiency</b></p>	<p>Signs of further weakening performance identified through routine monitoring; through implementation, compliance, or performance reviews; or by other means.</p> <p>Failure to meet multiple contractual performance standards/expectations; or repeated failure to meet a single performance standard/expectation.</p> <p>Significant failure to comply with applicable law or the conditions of the charter contract.</p> <p>Continued evidence of poor financial health or management.</p>	<p>Letter from Authorizer to charter school Board of Directors detailing areas of deficiency and action required to address the deficiency.</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p>Authorizer may require charter school Board of Directors to approve a remediation plan containing specific improvement objectives, technical assistance requirements, and schedule for remedial actions to be approved by the Authorizer.</p>
<p><b>INTERVENTION LEVEL THREE</b></p> <p><b>Probationary Status</b></p>	<p>Continued failure to meet contractual performance standards/expectations or failure to meet objectives of a remediation plan.</p> <p>Continued failure to comply with the applicable law or the conditions of the charter contract.</p> <p>Severe concerns regarding the school’s financial viability.</p>	<p>Letter from the Authorizer to charter school Board of Directors detailing reasons for probationary status and action required to address concerns.</p> <p>Remediation plan imposed by the Authorizer.</p> <p><i>and/or</i></p> <p>Authorizer may appoint staff or a consultant to specifically monitor implementation of the remediation plan</p>
<p><b>INTERVENTION LEVEL FOUR</b></p> <p><b>Charter Review</b></p>	<p>Failure to address the terms of Probationary Status.</p> <p>Extended pattern of failure to meet contractual performance standards/ expectations and/or to comply with applicable law or the conditions of the charter contract.</p> <p>Severe and persistent concerns regarding the school’s financial viability.</p>	<p>Recommendation to revoke, not to revoke, or to impose lesser sanctions.</p> <p><i>and/or</i></p> <p>Decision to commence or not to commence revocation proceedings made by VOA-MN.</p>
<p><b>INTEVENTION LEVEL FIVE</b></p> <p><b>Charter Revocation</b></p>	<p>Charter Review results in recommendation to revoke.</p>	<p>Commencement of charter revocation proceedings consistent with Minnesota Stat. 124E and the terms of the charter contract.</p>





## **Charter School Contract Renewal and Revocation Process**

### **Renewal Process**

Volunteers of America-Minnesota (VOA-MN) views contract renewal as an on-going process that is engaged in by the Board of Directors, school leadership, and the authorizer throughout the entire life of the school's contract with its authorizer. This process culminates in the authorizer publishing an end of contract evaluation report.

### **End-of-Term Evaluation**

VOA-MN publishes an end-of-contract evaluation report based on information, observations and documentation accumulated throughout the length of the contract. The evaluation is an opportunity to determine the extent to which the school is meeting VOA-MN's expectations of a high-quality charter school. More specifically, we assess the school based on the following three central questions:

- 1) Is the student learning program a success? (Academic Performance)
- 2) Does the school exhibit strong financial health? (Financial Management)
- 3) Is the organization effective and well-run? (Board Governance, Management and Operations, Compliance)

We quantify the school's progress in each area (academic performance, governance, financial management / health, and management/operations) using the system described in B.I. (Rating Scale and Weighting of Performance Measures).

VOA-MN will complete a draft of its end-of-term evaluation of the school and submit the draft for review and comment by school leadership and the board. VOA-MN will then make changes, if necessary, and resubmit a final evaluation and decision of renewal to the school's board. Through ongoing monitoring and the renewal evaluation process, VOA-MN determines whether to renew its contract with the charter school and if so, for what length of time. Contracts can be renewed for up to five years.

### **Termination or Nonrenewal of a Contract**

Consistent with Minn. Stat. 124E.10, Subd.4(b), VOA-MN may act to terminate or not renew a charter under the following grounds:

- (1) failure to meet the requirements for pupil performance contained in the contract;*
- (2) failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management;*
- (3) violations of law; or*
- (4) other good cause shown.*

At least 60 days before not renewing or terminating a contract, the authorizer shall notify the board of directors of the charter school of the proposed action in writing. The notice shall state the grounds for the proposed action in reasonable detail and that the charter school's board of directors may request in writing an informal hearing before the authorizer within 15 business days of receiving notice of nonrenewal or termination of the contract. Failure by the board of directors to make a written request for a hearing within the 15-business-day period shall be treated as acquiescence to the proposed action. Upon receiving a timely written request for a hearing, the authorizer shall give ten business days' notice to the charter school's board of directors of the hearing date. The authorizer shall conduct an informal hearing before taking final action. The authorizer shall take final action to renew or not renew a contract no later than 20 business days before the proposed date for terminating the contract or the end date of the contract.

**Example VOA-MN Timeline for Contract Renewal Process**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
School Program Description Completed by Charter School	Renewing School	February-March
<p>The School will complete and submit their proposed Program Description (contract Addendum A) for review by VOA-MN. Once the content of the document is agreed upon - including curriculum, interim assessments, and future plans, it will be incorporated into the renewal contract.</p>		
Authorizer formal end-of-term evaluation draft completed and submitted to renewal school for review	Authorizer	April
End-of-term evaluation comments completed	Renewing School/Bd	April-May
Draft contract submitted to renewing school for comment	VOA-MN	April –May
Contract approved and signed	VOA-MN	May-June
Contract approved and signed	Renewing Board	May-June

**If Terminating/Not Renewing**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Request a public hearing	Board	Within 15 business days of termination or nonrenewal notice
Final contract termination/renewal decision	VOA-MN	Within 20 business days of the contract end date if not renewing or terminating



## BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL Special Education Services

Birch Grove Community School will comply with Minnesota Statutes Chapters 125A and 124E, all applicable rules implemented pursuant to these chapters, and all Federal and State law relating to the education of students with disabilities. Consistent with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 124E.21, the financial parameters within which the School will operate to provide special education instruction and related services to students with disabilities will be based on the individual needs of the student, as defined by the student's evaluation and by the instruction and related services specified in the student's Individual Education Plan ("IEP"). The School will deliver services in accordance with IDEA, board policies, and best practices.

The School will provide special education services in compliance with all state and federal guidelines. The teaching staff will provide strategies and instructional techniques that support the learning needs of each learner. The School will continue to contract with a Special Education Director for oversight and assistance maintaining a compliant system that meets the needs of the student population.

The School will plan for child-find activities, initial assessments, reassessments, IEP planning and service delivery as dictated by special education laws. The School will use a combination of employment and contracted services to meet the needs of identified special education students.

### **Responsibilities of the Board:**

- Approve and monitor school budget revenues and expenditures related to special education. Require regular updates by school management regarding state special education reporting and financial reimbursements. Review and approve special education program expenditures.
- Approve the hiring of necessary and essential special education staff and contracted services.
- Monitor school management's oversight of special education faculty and contractors.
- Monitor school management's oversight of required special education program and financial reporting to the state.
- Collaboratively with school management, ensure that the school facility is ADA compliant and supports the continuum of special education services for students with disabilities. A charter school may not deny persons with disabilities, including parents and students, the benefits of programs and activities offered at its school because of inaccessible facilities.

### **Responsibilities of the School Management:**

- Monitor school compliance with the board-approved Total Special Education Services Plan (TSES). Every Minnesota school district, including charter schools that are districts, is required to have a Total Special Education System (TSES).
- Monitor and supervise special education faculty and contractors.

- Maintain and report financial data related to special education programs as required by Minnesota Statute § 125B.07, Subd.6 “Data Acquisition Calendar.”
- Provide oversight of the school budget related to special education revenue and expenditures.
- Supervise special education faculty to ensure that each student with an IEP is receiving all special education supports identified in the student's IEP.
- Arrange appropriate and ongoing staff development regarding the delivery of special education and related services.

**As a result of this expectation, the Authorizer will:**

- Annually review student school application forms, policies and procedures for compliance with the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Regularly monitor school compliance with the board-approved Total Special Education Services Plan (TSES). Every Minnesota school district, including charter schools that are districts, are required to have a Total Special Education System (TSES).
- Regularly monitor compliance with state reporting requirements as required by Minnesota Statute § 125B.07, Subd.6 “Data Acquisition Calendar.”
- At least annually interview the school Special Education Director and staff to monitor program accountability and compliance.
- During site visits, monitor ADA compliance and whether or not facilities support the continuum of special education services for students with disabilities. A charter school may not deny persons with disabilities, including parents and students, the benefits of programs and activities offered at its school because of inaccessible facilities.
- Monitor school compliance with state and federal special education educator licensing requirements and reporting.



COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT

The undersigned members of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS of BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL agree to comply with all federal and state laws governing organizational, programmatic and financial requirement applicable to charter schools.

1. Judith Motschenbacher  
Board Member Signature

Judith Motschenbacher  
Printed Name

2. H.G. Lamb  
Board Member Signature

Horace A Lamb  
Printed Name

3. Mary C. VanDoren  
Board Member Signature

Mary C. VanDoren  
Printed Name

4. Sara Knottski  
Board Member Signature

Sara Knottski  
Printed Name

5. Savera Crowley  
Board Member Signature

Savera Crowley  
Printed Name

## Charter School Closure Plan

Item	Description of Required Actions	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Status
<b>Immediate Board Actions</b>				
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Establish <i>ad hoc</i> School Board Committee for wind-up / restructuring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Designate School contact person(s) to send and receive communications from the VOA-MN;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Designate employees or School Board members who will handle various aspects of winding up of School operations;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide contact information, and list of employees / School Board members and correspondent responsibilities to the VOA-MN.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Instruct contact persons to heed notification requirements for time sensitive notifications, if any.</li> </ul>	Board		
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Reserve Funds</b></p> <p>Segregate by Board resolution in a separate checking account up to \$45,000 in funds to be used for legal, accounting and other expenses to execute this Closure Plan and to dissolve the School Corporation.</p>	Board		
<b>Notifications and Further Actions</b>				
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Notification of Parents / Guardians</b></p> <p>Within 10 days after charter revocation, notify parents / guardians and employees of school regarding the closure of the School, if such notification has not been made. Such notification shall include, but not be limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> * date of the last day of regular instruction;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> * cancellation of any planned summer school;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> * notice to parents that enrollment of children in their district of residence or other school is mandatory under state law for children that are six years of age or older;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> * a listing of the names of charter, parochial, public and private schools in the area.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> * offer of copies of student records before the CHARTER REVOCATION.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide the VOA-MN with a copy of the notice.</li> </ul>	Board Chair or School Director		
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Final Report Cards and Student Records Notice</b></p>	School Director		

	<p>Within 10 business days after CHARTER REVOCATION, provide parents / guardians with copies of final report cards and notice that records, which include information about any formal suspension, expulsion, and exclusion disciplinary action under sections 121A.40 to 121A.56, will be transferred to the student’s school district of residence. Notice shall include specific contact information for the resident school district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The notice must advise the parent/guardian to contact the school where the student intends to enroll and have the new school request a transfer of records from the school being closed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide the VOA-MN with a copy of the notice.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Transfer of Student Records and Testing Material</b></p> <p>No later than 10 business days after Authorizer Notice of CHARTER REVOCATION / CLOSURE, the school must provide parents of enrolled students information and assistance to enable the student to re-enroll in another school.</p> <p>Within ten business days of closing the charter school, the closed school must transfer each student’s educational records to the student’s school district of residence, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and all records regarding special education and supplemental services;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> student health / immunization records;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> attendance records; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> all other student records.</li> </ul> <p>Student transmitted records information must include any formal suspension, expulsion, and exclusion disciplinary action under sections 121A.40 to 121A.56. The school must provide notice to a student and the student's parent or guardian that formal disciplinary records will be transferred as part of the student's educational record, in accordance with data practices under chapter 13 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, United States Code, title 20, section 1232(g).</p> <p>All end of school year grades and evaluations must be completed and made part of the student records, including any IEP / Committee on Special Education meetings / progress reports.</p> <p>As noted above, parents / guardians should be offered copies of students’ records before CHARTER REVOCATION / CLOSURE.</p> <p>Testing material, including scores, test booklets, and annual data files etc. required to be maintained by the School by the State Education Department must also be forwarded to each pupil’s resident school district.</p>	<p>School Director</p>		

<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Notification of the Commissioner, School District, and Parents / Guardians of Enrolled Students</b></p> <p>Within 7 business days after the charter revocation, the School must notify school district(s) of students' residence regarding the termination of the education program and lack of future enrollment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, notification regarding cessation of food and transportation services should be provided.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide notice to the districts that arrangements should be made to pick up any district property; e.g., borrowed books, nursing equipment.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide VOA-MN with a copy of the notice.</li> </ul>	<p>Board Chair or Secretary</p> <p>Authorizer will notify Commissioner</p>		
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Notification of Funding Sources / Charitable Partners</b></p> <p>Within 7 days after CHARTER REVOCATION, all other sources of the School's operational funding must be notified in writing of the closure of the School as well as charitable partners of the School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The School should not accept further loans from management companies, etc. nor otherwise incur additional liability. However, it may continue to accept gifts from charitable partners as long as the charity is aware of the School's closure / restructuring status.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Charities with property on the premises of the School should be notified to remove same as soon as possible or after CHARTER REVOCATION, whichever is appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>Board Chair or Treasurer</p>		
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Notification of Contractors and Termination of Contracts</b></p> <p>Within 20 days after charter revocation, formulate a list of all contractors with contracts in effect, and notify them regarding cessation of current school operations at CHARTER REVOCATION.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, instruct contractors to make arrangements to remove any contractor property from the School facility by a date certain, e.g., copying machines, water coolers, other rented property.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide the VOA-MN with a copy of such notice.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Retain records of past contracts with proof that they were fully paid (<i>see</i> Records Retention, below) to prevent spurious claims.</li> </ul> <p>As appropriate, and to the extent possible, terminate contracts for goods and services as of the last date such goods or services will be needed to the extent not necessary for the educational program or wind-up of the School.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Telephone, gas, electric, water, insurance (premises and D&amp;O insurance, <i>see</i> below)</li> </ul>	<p>Board Chair or Treasurer</p>		

	<p>should remain operative through the CHARTER REVOCATION and to the extent necessary to wind up the School’s affairs beyond that time.</p>			
9	<p><b>Notification of Employees and Benefit Providers</b></p> <p>After an employee termination date is established, but in no event later than 60 days before CHARTER REVOCATION, notify all employees of termination of employment and/or contracts, and notify benefit providers of pending termination of all employees. Further notify employees and providers of termination of all benefit programs, and, if allowable, terminate all programs as of the last date of service in accordance with applicable law and regulations (i.e. COBRA), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> health care / health insurance;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> life insurance;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> dental plans;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> eyeglass plans;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> cafeteria plans;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 401(k), retirement plans; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> pension plans.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> TRA</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> PERA</li> </ul> <p>Specific rules and regulations may apply to such programs especially teacher’s retirement plans so legal counsel should be consulted.</p> <p>Employees should be notified of eligibility for unemployment compensation. (In the event the School has not paid into the unemployment program on an ongoing basis, the School may have significant financial liability on an ongoing basis after the CHARTER REVOCATION, and reserve funds should be set aside for this purpose.) <i>See</i> School Wind-Up Plan and Action regarding payment of taxes, below.</p>	Board Chair or designee		
10	<p><b>Notification of Food and Transportation Services and Cancellation of Contracts</b></p> <p>Within 20 days after the charter revocation, or earlier if required by the contractual notice requirements, cancel school district or private food and/or transportation services for summer school and next school year.</p>	Board Chair or Secretary		
11	<p><b>Notification of VOA of MN Regarding Lawsuits</b></p> <p>As soon as possible after receiving notice and/or service of process regarding litigation against, or initiated by, the School, School Board or School employees, notify the VOA of MN and provide copies of legal papers received.</p> <p>The School has an ongoing obligation to keep the VOA-MN informed regarding such litigation,</p>	Board Chair or Secretary		

	including bankruptcy, whether voluntary or involuntary, and to provide copies of all filings.			
<b>Assets, Creditors and Debtors</b>				
<b>12</b>	<p><b>List of Creditors and Debtors; UCC Search</b></p> <p>Within twenty (20) days after the charter revocation, formulate list of creditors and debtors and any amounts accrued and unpaid with respect to such creditor or debtor.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> This list is not the same as the contractor list, above, but may include contractors, which should be listed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Creditors include lenders, mortgage holders, bond holders, equipment suppliers, service providers and secured and unsecured creditors. Security interests may be recorded and filed pursuant to the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) with the county and State of Minnesota, and may include all of the assets of the School Corporation or specific assets in which a creditor has an interest as long as such debt remains outstanding.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A UCC search should be performed by the School to determine if there are any secured creditors and to what assets security interests are attached.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Debtors include persons who owe the school fees or credits, lessees or sub-lessees of the School, and any person holding property of the School.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide a copy of the list of creditors to the VOA-MN with the amount owed to each creditor thereon and the amount owed by each debtor.</li> </ul>	Board Chair or Treasurer		
<b>13</b>	<p><b>Notification to Creditors</b></p> <p>Within thirty (30) days after the charter revocation, the School must notify all creditors of its closure.</p> <p>The School should solicit from each creditor a final accounting of the School’s accrued and unpaid debt owed to such creditor. This figure should be compared to the School’s calculation of the debt and be reconciled between the parties.</p> <p>To the extent possible, the School negotiates a settlement of debts, which is ultimately consummated by a settlement agreement reflecting satisfaction and release of the existing obligations, if possible.</p>	Board Chair or Treasurer		
<b>14</b>	<p><b>Notification to Debtors</b></p> <p>Within thirty (30) days after the charter revocation, the School must contact all debtors and demand payment. To the extent collection efforts are unsuccessful, the School may turn the debt over to commercial debt collection agencies. All records regarding such collection or disputes by debtors regarding amounts owed must be retained.</p>	Board Chair or Treasurer		

<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>School Wind-Up Plan and Action</b></p> <p>The School Corporation shall collect debts, dispose of assets and negotiate with and pay creditors in an orderly fashion in accordance with a timetable and plan adopted by the School’s board of directors. Priority should be given to continuing the School’s educational program through the end of the school year and retaining funds to complete the wind-up process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The initial plan should be adopted within 20 days of charter revocation, and be updated at least bi-weekly with copies to the VOA-MN. The plan should include, but not be limited to, the following.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Termination of non-essential personnel and cancellation of non-essential services prior to CHARTER REVOCATION.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make final federal, state and local tax payments (every employer, including the School, which pays wages to employees is responsible for withholding, depositing, paying, and reporting federal, state and local income tax, social security taxes, and federal unemployment tax for such wage payments).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Auction / sale of assets in a manner that avoids conflicts of interest, and maximizes net revenue to the extent permitted by ongoing agreements with existing creditors. (<i>See Liquidation of Assets, below.</i>)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Liquidation or closing of bank accounts according to a schedule that minimizes fees but leaves the School enough flexibility to pay creditors, attorneys, accountants, etc. during the course of the wind-up, including funds for a final audit, and (if the School Corporation does not submit or the board of directors do not approve a renewal application), for dissolution.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cancellation of corporate credit cards and lines of credit.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Change authorized signatures on accounts as needed to reflect changes in persons authorized to implement the winding down operations of the School Corporation, and employment, contract and School Board status of those authorized to sign for the School.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Status reports on the implementation of the School Wind-Up Plan to be submitted to the VOA-MN through Interim Statements and a Final Statement (below).</li> </ul>	<p>School Board and School Director</p>		
<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>Protection of Assets; Insurance</b></p> <p>The School’s assets and any assets in the School that belong to others must be protected against theft, misappropriation and deterioration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Existing insurance coverage should be maintained on the assets until the disposal of such assets. In accordance with the Wind-Up Plan.</li> </ul>	<p>Board Chair or Designee</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue existing insurance for School Facility, vehicles and other assets until 1) disposal or transfer of real estate or termination of lease, and 2) disposal, transfer or sale of vehicles and other assets are sold, respectively.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Negotiate School Facility insurance with entities that may take possession of School Facility – lenders, mortgagors; bond holders, etc., if possible.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate security services should be obtained or maintained.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Action may include moving assets to secure storage after closure or loss of the School Facility.</li> </ul>			
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>17</b></p>	<p><b>Inventory</b></p> <p>No later than 30 days prior to CHARTER REVOCATION, <u>all</u> of the School’s assets must be inventoried with item #'s and quantities and/or its inventory updated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All assets of the School, not just ones over a certain dollar value must be inventoried.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide VOA OF MN with a copy of the inventory.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify assets belonging to other entities (school district, county, municipality, health department, Authorizing foundation, vendors, PTA, etc.), including those borrowed or loaned.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify assets encumbered by the terms of a contingent gift, grant or donation, or a security interest.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Return assets not belonging to School and document same.</li> </ul>	<p>Board Chair &amp; School Director</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>Liquidation of Assets</b></p> <p>Assets must be liquidated in a commercially reasonable manner including, but not limited to, sale by way of auction, sealed bidding or other commercially reasonable sales methods to the extent permitted under agreements with existing creditors and to the extent such assets are free and clear of any liens or encumbrances. If an asset is subject to a lien, encumbrance or security interest (above), the secured party should be contacted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pursuant to MN Statute 317A.735, no asset may be given away, except as authorized by law. In cases where the cost of disposing of an asset will exceed the cost to be received at sale or auction, it may be permissible to give away or discard such assets. However, this should be cleared from the largest or sole creditor(s) in advance.</li> </ul> <p>School Board members and their relatives as well as employees and students of the School should not purchase any asset unless the purchase is disclosed to the School Board and the disclosure is made a matter of record in the School Board’s minutes and approved by a majority of the non-interested members of the School Board.</p>	<p>School board chair and treasurer</p>		

<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>D&amp;O Insurance</b></p> <p>Maintain existing directors and officer’s liability (D&amp;O) insurance, if any, until final dissolution of the School Corporation. If no such D&amp;O insurance exists, disclose this fact to the board of directors.</p>	<p>School Board</p>		
<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>Interim Statements</b></p> <p>No later than 10 days after CHARTER REVOCATION, prepare, and submit to the VOA of MN, an interim statement in a form satisfactory to the VOA of MN, of the status of all contracts and other obligations of the School Corporation, and all funds, including principal and accrued interest, owed to, and by, the School Corporation, with supporting evidence showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> all creditors or former creditors, any amounts paid to creditors (or in-kind exchanges of assets), and any amounts of debt of the School or School Corporation outstanding, including principal and accrued interest, as of the date of the interim report; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> all amounts owed to the School Corporation by debtors, any amounts paid by debtors, and whether any debtors have paid in full, and any amounts outstanding; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> all income generated through sale or auction of assets and any other change in status of assets.</li> </ul> <p>The School will prepare and submit such statements to the VOA-MN at 30-day intervals until the final statement (below) is prepared and submitted.</p>	<p>School board chair or designee</p>		
<p><b>21</b></p>	<p><b>Final Statement</b></p> <p>At a date to be determined by the VOA-MN, anticipated to be no later than 90 days after CHARTER REVOCATION, no later than 10 days prior to the filing of a dissolution proceeding, the School shall prepare to the full satisfaction of the VOA of MN a final statement of the status of all contracts and other obligations of the School Corporation, and all funds owed to the School, audited (or confirmed) by an independent accountant, with supporting evidence showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> all assets and the value and location thereof, whether such asset has been distributed to creditors in satisfaction or payment of any existing debt obligation; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> each remaining creditor and any and all amounts owed to each creditor, including principal and accrued interest through the date of such statement; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> statement that (a) all debts have been collected, or (b) that good faith efforts have been made to collect same, and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> each remaining debtor of the School or School Corporation and the amounts owed by each debtor, including principal and accrued interest.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> This statement is submitted to the VOA-MN in the form in which it will be sworn and submitted</li> </ul>	<p>School board chair or designee</p>		

	<p>to the MN Attorney General and/or MN Secretary of State as part of any dissolution proceeding.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This statement is in addition to the final Financial Statement Audit (below).</p>			
<b>Corporate Records / Accounting</b>				
<b>22</b>	<p><b>Final Financial Statement Audit</b></p> <p>The School must have a financial statement audit performed in accordance with the Charter and the Act no later than November 1<sup>st</sup> of the calendar year in which the School ceases instruction.</p>	School Board		
<b>23</b>	<p><b>Closeout of State and Federal Grants</b></p> <p>State, federal and other grants must be closed out, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> notification to the grant entity of the School closure; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> filing of any required expenditure reports or receipts and any required program reports.</li> </ul> <p>The School Corporation should continue to pursue grant funds to which it is entitled, provided that it fully discloses its current situation and intentions with respect to closure. The School Corporation should not seek or accept grant funds for future school years when the School will be closed. Grant status should be noted on financial statements.</p>	School Board		
<b>24</b>	<p><b>U.S. Dept. of Education Filings</b></p> <p>File Federal form 269 or 269a if the School was receiving funds directly from the United States Department of Education. <i>See</i> 2 CFR 200.334-200.338.</p>	School Board		
<b>25</b>	<p><b>IRS Status; Reports</b></p> <p>The School Board must continue to take all steps necessary to maintain its 501(c)(3) status, including, but not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> notification to IRS regarding any address change of the School Corporation; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> filing of required tax returns or reports (e.g., IRS form 990 and Schedule A).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If the School Corporation proceeds to dissolution, notify the IRS of dissolution of the education corporation and its 501(c)(3) status and furnish a copy to the VOA of MN.</li> </ul>	School Board		
<b>26</b>	<p><b>Corporate Records</b></p> <p>In all cases, the School Board shall maintain all corporate records related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Loans, bonds, mortgages and other financing;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contracts;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Leases;</li> </ul>	School Board		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assets and asset sales;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Grants -- records relating to federal grants must be kept in accordance with 2 CFR 200.334 – 200.338.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Governance (Minutes, by-laws, policies);</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Employees (background checks, personnel files);</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Accounting/audit, taxes and tax status, etc;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Personnel,</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Employee benefit programs and benefits; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student summary test data files</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Any items listed in this Closure Plan.</li> </ul>			
<b>Dissolution / Final Distribution of Assets</b>				
<b>27</b>	<p><b>Resolution of Dissolution</b></p> <p>The Board of Directors must adopt a resolution that the School Corporation be dissolved and proceed to file the same with the MN Attorney General and/or MN Secretary of State.</p>	School Board Chair		
<b>28</b>	<p><b>Dissolution</b></p> <p>If the School Corporation dissolves, the Board must follow the dissolution provisions in its articles of incorporation and applicable laws. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a complete statement of all assets, their location and an estimate of their value; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a statement of the ascertainable debts of the education corporation.</li> </ul> <p>Whenever the Charter or an order of dissolution is made, the members of the School Board or other custodian of the records of the School have the duty to properly maintain the permanent records of the School according to law and stored in a secure, locked container.</p> <p>Copies of all papers related to dissolution should be sent to the VOA-MN.</p> <p>Members of the Board are empowered to continue in office even after the expiration of the Charter and dissolution of the School Corporation for the purpose of winding-up and settling the affairs of the School Corporation, and after the dissolution of the School Corporation.</p>	School board secretary		
<b>29</b>	<p><b>Final Distribution of Assets</b></p> <p>All liabilities and obligations of the School must be paid and discharged (or adequate provision must be made therefore) to the extent of the School’s assets. Any assets held subject to a lien, encumbrance, security interest or other written conditions or limitations must be disposed of in accordance with and subject to those conditions or limitations.</p>	School board chair or designee		

	<p>Assets received and held by the School subject to limitations permitting their use only for charitable, benevolent, educational, or similar purposes, but not held upon condition requiring return or with specific disposition instructions, shall be held until dissolution and transferred or conveyed to one or more charter schools in the school district or to the school district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> An itemized receipt must be obtained from each recipient of an asset containing the name, address and telephone number of the recipient. (In case of later question, audit or review by federal bankruptcy or state supreme court, or other governmental body.)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> In closing out any federal grant and accounting for any federal grant funds, property owned by the federal government or property acquired under a federal grant must be distributed in accordance with federal regulations.</li></ul>			
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**Contract Evaluation Report  
BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

**Contract Term: July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2021**

**REPORT PURPOSE:** This report was produced by the authorizer of BIRCH GROVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL charter school in compliance with Minnesota Statute § 124E.10, Subd.3 (Review and Comment), which requires an authorizer to conduct a formal evaluation and report on the performance of a charter school before a charter school's contract is renewed for another contract term. Per state law, Volunteers of America-Minnesota (VOA-MN) regularly monitors and evaluates the performance of the school. VOA-MN views contract renewal as an on-going process that is engaged in by the Board of Directors, school leadership, and the authorizer throughout the entire life of the school's contract with its authorizer. Using the results of ongoing site school site visit reports, performance on the VOA-MN Annual Reports on Governance, Finance, and Academics, board meetings monitored, as well as the evaluation and observations from the end-of-term site visit, VOA-MN determines whether to renew its contract with the charter school and if so, for what length of time. Contracts can be renewed for up to five years.

**SCHOOL DIRECTOR:** Diane Blanchett

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** [Stephanie will insert]

**EVALUATION REPORT ORDER**

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE & STATUTORY PURPOSES

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

- BOARD GOVERNANCE
- MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

CONTRACT RENEWAL DETERMINATION

**Rating Scale: For each standard, a school earns points for contract renewal as follows:**

2 = Meets Standard

1 = Partially Meets Standard

0 = Does Not Meet Standard

**Weighting of Performance Measures used during the contract renewal process is as follows:**

50% weighting: Academic Program (statutory purposes, including primary purpose)

20% weighting: Financial Sustainability

30% weighting: Organization

15% governance

15% management & compliance

**Three essential questions guide our VOA-MN authorizer oversight and charter school accountability plan.**

**1. Academic Program Performance - Is the school’s Learning Program a Success?**

**Academic Performance-** All public schools, including charters, must fully participate in the state assessments - Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments. Additionally, the school shall annually complete a VOA-MN (authorizer)/School jointly approved interim assessment in reading and math. Data from state assessments as well as Title 1 Designation utilizing Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) will be compiled and evaluated in the Annual VOA-MN Authorized Charter Schools Academic Performance Report by the authorizer. Charter schools are required to meet the academic performance standards for which they agree to be held accountable in their charter contract.

**The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program publishes annually an Academic Performance Report on their network of authorized charter schools.** The report serves as a single annual source of academic program and performance information for all of our VOA-MN operational charter schools. The report contains an analysis of annual and cumulative academic program, performance, and professional development data for each school.

Content from the annual Academic Performance Report also serves as the basis for the school academic performance analysis contained in the statutorily required Contract Renewal Evaluation Reports, including evaluation of the extent to which the school has met their primary purpose, “to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement” during the contract term.

The VOA-MN determined academic performance standards contained below are uniform for all VOA-MN charter schools. The standards are contained in VOA-MN Charter Contract Addendum B (School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System) and serve as the basis for both annual authorizer monitoring of school academic performance and contract renewal determinations. The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to reasonably amend these standards /expectations as needed:

**Birch Grove Community School Academic Performance Section Overview:**

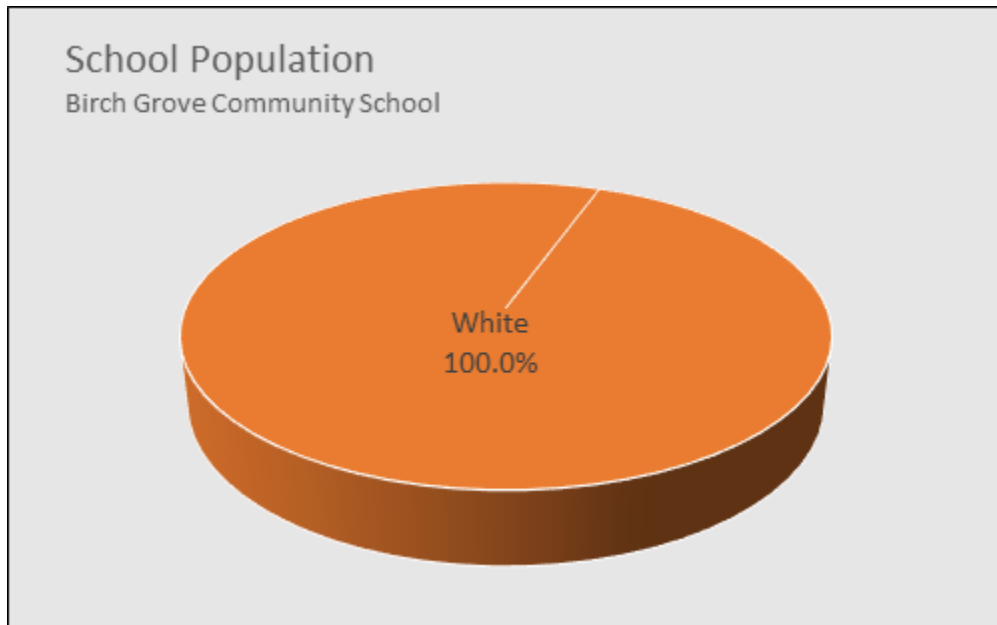


Figure 1 – School Population

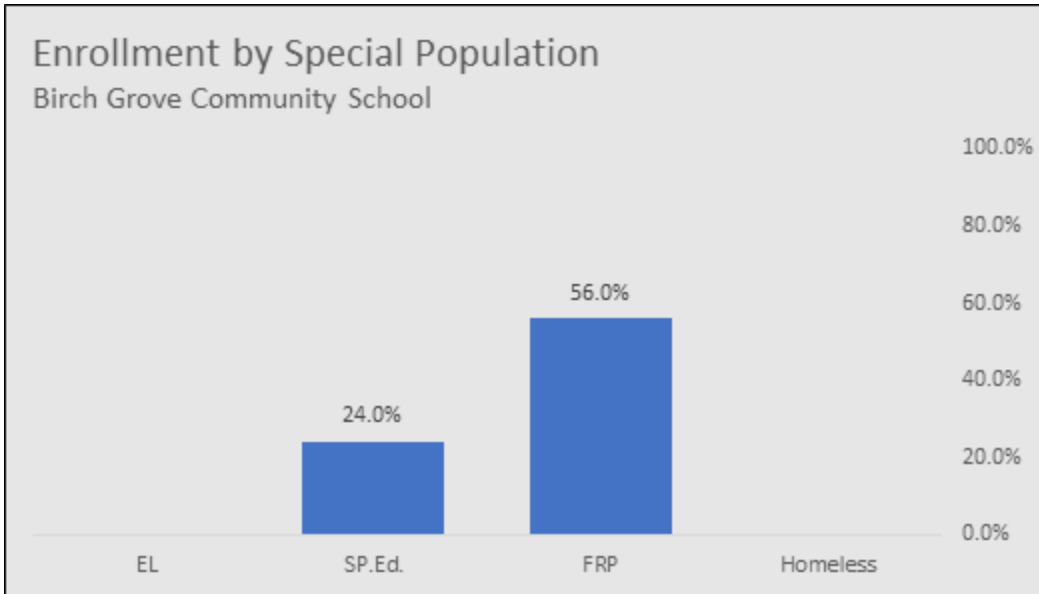


Figure 2 - Enrollment by Special Population

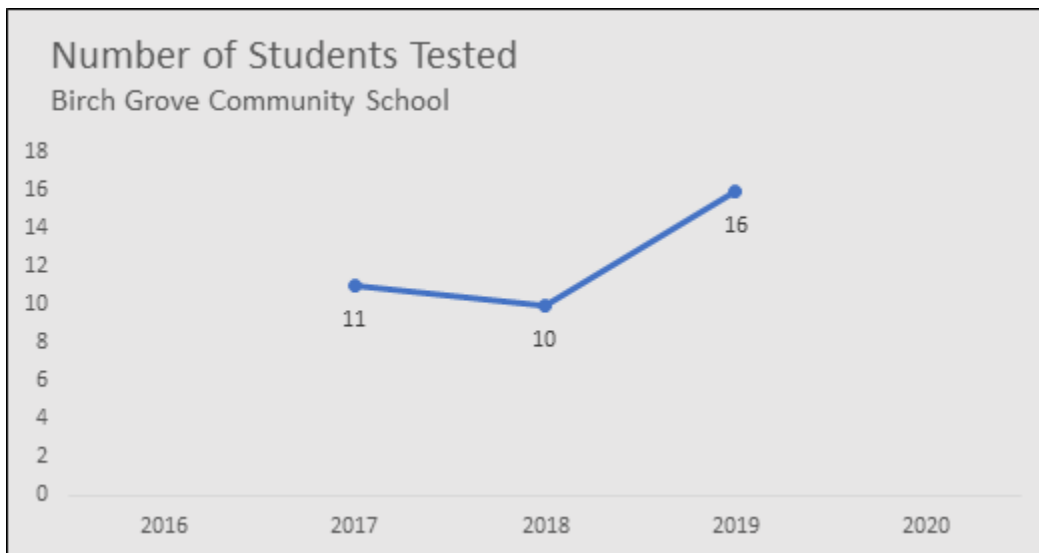


Figure 3 – Number of Students Tested (MCA)

**Academic Performance Standard 1 – State Examinations**

Students are performing well on state examinations or other agreed upon exam (i.e. NWEA) in comparison to students at schools they might otherwise attend (with similar demographics) as evidence of meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement.

The following results show the percentage of students tested who either met or exceeded the standards on the MCA Math, Reading, and Science assessments.

Table 1 – MCA Math Proficiency 2016 - 2020

MCA Math	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Statewide	60.1%	59.2%	57.7%	55.5%	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	70.0%	68.6%	66.9%	66.0%	
4 <sup>th</sup>	69.4%	67.4%	65.6%	64.3%	
5 <sup>th</sup>	59.4%	57.7%	55.2%	52.4%	
Birch Grove	N/A	54.5%	N/A	66.7%	

3 <sup>rd</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	CTSTR	
4 <sup>th</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	CTSTR	
5 <sup>th</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	CTSTR	
Sawtooth Elem.	48.8%	45.2%	52.4%	43.8%	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	65.4%	55.6%	72.0%	66.7%	
4 <sup>th</sup>	48.5%	41.7%	50.0%	66.7%	
5 <sup>th</sup>	32.0%	39.4%	37.9%	CTSTR	

\* Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the school did not have any publicly reportable academic data for the 2019-2020 school year.

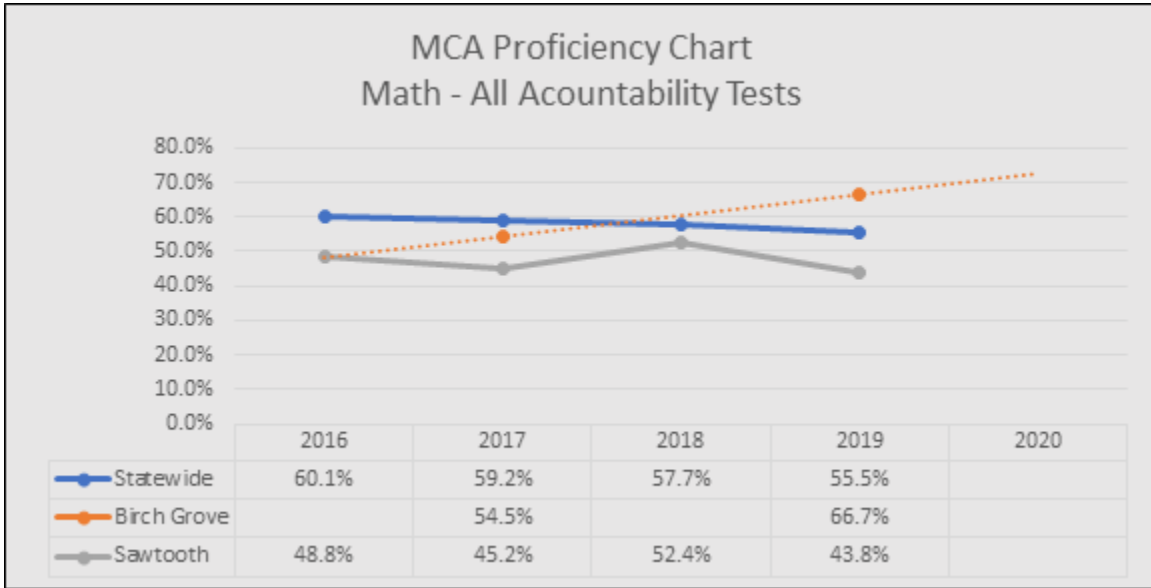


Figure 4 - MCA Math Proficiency 2016-2020

**ANALYSIS OF MATH MCA PROFICIENCY:** Birch Grove’s MCA proficiency results are shown in Table 1 and Figure 4. Birch Grove Community School increased its math proficiency rate to 66.7% in 2019, an increase of over twelve percentage points from the last time the school had a reportable score in 2017. Birch Grove is currently outperforming the local district comparison school as well as the statewide average. In future years, it is expected that Birch Grove Community School will continue to outperform the both the local district comparison school and the statewide average.

Table 2 – MCA Reading Proficiency 2016 - 2020

MCA Reading	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*
Statewide	60.2%	60.6%	60.4%	59.7%	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	57.7%	57.0%	56.2%	55.0%	
4 <sup>th</sup>	58.8%	57.3%	56.2%	55.9%	
5 <sup>th</sup>	68.1%	67.9%	67.5%	66.2%	
Birch Grove	N/A	63.6%	N/A	CTSTR	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	CTSTR	
4 <sup>th</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	CTSTR	
5 <sup>th</sup>	N/A	N/A	N/A	CTSTR	
Sawtooth Elem.	58.0%	69.5%	69.5%	70.3%	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	54.2%	54.2%	79.2%	80.0%	

4 <sup>th</sup>	46.9%	68.0%	58.6%	76.9%	
5 <sup>th</sup>	76.0%	81.8%	72.4%	57.1%	

\* Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the school did not have any publicly reportable academic data for the 2019-2020 school year.

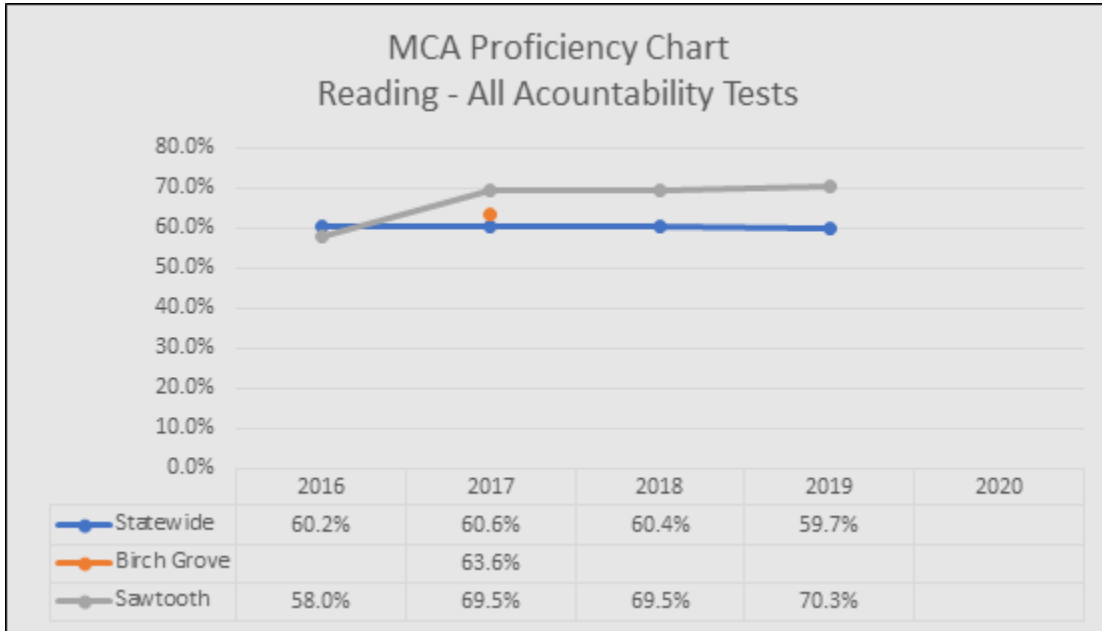


Figure 5 – MCA Reading Proficiency 2016-2020

**ANALYSIS OF READING MCA PROFICIENCY:** Birch Grove’s MCA proficiency results are shown in Table 2 and Figure 5. Birch Grove Community School did not have a sufficient number of proficient students on the 2019 reading MCA to generate a reportable score. In future years, it is expected that Birch Grove Community School will continue to meet or exceed the state and the local comparison district’s performance.

**Academic Performance Standard 2 - Growth**

Over the term of the contract, the school will maintain a minimum combined achievement level of 62.7% in math and 67.0% in reading on the North Star Academic Achievement Report (Improved + Maintained) as evidence of meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement.

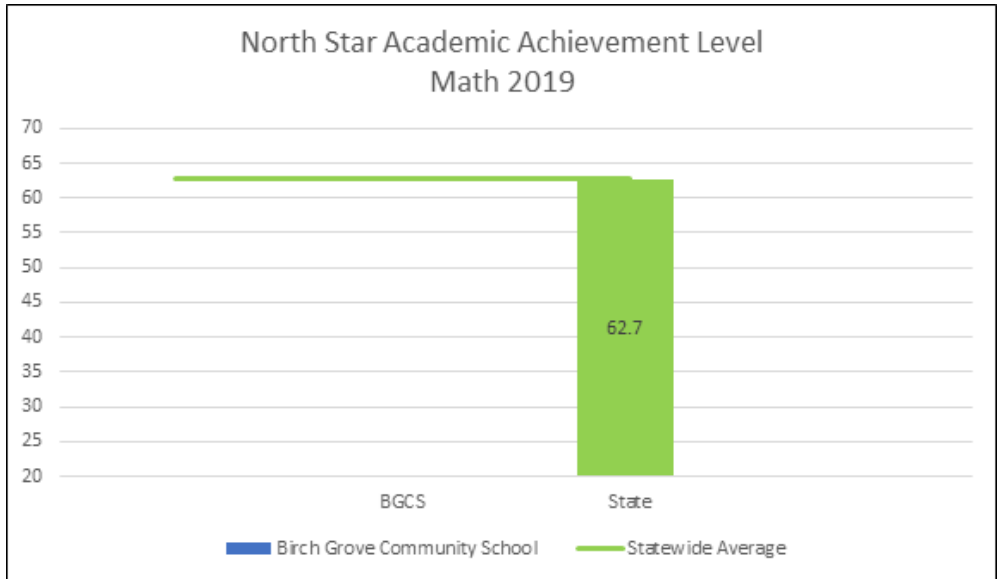


Figure 6 – 2019 North Star Academic Achievement Level (Improved + Maintained)

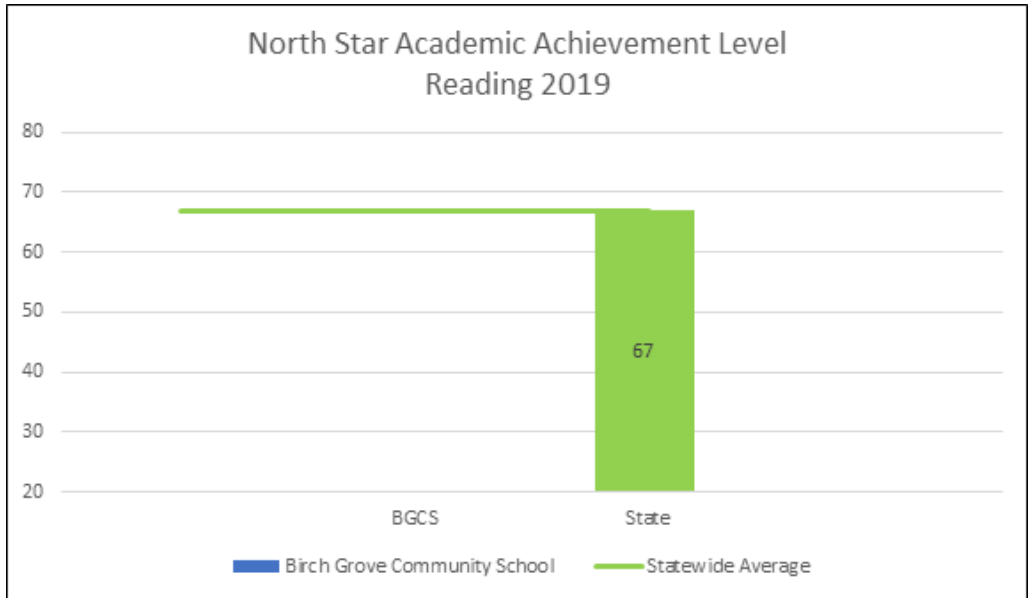


Figure 7 – 2019 North Star Academic Achievement Level (Improved + Maintained)

\* The school has not had a large enough testing cell size in recent years to generate growth scores.

**Academic Performance Standard 3 - Achievement Gap Reduction**

The difference between the “all-students” proficiency rate in the School and any reportable student group proficiency rate will be reduced over the term of the contract in both reading and math using state examination or other agreed upon exam (i.e. NWEA) data as evidence of the School meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement.

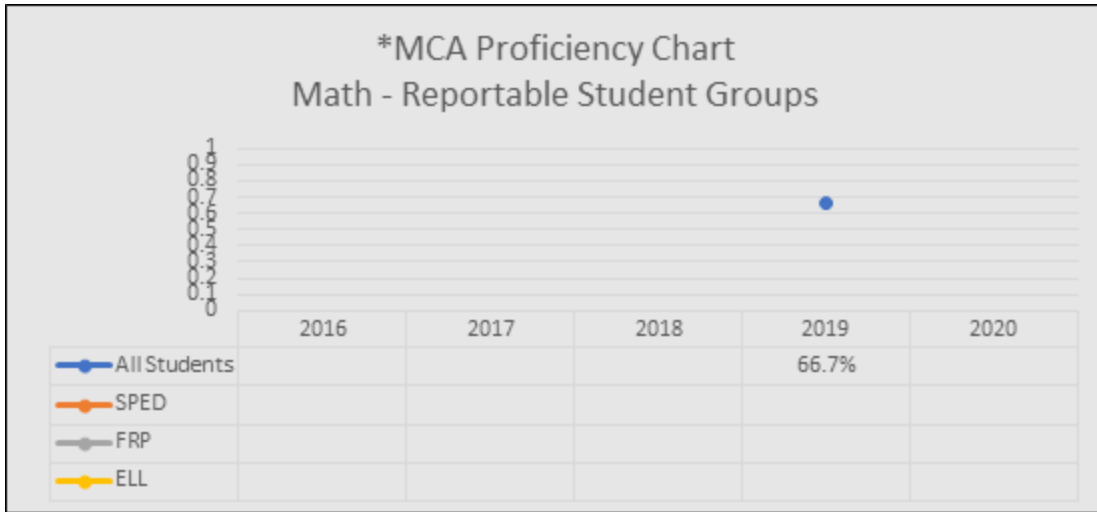


Figure 8 - Reportable Student Groups MCA Math 2019

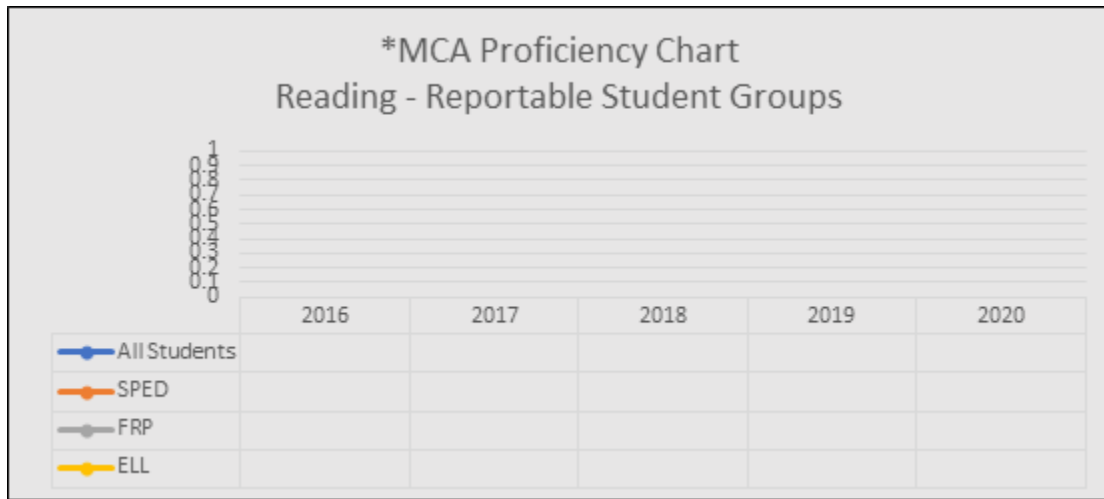


Figure 9 - Reportable Student Groups MCA Reading 2019

\* Data not available due to small testing cell size

**VOA -MN Standards Evaluation**

The school’s evaluation on each standard is listed in the tables below.

<p><b>Standard 1: Students are performing well on state examinations or other agreed upon exam (i.e. NWEA) in comparison to students at schools they might otherwise attend (with similar demographics) as evidence of meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Imbedded WBWF Standard: All third-graders can read at grade-level.</b></li> </ul>		
X	<b>2-Meets</b>	School’s average proficiency rate exceeds the average performance of students in schools they might otherwise attend.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	School’s average proficiency rate meets or exceeds the average performance of students in schools they might otherwise attend in one or two subjects (math, reading and science) but not all three.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	School’s average proficiency rate is less than the average performance of students in schools they might otherwise attend.
<p><b>Evidence / Source:</b> Minnesota Department of Education</p>		
<p><b>Analysis:</b> MCA’s were not conducted due to COVID-19. The most recent testing information: BGCS conducted NWEA-MAPS testing in the fall and winter of the 19-20 school year. While the winter data</p>		

can't determine if the school academic goal was achieved, it may give some insight as to how our students were doing in January 2020. K-5 that MET or EXCEEDED their RIT Year End Growth Goal in January 2020: Reading: 68%, Math: 64%

**Academic Performance Standard 2 - Over the term of the contract, the school will maintain a minimum combined achievement level of 62.7% in math and 67.0% in reading on the North Star Academic Achievement Report (Improved + Maintained) as evidence of meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement.**

N/A	<b>2-Meets</b>	School's achievement level of "improved and maintained" is above 62.7% for math and 67.0% for reading.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	School's achievement level of "improved and maintained" is above 50%
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	School's achievement level of "improved and maintained" is below 50%

**Evidence / Source:** North Star Academic Progress

**Analysis:** MCA's were not conducted in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The school has not had a large enough testing cell size in recent years to generate growth scores.

**Standard 3: The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate in the School and any reportable student group proficiency rate will be reduced over the term of the contract in both reading and math using state examination or other agreed upon exam (i.e. NWEA) data as evidence of the School meeting their primary statutory purpose of improving all pupil learning and all student achievement.**

- **Imbedded WBWF Standard: all racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.**

N/A	<b>2-Meets</b>	The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate and all subgroup proficiency rates has been reduced.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate and at least one subgroup proficiency rate has been reduced.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The difference between the "all-students" proficiency rate and all reportable subgroup proficiency rates has increased.

**Evidence / Source:** North Star Academic Progress

**Analysis:** N/A Testing cell sizes at the school were too small to generate any reportable subgroups.

**Standard 4: The school has adopted a formal teacher evaluation process and adheres to the requirements set forth in Minnesota Statute 122A.40.**

X	<b>2-Meets</b>	Meets all criteria and is adhered to.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Meets some of the criteria, but no evidence that process is followed.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	School has not adopted a teacher evaluation process.

**Data / Source:** School Annual Report

**Analysis:** Teacher observation/evaluation: Teachers are observed in the classroom and evaluated by each other, and a teacher liaison, three times per school year. Observation/evaluations are reviewed with this team along with the school director. A written self-reflection accompanies each observation upon completion. Teachers must receive a score of proficient or higher on all three observations to

consider the goal achieved. Teachers also formally evaluated annually by the school director. This evaluation includes a teacher self-review document that is reviewed with the school director.

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Standard 5: All teachers are supported through a school-wide professional development plan that is based on analysis of assessment data and directly linked to improving all pupil learning and all student achievement.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school has adopted and followed a school-wide, data-driven professional development plan.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school has a school-wide professional development plan, but the reviewer could not conclude that the plan was tied to data-driven decision-making.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school has not adopted a school-wide professional development plan.

**Data/Source:** School Annual Report

**Analysis:** Professional development included but was not limited to the following: Restoring Connection during Distance Learning, Bloodborne Pathogens, Mandatory Reporter Training, Child Find Training, Trauma-Informed Compassionate Classroom and cultural Competency Training.

**Standard 6: The school is meeting their additional statutory purposes (MS 124E.01, Subd.1; Charter Contract Addendum B).**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school has a plan and is meeting their additional statutory purposes.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school has a plan for meeting their additional statutory purposes and is partially meeting them.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school does not have a plan for meeting their additional statutory purposes and measuring progress.

**Data / Source:** School Annual Report

**Analysis:**  
 School Culture  
 Birch Grove Community School works hard to ensure a productive academic environment where students feel safe, comfortable, respected, and challenged. The start of each year requires much attention directed to new students who aren't accustomed to Birch Grove. Birch Grove integrates respect and responsibility into everyday life of the school, and we start every morning the same – all staff and students gather at Morning Meeting listen to daily announcements, recite the Pledge of Allegiance and set a positive, “let’s get to learning” tone.  
 Multi-Grade Classrooms  
 Benefits of multi-grade classes are:  
 Instructional Flexibility  
 In a multi-grade classroom, the teacher has the possibility of allowing a child to read with students in higher grades while, for example, the same child does math with the lower grades. One can more easily gear the work to individual needs.  
 Social Skills  
 A classroom with children of several ages enables students to gain a perspective on what is happening in the lives and education of children both younger and older. It helps them gain a more accurate sense of the past and future in terms of experiences and interest and stimulates the entire learning environment.  
 Peer Tutoring

In multi-age classrooms, the children generally have more opportunity to help one another than in a single grade classroom. Such peer teaching aids the slower and younger children in ways often beyond the communicative ability of adults, since adults have generally forgotten the problems they had in learning a particular concept or skills in the remote past.

At Birch Grove, we come to know our students very well. Our low student to teacher ratio, multi-grade classrooms (students have the same teacher for at least two consecutive years) and the staff concern and care for our students contributes to a family atmosphere that we are proud of. Because we know our students well, we are better able to gauge what their specific abilities and needs are, allowing us to serve our students better.

Other innovative practices include goal setting contracts, community lunch and the great outdoors.

**Standard 7: The school is meeting the World’s Best Workforce goals (MS 120B.11; Charter Contract Addendum B).**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school has a plan and is meeting their WBWF goals.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school has a plan for meeting their WBWF goals and is partially meeting them.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school does not have a plan for meeting their WBWF goals and measuring progress.

**Data / Source:**

**Analysis:** Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the school was unable to complete standardized testing for the 2019-2020 school year. The Minnesota Department of Education reported that the State will not be summarizing or publicly reporting on 2019-2020 data for Minnesota schools. Therefore, 2019-2020 data has not been included in this report.

1. All racial and economic achievement gaps between students is closed. BGCS will increase the percent of all students who “meet standard” on the MCA exams and NWEA exams each year as evidence of closing the racial and economic achievement gap. (Note: BGCS does not have a very diverse population and small has cell size too small to report) Measure: MCA exams (internal use) and NWEA assessments (public reporting limited to small sample size). Reporting: School Annual Report (MS. 124d.10)

\*\*Both the MCA’s and the spring MAPS test were canceled for the 2019-2020 school year. The most recent testing information: BGCS conducted NWEA-MAPS testing in the fall and winter of the 19-20 school year. While the winter data can’t determine if the school academic goal was achieved, it may give some insight as to how our students were doing in January 2020 when the winter NWEA-MAPS data was assessed.

Percentage of students who met or exceeded their year-end growth goal in January of 2020

Reading – 68%

Math 64%

2. All children are ready for school. BGCS will increase the percent of children who are ready for school each year. Measure: The Saplings Program was operational for the 2018-2019 year for kindergarteners who entered in the fall. Cell Size Too Small To Report. However, NWEA data over the past years show that children who attend the Saplings Program, on a regular basis (part to full time), score higher upon entering Kindergarten than children who do not attend the program.

3. All third-graders can read at grade level based on state standards and NWEA Assessments. 7 third graders took the NWEA MAPS test in Reading. Cell Size Too Small To Report. However, BGCS is pleased with the percentage of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders that scored proficient or higher in Reading.

**FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY - Does the School Exhibit Strong Financial Health?**

**Financial Section Summary**

Charter schools receive public funds and must meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management. It is VOA-MN’s duty to ensure that the schools are responsible stewards of public funds. The charter school shall provide VOA with a copy of its draft and final annual budgets and monthly cash flow projections for each fiscal year by July 1 of each fiscal year. VOA-MN shall use submitted budget and cash flow statements, along with any other relevant information, to determine if the charter school has a realistic balanced budget plan for the current year. VOA-MN shall use the financial statements presented in the charter school’s annual financial audit, along with any other relevant information, to determine if the charter school maintained a balanced budget during the prior-year. Schools are expected to have audits that are free of all findings.

Ten key financial oversight standards that every VOA-MN charter school strives to achieve are the basis for the VOA-MN Finance Award of Excellence. There were various data sources and documents examined during the review of the fiscal condition of each school. There was a review of the original budget and monthly income statement, balance sheet, check registers, cash flow projections, enrollment reports along with school board and finance committee meeting agendas and minutes. Various school reports were reviewed that were submitted to MDE for UFARS and ADM enrollment updates and projections. That examination was followed by a review of the school financial audit reports and revised budgets. Finally, selected financial documents and practices were studied including finance related policies, appropriate use of public funds and various internal systems.

The VOA-MN determined school financial standards contained below are uniform for all VOA-MN charter schools. The standards are contained in VOA-MN Charter Contract Addendum B (School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System) and serve as the basis for both annual authorizer monitoring of school financial health and contract renewal determinations. The authorizer monitors school performance meeting these standards on an ongoing basis and the standards will be evaluated in the annual VOA-MN Network Finance Report. The standards also serve as the criteria for contract renewal determinations and annual network award winners. The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to reasonably amend these standards /expectations as needed.

**VOA -MN Standards Evaluation**

The school’s evaluation on each standard is listed in the table below.

<b>Financial Standard 1: The school maintains a balanced budget.</b>		
	<b>2-Meets</b>	surplus position
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	NA
<b>X</b>	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	deficit position
<b>Data / Source:</b> School budgets, Annual Report, School monthly financial reports		
<b>Analysis:</b> The school’s original FY 2020 budget approved in June 2019 was based on 31 ADM with a projected surplus of \$2,500. The school revised the budget in March 2020 based on 24.5 ADM and reflected a deficit of \$16,841.		
The school’s audit report includes the following highlights:		
<b>General Fund Budgetary Highlights</b>		
<i>During the year ended June 30, 2020, the School made revisions to its General Fund operating budget. In accordance with Minnesota Statutes, an expenditure budget must be in place prior to the beginning of the fiscal year in order to spend funds. Prior to July 1, the School Board approves the budget for next year. A revised budget was necessary to incorporate data that was not available at the time of the preliminary budget.</i>		
<i>The School’s General Fund final budget anticipated that expenditures would exceed revenues (before other financing sources and uses) by \$13,841. Actual results for the year reported expenditures exceeded revenues (before other financing sources and uses) by \$2,589. Actual revenues were less than projected</i>		

by \$3,054, primarily due to revenues from federal sources being \$9,538 lower than budget, sales of assets being \$9,265 lower than budget, and revenues from local sources being \$2,441 lower than budget. This was partially offset by revenue from state sources being \$18,109 higher than budget. Actual expenditures were \$14,306 less than budgeted, primarily due to expenditures for instructional support services and pupil support services being under budget by \$5,101 and \$9,110 respectively.

The school ended the year with a FY 2020 General Fund deficit of \$3,589 resulting in an ending General Fund balance of 6.5%. The FY 2020 financial audit noted:

**FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

Key financial highlights for the year ended June 30, 2019 include the following:

- Net position at June 30, 2020 is a deficit of \$321,554. This is an increase in the deficit of \$42,832 or 15.37 from the prior year.
- School-wide revenues were \$595,598 and overall expenses were \$638,430.
- General Fund revenues were \$507,119, expenditures were \$509,708, transfers to the Food Service Fund were \$3,500, and proceeds from sale of assets of \$2,500. This resulted in an operating deficit of \$3,589.

Overall, the school has not maintained a balanced General Fund budget for FY 2020.

**Financial Standard 2: The school is compliant with state and federal financial reporting deadlines and laws, including the proper use of public funds.**

X	2-Meets	never missed
	1-Partially Meets	missed 1 time
	0-Does Not Meet	missed > 1 time

**Data / Source:** Preliminary and final UFARS data, ADM reports

**Analysis:** The VOA-MN financial analyst did not discover any delinquent or late payments to vendors of the school through June 2020.

**Standard 3: The school’s financial audit is submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education, Office of the State Auditor and the authorizer by December 31.**

X	2-Meets	Submitted
	1-Partially Meets	N/A
	0-Does Not Meet	Not Submitted

**Data / Source:** Financial audit submission

**Analysis:** The school submitted its financial audit to the MDE by December 31, 2020.

**Financial Standard 4: The schools financial audit is free of all findings.**

	2-Meets	no findings
X	1-Partially Meets	1 or more “significant deficiency” finding(s)
	0-Does Not Meet	1 or more “material weakness” or legal compliance finding (s)

**Data / Source:** School financial audit

**Analysis:** The school’s FY 2020 financial audit contained one finding as noted in the excerpts from the financial audit report Schedule of Findings and Responses:

**Finding: 2020-001 – Preparation of Financial Statements**

**Condition**

*The School’s auditor prepares the financial statements. This is not unusual in schools the size of Birch Grove Community School, Minnesota Charter School No. 4145’s; however, the School’s management and governance personnel should be aware that even though they assume responsibility for the financial statements the fact that the auditor has prepared the financial statements indicates a control deficiency by management.*

**Recommendations**

*We recommend that management become knowledgeable in financial statement preparation so that management can prepare the financial statements for audit purposes. If management does not feel that it desires to obtain this knowledge and expertise then it should consider contracting with a third-party accountant that would prepare year end adjusting entries to the financial records and also prepare the financial statements for audit purposes.*

**Actions Planned in Response to Finding**

*The Board will continue to have the contracted auditor for the year prepare the financial statements. The Board will consider internal control procedures consistent with those outlined above within the segregation of duties and with Board guidance (approval of policies and/or procedures). In addition, all financial statement reviews will be documented.*

The audit report also includes the following clarification of the findings:

*Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies and therefore, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that have not been identified. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. We did identify a deficiency in internal control, described in the accompanying schedule of findings and responses that we consider to be a significant deficiency: 2020-001.*

As noted in the school’s response to these findings, the board will continue to have the school’s auditor prepare the financial statements and will ensure that all financial statement reviews are documented.

**Financial Standard 5: The school is current on all financial obligations, including, but not limited to: pension payments, payroll taxes, insurance coverage and loan payments.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	never late
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	late 1-2 times
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	late > 3 times

**Data / Source:** School monthly financial reports

**Analysis:** The VOA-MN financial analyst did not discover any delinquent or late payments to vendors of the school through June 2020.

**Financial Standard 6: The School provides VOA-MN and school board members with monthly financials at least three days prior to board meetings. June financial reports may be delayed until year-end journal entries are completed. Packets include at least the following: 1) detailed income/expense report, 2) cash flow projection, 3) check register, and 4) current enrollment (Average Daily Membership). The board should review and approve the financials at each board meeting.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	never missed
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	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	missed 1-2 times
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	missed > 2 times
<b>Data / Source:</b> School monthly financial reports		
<b>Analysis:</b> The school board reviews and approves various financial reports at each meeting and regularly receives an update from the finance and fundraising committees. The school has provided all monthly financial reports in a timely manner.		

**Financial Standard 7: The School develops and maintains a targeted General Fund balance determined by the school board. For the finance report, VOA-MN also determines a standard for fund balance annually based on items such as school funding trends and funding hold backs.**

	<b>2-Meets</b>	20% or >
<b>X</b>	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	15-20%
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	< 15%

**Data / Source:** School fund balance policy, school monthly financial reports, board meeting agendas and minutes

**Analysis:** The table below contains the history of the school’s General Fund balance/SOD calculation:

<b>FOUR YEAR FUND BALANCE HISTORY</b>				
	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020</b>
<b>Fund Balance Amount</b>	\$38,185	\$51,476	\$54,617	\$51,965
<b>Fund Balance Percent</b>	8.09%	10.61%	10.78%	6.5%

The school’s FY 2020 General Fund balance decreased from the prior year. The school has a fund balance policy in place which states:

*The school will strive to maintain a minimum unassigned general fund balance of 20-25% of the annual expenditure budget.*

The FY 2020 financial audit stated the following:

*The School Board strives to maintain an unassigned fund balance in the General Fund amounting to 6.5% of the General Fund operating budgeted expenditures for each fiscal year. At June 30, 2020 the School’s fund balance met the policy required 6.5% level.*

**Financial Standard 8: The school board has a finance committee that meets regularly to review financial reports.**

	<b>2-Meets</b>	8-12 meetings/year
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	5-7 meetings/year
<b>X</b>	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	0-4 meetings/year

**Data / Source:** School monthly board meeting agendas and minutes

**Analysis:** The school has a finance committee that met in February, March, and June 2020.

**Financial Standard 9: All finance committee members have working knowledge of financial oversight.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	all committee members have received formal/informal training during the year relating to their roles and responsibilities on the finance committee
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	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	N/A
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	some committee members have not received formal/informal training during the year relating to their roles and responsibilities on the finance committee
<b>Data / Source:</b> School monthly board meeting agendas and minutes, certificates of board training		
<b>Analysis:</b> All finance committee members have received training during the year relating to their roles and responsibilities on the finance committee as noted in an email received from the school director on December 23, 2020.		

<b>Financial Standard 10: The school is not in Statutory Operating Debt (SOD).</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	not in SOD
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	N/A
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	in SOD
<b>Data / Source:</b> School’s current year budget, monthly board agendas and minutes, prior year financial audit		
<b>Analysis:</b> The school is not in Statutory Operating Debt.		

**SCHOOL ORGANIZATION - Is the organization effective and well run?**

**PART I: BOARD GOVERNANCE.** Effective board governance is essential to the successful start-up and operation of a public charter school. The diversity of charter school board memberships – teachers, parents, community leaders, and volunteers – heightens the importance of consistent expectations and development activities.

The authorizer regularly monitors the performance quality of the school board based on authorizer observations; interviews with the director, board and faculty; and the review of school policies, reports and board meeting minutes. A school must have a governance model that provides quality oversight by ensuring that there are checks and balances between the board and the school administrators.

A school board is responsible for developing, implementing, and assessing policy; defining sound employee relations; conducting open meetings; recognizing and conforming to the legal mandates imposed by state and federal laws; and governing within the limits of a delegation of state authority – as a nonprofit and public-school board. Additionally, the board has an obligation to assess its successes and failures; inform the public of all deliberations and decisions; promote accountability; enhance public understanding of its mission; conform to standards of ethical behavior; provide a framework for setting goals; and develop strategic plans for the accomplishment of those goals.

**The VOA-MN Charter School Authorizing Program publishes annually a School Board Governance Report on their network of authorized charter schools.** The purpose of this report is to be a single annual source on the board operations and compliance of the fifteen VOA-MN- authorized charter schools. Authorizer VOA-MN also observes a minimum of two school board meetings annually.

The VOA-MN determined school board governance standards contained below are uniform for all VOA-MN charter schools. The standards are contained in VOA-MN Charter Contract Addendum B (School Accountability and Authorizer Oversight System) and serve as the basis for both annual authorizer monitoring of school board performance and contract renewal determinations. The authorizer monitors school performance meeting these standards on an ongoing basis and the standards shall will be evaluated in the annual VOA-MN Network Governance Report. The standards also serve as the criteria for contract renewal determinations. The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to reasonably amend these standards /expectations as needed.

**Board Chair:** Judy Motschenbacher

Email: motsch@boreal.org

Phone: 218-663-0017

**Birch Grove Community School Board Committees**

District Advisory & Academic Excellence Committee

Finance Committee

Fundraising Committee

Community Service Advisory Council

**VOA -MN Standards Evaluation**

The school’s evaluation on each standard is listed in the table below.

**Board Structure and Development**

<b>Standard 1: The Board of Directors meets its governance model requirements laid out in its bylaws and membership requirements as required by Minnesota Statute.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	Board structure meets bylaws and state statute.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Board did not meet requirements for the entire fiscal year.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Board structure does not meet bylaws and/or state statute.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Website and Annual Report		
<p><b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The Board of Directors structure meets its governance model requirements laid out in its bylaws and as required by Minnesota Statute. The Board consists of no less than 5 members and no more than 7, with the school Director as an advisory, non-voting position on the Board. One licensed teacher serves on the Board with an optional rotating term. The Board also made committee appointments to the following committees: District Advisory &amp; Academic Excellence Committee; Finance Committee; Fundraising Committee; and Community Service Advisory Council. During this meeting they also reviewed the Annual Report and the Continuous Improvement Plan.</p> <p>Regular Board meetings are held the third Monday of each month. Board member terms are three years, beginning and ending at the first meeting in February. The Board member election is in January with new members taking seats in February. The maximum number of teachers serving on the Board at one time shall be two. Board Officer Roles and responsibilities are defined in the Bylaws. BGCS has 3 Committees and an Advisory Council: District Advisory &amp; Academic Excellence Committee, Finance Committee, Fundraising Committee, and Community Service Advisory Council.</p> <p>The following table demonstrates that the Board includes a balance of skills and expertise among members.</p>		

\*124E.07 Subd. 3. Membership criteria.

(a) The ongoing charter school board of directors shall have at least five nonrelated members and include: (1) at least one licensed teacher who is employed as a teacher at the school or provides instruction under contract between the charter school and a cooperative; (2) at least one parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in the charter school who is not an employee of the charter school; and (3) at least one interested community member who resides in Minnesota, is not employed by the charter school, and does not have a child enrolled in the school. The board structure may include a majority of teachers under this paragraph or parents or community members, or it may have no clear majority. The chief financial officer and the chief administrator may only serve as ex-officio nonvoting board members. No charter school employees shall serve on the board other than teachers under clause (1). Contractors providing facilities, goods, or services to a charter school shall not serve on the board of directors of the charter school.

(b) An individual is prohibited from serving as a member of the charter school board of directors if: (1) the individual, an immediate family member, or the individual's partner is a full or part owner or principal with a for-profit or nonprofit entity or independent contractor with whom the charter school contracts, directly or indirectly, for professional services, goods, or facilities; or (2) an immediate family member is an employee of the school. An individual may serve as a member of the board of directors if no conflict of interest exists under this paragraph, consistent with this section.

Board Member	Board Office/ Seat Type	Expertise	Initial Training	Ongoing Training dates (this year)	Meets Req
Judy Motschenbacher	Community, Seat A, Board President	Founder	Yes	7/15/2019, 12/16/2019, 1/9/2020, 1/10/2020, 1/27/2020, 2/24/2020	Yes
Skip Lamb	Community, Seat B, Treasurer	Finance	Yes	7/15/2019, 12/16/2019, 1/27/2020, 2/24/2020	Yes
Sara Knottski	Teacher, Seat C, File#487820, Vice President	Education	Yes	7/15/2019, 12/16/2019, 1/27/2020, 2/24/2020	Yes
Kathy Lawrence	Parent, Member	Parent	Yes	7/15/2019, 12/16/2019, 1/27/2020, 2/24/2020	Yes
Sarena Nelson	Parent, Secretary	Parent	Yes	7/15/2019, 12/16/2019, 1/27/2020, 2/24/2020	Yes
Krystal Singleton	Parent, Member	Parent	Yes	12/16/2019, 1/27/2020, 5/17/2020	Yes

<b>Standard 2: The Board of Directors has the necessary knowledge to carry out the responsibilities contained in MN Stat 124E.07, Subd.6. (Duties), including knowledge in finance/budget, policy/legal, personnel/employment, and education.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The Board has a thorough plan to ensure members have the necessary knowledge in the areas of finance/budget, policy/legal, personnel/employment, and education.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The Board has a partial plan to ensure members have the necessary knowledge in the areas of finance/budget, policy/legal, personnel/employment, and education.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The Board does not have a plan to ensure board members have the necessary knowledge.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Annual Report, Board Minutes, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The school had a board training plant with Ship’s Wheel Consulting, LLC on Governance, Financial Management, Employee Matters, other areas of ongoing board concerns and responsibilities, and board self-evaluation was canceled due to COVID-19. Reference to page 10 in the BGCS FY2020 Annual Report.		

<b>Standard 3: The Board adheres to an orientation process for bringing on new members.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The School Board adheres to a thorough process for the orientation of new board members.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The School Board has a process for the orientation of new board members, but it is not consistently followed.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The board does not have a membership orientation process for new board members.

<b>Data / Source:</b> Website, Board Packet, Minutes, Authorizer/School Discussion
<b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The Birch Grove Community School Board chair confirmed the Board provides an orientation process for bringing on new members.

**Board Practices**

**Standard 4: The Board of Directors complies with initial training requirements set forth in Minn. Stat 124E.07, Subd.7 (Training): governance, financial, and employment policies and practices.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	All board members comply with Minnesota law regarding board training requirements.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	One board member did not fully comply with Minnesota law regarding board training requirements and was removed.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	More than one board member did not fully comply with Minnesota law regarding board training requirements.

<b>Data / Source:</b> VOAMN Submission Calendar
<b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The following table was compiled from information provided by the school in its 2019-2020 Annual Report on pages 7-10 which demonstrates that all new and existing board members have met initial training requirements. (See Standard 1 Table for summary.)

**Standard 5: The Board of Directors completes a self-evaluation each year.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	Board completes a formal self-evaluation each year.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Board competes informal self-evaluations during one or more board meeting(s).
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Board does not self-evaluation.

<b>Data / Source:</b> Board Minutes
<b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The School Board uses a self-evaluation instrument for board members to fill out. Following compilation of results the Board processes the results to improve Board practice. This self-evaluation is completed annually. The Board completes and reviews its self-evaluation at an all school board training. In addition, at the end of each board meeting the Board completes an evaluation of the meeting.

**Standard 6: The Board of Directors will comply with MN Open Meeting Law, Chapter 13D, and maintains a quorum for all board meetings.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The Board has no infractions of MN Open Meeting Law.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The Board has 1 infraction of MN Open Meeting Law.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The Board has 2 or more infractions of MN Open Meeting Law.

<b>Data / Source:</b> Bylaws, Website, Board Packet and Minutes, Authorizer-School Discussion
<b>Analysis:</b> The School Board meets this standard. The Board chair stated that the Board is diligent to follow open meeting law requirements. Monthly logs of School Board meeting minutes provided evidence that the school maintained a quorum for scheduled board meetings

\*124E.07 Subdivision 1. Initial board of directors.

Before entering into a contract or other agreement for professional or other services, goods, or facilities, the operators authorized to organize and operate a school must establish a board of directors composed of at least five members who are not related parties. The initial board continues to serve until a timely election for members of the ongoing charter school board of directors is held according to the school's articles and bylaws under subdivision 4.

124E.07 Subd. 2. Ongoing board of directors.

The ongoing board must be elected before the school completes its third year of operation. Board elections must be held during the school year but may not be conducted on days when the school is closed.

124E.07 Subd. 5. Eligible voters.

Staff members employed at the school, including teachers providing instruction under a contract with a cooperative, members of the board of directors, and all parents or legal guardians of children enrolled in the school are the voters eligible to elect the members of the school's board of directors. A charter school must notify eligible voters of the school board election dates at least 30 days before the election.

<b>Standard 7: The Board regularly reviews, updates, and approves its bylaws. The bylaws are consistent with state law.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	Bylaws are consistent with state law and the Board reviews them regularly.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Bylaws are consistent with state statute but have not been reviewed regularly.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Bylaws are inconsistent with state statute.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Bylaws, Annual Report, Board Packet and Minutes, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The Board chair confirmed that their bylaws are up to date and consistent with state law. Bylaws were reviewed, updated and approved at the 10/21/2019 board meeting. This date is in the Bylaws on the School's website. The Board reviews the Bylaws at each Annual Meeting. Each board member has a binder and digital version of bylaws and school office binder contains the bylaws. Bylaws can be found online at: <a href="https://tb2cdn.schoolwebmasters.com/acnt_8817/site_511375/Documents/Bylaws-Birch-Grove-.pdf">https://tb2cdn.schoolwebmasters.com/acnt_8817/site_511375/Documents/Bylaws-Birch-Grove-.pdf</a>		

<b>Standard 8: The Board of Directors adheres to board member election requirements set forth by state statute.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	All requirements were met.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	N/A
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Election requirements were not met.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Annual Report, School Website, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> This standard was met. The election was held on October 21, 2019 at the Annual Meeting. The School Director confirmed that the election was announced 30 days of the election.		

<b>Standard 9: The Board conducts an annual evaluation (including all aspects of the position description) of the performance of the school leader through a defined annual evaluation process.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The Board completed a formal evaluation of the school leader including all aspects of the job description.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The Board completed an evaluation of the school leader but not on all aspects of the job description.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The Board did not complete an annual evaluation of the school leader.

<b>Data / Source:</b> Website, Board Packet and Minutes, Authorizer-School Discussion	
<b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The FY2020 Annual Report indicated the Board has an evaluation plan for the Director. The School Director Review is conducted by the School Board annually. A Director evaluation form is sent to each board member in the summer. Then in August/September survey results are presented at a regular School Board meeting. Survey results for the School Director Review were found in board minutes. The year-end progress on professional goals is also discussed and reviewed at this time. In October of each year, the administration presents a professional development plan for the current year to the Board. The plan is to be goal oriented, citing the action and the measurement for success. The plan is approved by the School Board prior to implementation. The review was completed on October 19, 2020.	

<b>Standard 10: The Board has a board-approved professional development plan for the school director (if applicable as required by Minn. Stat. 124E.12, Subd.2(b)).</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	A professional development plan for the non-licensed individual(s) was documented in the school’s annual report or the school’s director holds an administrative license.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	N/A
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	A professional development plans for the non-licensed individual(s) was not documented in the school’s annual report.

<b>Data / Source:</b> Website, Board Packets and Minutes, Authorizer-School Discussion	
<b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The professional development plan for the non-licensed school director/administrator(s) was documented in the school’s annual report on pages #18-20. Diane Blanchette, a founder of the school, has been the school director since the school opened (with the exception of an eight-month absence). Diane worked for the non-profit that created the charter school application, became the school start-up director, and then the school director/business manager. The following goals were included in her plan: Goal 1: To increase knowledge and skills to better contribute to the success and well-being of Birch Grove Community School. Goal 2: To increase student academic achievement - The percentage of all students enrolled October 1 in grades K-5 at Birch Grove Community School who meet or exceed their fall to spring RIT Growth Projection on the NWEA MAP in Reading will increase 5°/o higher than the previous year’s percentage.	

\* Refer to: Minnesota Data Practices Act (Minn. Stat. Chapter 13), Minnesota Rules, Chapter 1205, Official Records Act (Minn. Stat., section 15.17), Records Management Statute (Minn. Stat., section 138.17), and FERPA and HIPPA laws. See [https://mn.gov/admin/assets/dpintro\\_tcm36-309355.pptx](https://mn.gov/admin/assets/dpintro_tcm36-309355.pptx) , <https://mn.gov/admin/data-practices/data/types/education/>, Federal law for FERPA (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>).

<b>Standard 11: The Board of Directors monitors the organization's adherence to school board policies.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	Meeting minutes include three or more examples of the Board monitoring the organization's adherence to School Board policies.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Meeting minutes includes one or two examples of the Board monitoring the organization's adherence to School Board policies.

	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Meeting minutes include no evidence of the board monitoring the organization's adherence to School Board policies.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Bylaws, Website, Board Packet and Minutes, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The School Board utilizes policies and monitors the application of policies in its work throughout the year. Examples include:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examining board policy related to board membership and committees.</li> <li>• Reviewing board member training requirements and board member roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Monitoring compliance to open meeting law.</li> <li>• Monitoring evaluation of leadership.</li> <li>• Applying financial decisions regarding the Fund Balance policy.</li> <li>• Monitoring World’s Best Workforce compliance.</li> <li>• Planning and organizing elections.</li> <li>• Monitoring board training</li> </ul>		

<b>Standard 12: The Board of Directors complies with Federal data practices law and the Minnesota Data Practices Act (Minn. Stat. Chapter 13).</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	Data practice policies are in place in accordance with state statute and staff are appropriately trained in Data Practices.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Data practice policies are in place in accordance with state statute but staff were not trained in Data Practices.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Data practice policies are not fully in place.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Website, Board Packet and Minutes, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The Board works to comply with the Minnesota Data Practices Act in several ways.		
The school has the following data practices policies:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public and Private Personnel Data #406 provides guidance to school district employees as to the data the school district collects and maintains regarding its personnel.</li> <li>• Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records (#515) establishes policies and procedures BGCS will follow regarding public and private student data. This covers FERPA rules and distinguishing between private data and summary data. It establishes the BGCS Records Retention Schedule Policy, which defines when and how what types of records (any form) will be retained, destroyed and requirements for securing records. A schedule for policy review is in place.</li> </ul>		
The school ensures the school follows these requirements - student and employee privacy, readiness to respond to data requests, and is effective to separate public from private information and data.		
The Data Practices Compliance Officer is the school board chair Judy Motschenbacher and the Responsible Authority is school board secretary Sarena Nelson. They have each had training in these roles.		

**Board Documentation and Communications**

<b>Standard 13: The Board of Directors provides ongoing oversight of school academic performance.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	Meeting minutes include evidence of regular oversight of school academic performance.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	At least half of the Board meeting minutes include evidence of oversight of school academic performance.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Less than half of the Board meeting minutes or less include evidence of oversight of school academic performance.

<p><b>Data / Source:</b> Board Packet and Minutes, Authorizer-School Discussion</p> <p><b>Analysis:</b> The School meets this standard. The School Board monitored academic performance at board meetings regularly either as an agenda item or as part of the Director’s report. The School Board regularly monitors academic performance through examining academic achievement as an agenda items in board meetings, in the Director’s Report, in the Annual Report, and at the Annual Meeting. In their Annual Report, BGCS explained that they use the NWEA MAP Test as its standardized academic assessment tool for student achievement. Testing is conducted 3 times a year (Fall, Winter and Spring) and is used to guide instruction, set learning goal contracts with students and to measure school progress on school-wide goals in the Charter Contract. Evidence of monitoring the academic program and student results referenced in the following meeting minutes or Director’s Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On October 21, 2019 the school board reviewed the Fall NWEA MAP assessments scores.</li> <li>• In the January 2020 board meeting the Board reviewed winter MAPS scores which were completed by January 16, 2020.</li> <li>• In the April 2020 board meeting the Board discussed Q-Comp goals and revised plans on these goals due to lack of data (MAPS Testing, etc.) due to COVID-19.</li> <li>• In the June 2020 board meeting the Board reviewed the 2019-2020 Q-Comp Year End Report.</li> <li>• All of the weekly newsletters are included in each board packet. These newsletters include updates from classroom teachers as to what is happening academically in their classrooms.</li> </ul>
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<b>Standard 14: The school maintains a high level of parent, teacher and student satisfaction rates based on school conducted surveys and student/faculty retention rates.</b>		
	<b>2-Meets</b>	All of the following criteria are met: high levels of satisfaction of parent satisfaction is based on survey results of over 80%; high levels of student satisfaction based on achieving over 80% retention rates; and high levels of teacher satisfaction based on achieving over 80% staff retention rates.
<b>X</b>	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Two of three criteria are met: high levels of satisfaction of parent satisfaction is based on survey results of over 80%; high levels of student satisfaction based on achieving over 80% retention rates; and high levels of teacher satisfaction based on achieving over 80% staff retention rates.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Less than two of three criteria are met: high levels of satisfaction of parent satisfaction is based on survey results of over 80%; high levels of student satisfaction based on achieving over 80% retention rates; and high levels of teacher satisfaction based on achieving over 80% staff retention rates.

<p><b>Data / Source:</b> Annual Report, Submission Calendar, Authorizer-School Discussion</p> <p><b>Analysis:</b> The School partially met this standard. The School is small and year to year attrition percentages can fluctuate greatly, but overall, the school has maintained a student enrollment between 26-28. The FY 2020 student enrollment was presented as retention of 74.44% in the Annual Report. The parent satisfaction rate was 96.9% based on 13/13 respondents. The teacher survey affirmative rate was 89.4% based on 4/4 teachers and 45 questions. Teacher retention was 100%.</p>
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\* 124E.07 Subd. 8.(b) A charter school shall publish and maintain on the school's official Web site: (1) the meeting minutes of the board of directors and of members and committees having board-delegated authority, for at least 365 days from the date of publication; (2) directory information for the board of directors and for the

members of committees having board-delegated authority; and (3) identifying and contact information for the school's authorizer.

124E.07 Subd. 8.(b) (1) the meeting minutes: <http://www.birchgroveschool.com/index.cfm?pID=7428>

(2) board members: <http://www.birchgroveschool.com/index.cfm?pID=7428>

(3) authorizer: <http://www.birchgroveschool.com/index.cfm?pID=15927#ad-image-0>

124E.11 (b) ... The charter school must develop and publish, including on its Web site, a lottery policy and process that it must use when accepting pupils by lot.

124E.11 (b) lottery policy: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9xCxo7j-Ca1YUVEN0czbEF1NEU/view>

124E.11 (d) ... a charter school may establish and publish on its Web site a policy for admission of selected pupils at an earlier age, consistent with the enrollment process in paragraphs (b) and (c).

124E.11 (d) admission of selected pupils at an earlier age: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9xCxo7j-Ca1QUpnalM5NGdaLU0/view>

124E.13 Subd. 3. (b) (3) post on the school Web site the name, mailing address, bylaws, minutes of board meetings, and names of the current board of directors of the affiliated nonprofit building corporation

The school does not have an affiliated building corporation.

124E.16 Subd. 2. Annual public reports. (a) .... A charter school must post the annual report on the school's official Website.

124E.16 Subd. 2. Annual public report:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5S56FG0hwsXR05aLUFVUE8xWnc/view>

**Standard 15: Board documents are distributed to all board members at least 3 days prior to a board meeting.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	Board documents were distributed to all board members at least 3 days prior to each board meeting.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Board documents were not distributed to all board members one or two times.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Board documents were not distributed to all board members three or more times.

**Data / Source:** Board Packet and Minutes, submission email dates.

**Analysis:** The School meets this standard. VOA meeting minute logs confirms that the school has regularly adhered to providing information 3 days in advance of board meetings. All meeting notices and packets were on time to the Board.

**Governance Standard 16: The Board of Directors maintains a Board Documents Binder which includes meeting minutes, bylaws and articles of incorporation and financial statements; and statutory requirements for posting board related information on the school's website\*.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	A complete Board Documents Binder is kept includes meeting minutes, bylaws and articles of incorporation and financial statements; and the school's website includes the statutory requirements for posting board-related information.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Complete information is available both in a binder and on the school's website; but there are 1-2 incidents of minutes not being posted after board approval.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Information is incomplete in the binder or on the school's website.

**Data / Source:** Website, Board Documentation, Authorizer-School Discussion

**Analysis:** The School meets this standard. The School Board has a Documents Binder which includes meeting minutes, bylaws and articles of incorporation and financial statements and is located in the school office records room for public access and all board members have digital access to it. Board documents can also be found at the school's Web site at:

Bylaws, Annual Report, WBWF Report, Authorizer, Board minutes, Policies, Student Handbook, forms and board member and committee membership information can all be found on the BGCS website.  
All required items were posted on the School’s Website.

**Governance Standard 17: The Board has a policy review calendar and reviews and updates its policies as needed or required by state law.**

	<b>2-Meets</b>	The Board has a thorough policy review calendar/plan and review policies as a regular component of regular board meetings.
<b>X</b>	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The Board has a policy review calendar/plan and reviews policies at half or fewer of the regular board meetings.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Board does not have a calendar/plan for policy review and/or reviews policies at half or fewer of the regular meetings.

**Data / Source:** Website, Board Documentation, Authorizer-School Discussion

**Analysis:** The School partially meets this standard. While the Board Chair stated that the school has an annual policy review plan, less than half of the meetings included policy review. Some policies were reviewed including:

- At the January 2020 board meeting the Board reviewed and approved Policy 714 Fund Balance.
- At the February Special Board Meeting the Board approved Policy 102-2 Application and Lottery Policy.
- In May there was an action to change the absence/fee policy for Community Service Programming.

**Standards Met Past 3 Years**

2020	32/34	94%
2019	34/34	100%
2018	34/34	100%

**SECTION PART II: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS**

Effective day to day operations of a charter school support the Learning Program. A well-run school provides an environment in which staff and students can perform at the highest possible level and more effectively reach the school’s goals. Management and operations of the school will be monitored and reported by the authorizer using the Formal Site Visit Rubric. The standards also serve as the criteria for contract renewal determinations. The authorizer reserves the right to have flexibility to reasonably amend these standards /expectations as needed. Standards for Management and Operations are judged on the Formal Site Visit Rubric and monitoring of reporting compliance.

One of the most important ways VOA-MN gathers information about the schools it authorizes is through on-site visits. Site visits allow the authorizer to observe the school, hear directly from key stakeholders, and corroborate school-reported information and data. VOA-MN conducts two different types of site visits: Formal and Informal. School site visits help inform the extent to which the school is meeting the charter school contract provisions contained in the body of the contract. Formal Site Visits are typically conducted once per year by a member of the VOA-MN Authorizing Program Leadership Team. The school’s evaluation on each standard is listed in the table below.

**Standard 1: Mission and vision are central to the school’s identity and inform all decision-making processes. The school’s learning program exemplifies the mission and vision of the school.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	Mission and vision are central to the school’s identity and inform all decision-making processes. The school’s learning program exemplifies the mission and vision of the school.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	Mission and vision are displayed in the facility, on website and in annual report, but evidence that they guide decision-making and programming are missing.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	Mission and vision are not used to guide school’s decision-making.

**Data / Source:** Website, Board Packets, Annual Report, Site Visits, Authorizer-School Discussion

**Analysis:** Mission posted in every school room, entry board, on newsletters, board meeting agendas, and mission read before every school board meeting.

**Standard 2: The school has a plan for Service Learning that connects classroom learning with real life lessons that come through service.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school has a plan for Service Learning that connects classroom learning with real life lessons that come through service.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school has a service-learning plan, but without evidence of a connection between the plan and service activities.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school does not have a plan for service learning. School does not engage in service.

**Data / Source:** Annual Report, Authorizer-School Discussion

**Analysis:** The school’s Service-Learning Plan is contained on the school website. Though more recent service projects were limited by COVID restrictions. Over the contract term, the school engaged students in a number of quality service projects in their community and displayed these activities on a designated bulletin board in the school.

**Standard 3: The school maintains a safe and healthy environment per state and federal guides and board policy. (e.g., facility /ADA, building inspections, school liability insurance, student medical / health matters, school drills).**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school can provide evidence that it complies with health and safety requirements for public schools.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school is making progress approaching standard.
	<b>-Does Not Meet</b>	The school could not provide evidence of compliance with health and safety requirements for public schools.

**Data / Source:** Board Policy Review, Site Visits, Compliance Binder

**Analysis:**  
Faculty receive required training on health and safety procedures.  X  Yes \_

List of 2019-20 health and safety related professional development training topics:  
Blood Borne Pathogens  
Crisis Management

Drill Overview

Mandatory Reporting

- *NOTE: School should have evacuation routes posted in each room of the facility.*

School complies with MS 121A.035 – Crisis Management Policy.  Yes  No

Number of fire drills completed 2019-20 school year 4. (req. five annually) – one short due to COVID distance learning.

Number of lockdown/safety drills completed 2019-20 school year 4.

Number of tornado drills completed 2019-20 school year 0.

Not completed due to COVID and switch to distance learning.

Designated crisis management person team: Diane Blanchette (Tornado drill completed annually during national TAW)

- *The authorizer continues to suggest that the school invite the Sheriff's department to come for a visit to the school and discussion of "what if." There was also a discussion of conducting drills at different points throughout the day (recess, arrival, dismissal, lunch).*

Classrooms & shared spaces contain evacuation plans / procedures.  Yes  No

School complies with MS 299F.47 - School Inspections.  Yes  No

Date of most recent facility inspection by fire department: 07/2019 (must be a minimum of every three years)

School maintains a log of all visitors.  Yes  No

- *The facility has a locked, doorbell entry. The school exists in a shared space. A school visitor sign in log is located in the director's office. The clinic, fitness center, and senior center all maintain their own logs. The building security camera monitor is located in the school director's office. (2019 no change).*

School complies with MS 144.29 Health Records; Children of School Age.  Yes  No

Responsible employee: Diane Blanchette, Jessica Klemmer

School complies with MS 121A.15 - Health Standards; Immunizations; School Children.

Yes  No

Designated responsible employee: Diane Blanchette, Jessica Klemmer *School contracts with Charter School Health to complete the immunization submissions and on call for services like oversight of 504 plans as needed.*

School complies with MS 121A.22 – Administration of Drugs and Medicine.  Yes  No

Designated responsible health aid/employee: Diane Blanchette

When needed, have parent fill out the Medication Administration Form, labeled bottles only, and Ms. Blanchette is charged with that responsibility. Medicine needs to be in an original container.

School complies with MS 121A.21 – School Health Services (if applicable).  Yes  No

The school contracts with a licensed school nurse or organization.  Yes  No

Name/Organization: School is looking into contracting with a new registered nurse for the required submissions to the state and for assistance if/when the school has a student on a 504 Plan (none presently).

School has a designated 504 Coordinator  X  Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
 504 Coordinator Name & Position: Diane Blanchette  
 School has a process to ensure that student accommodations are consistent with 504 Plans.  X  Yes  
 Number of enrolled students presently on a 504 plan: 0

Additional Evidence for Authorizer Review: A school “Crisis Management” binder is available near the entry of each room of the school. The school’s Crises Management Policy is #806. The adjacent Forest Service is headquarters (safe spot) in the event of an emergency. The BGCS web-based contact information can be accessed at the Forest Service.

**Standard 4: Evidence suggests that the school engages parents and students in ways that build positive relationships and engages them as partners in their child’s learning.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school provides ample evidence that the organization engages parents and students in ways that build positive relationships and engages them as partners in their child’s learning.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school is making progress approaching standard.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school could not provide evidence that it has a plan or activities to engage parents and students in ways that build positive relationships and engages them as partners in their child’s learning.

**Data / Source:** Website, Annual Report, Authorizer-School Discussion

**Analysis:**

Parent – Teacher conferences 2 x per year. Each student has an academic goal contract signed by parents, teacher, and student.  
 Weekly Newsletters – includes classroom updates on “what we did in class.” Newsletters are sent by email to all parents and are on the school website.  
 Monthly Community Lunch with student projects/work on display  
 Facebook  
 Website  
 Surveys  
 Events: Gala, Rib Festival, Halloween Carnival, Papa Charlies event.

**Standard 5: Evidence suggests that the school teachers are covering the scope and sequence of the state academic standards and engaging in data-driven decision-making.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2 - Meets</b>	Evidence suggests that the school has established a uniform system to ensure that the school-teachers are covering the scope and sequence of the state academic standards and monitoring student progress toward comprehension.
	<b>1 -Partially Meets</b>	The school leadership provided some examples of how he/she provides oversight that school-teachers are covering the scope and sequence of the state academic standards, but systemic plan for monitoring progress and data-driven decision-making was lacking.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school does not have a system established to ensure that school-teachers are covering the scope and sequence of the state academic standards &/or does not engage in data-driven decision-making.

**Data / Source:** MCA Results, Site Visits, Authorizer-School Discussion

**Analysis:** The State standards must be incorporated into lessons plans that must be handed in weekly to School Director for review.

Most recent curriculum standards alignment review for language arts: (2019 edition- Houghton-Mifflin “Journeys”)

Most recent curriculum standards alignment review for math: (2019 edition Houghton-Mifflin “Math Expressions.”)

Most recent curriculum standards alignment review for science: Houghton Mifflin Science purchased end of year 2020

Most recent curriculum standards alignment review for social studies: 16-17

- The school requires that the state standards be imbedded in lesson plans (Ms. Blanchette monitors blocking and spacing/progress meeting the standards.

Management requires that lesson plans and student learning targets are aligned to the state standards.  X  Yes   No. School reviews fall NWEA data and previous year MCA results. To help reduce “summer slide,” the school keeps the library open all summer and “Camp Site Kids” has 30 minutes of reading each day and is many times run by licensed teachers.

School has a well-defined plan for ensuring that teachers engage in data-driven instruction to ensure student mastery of state standards.  X  Yes   No Explanation of school plan: Assessment results are discussed after every NWEA test as well as throughout the year during weekly Q-Comp/Staff meetings. A benefit of being a small school is that each child’s academic progress is monitored at weekly meetings.

**Standard 6: The school employs highly qualified, appropriately licensed teachers.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2 -Meets</b>	The school provides evidence of exemplary hiring processes that ensure teachers are properly credentialed. There have been no license infractions over the contract term.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school has had two or fewer teacher license infractions and they were swiftly resolved. Evidence suggests that the school has systems to recruit quality licensed teachers.
	<b>0- Does Not Meet</b>	The school has had multiple license infractions over the contract term.

**Data / Source:** VOA-MN Submission Calendar, STAR Report, Site Visits, Authorizer-School Discussions.

**Analysis:** The authorizer annually verifies that the school’s teachers are appropriately- licenced in the state of Minnesota. The school administration and board tries hard to retain its teachers in a very competitive market.

**Standard 7: Criminal background checks are conducted on all persons per the board policy and Minn. Stat. 123B.03, Subd.1.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school provided evidence that it adheres to statute and policy pertaining to conducting criminal background checks on employees and school volunteers.
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	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school could not provide evidence that it adheres to statute and policy pertaining to conducting criminal background checks on employees, but not on school volunteers.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school could not provide evidence that it adheres to statute and policy pertaining to conducting criminal background checks on employees and school volunteers.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Board Policy, Handbook, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> Background checks are done at initial employment / first volunteer activity, and then every 3-4 years.		

<b>Standard 8: The school meets / maintains its enrollment goals.</b>		
X	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school could provide evidence that it is meeting its annual student enrollment goals.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	N/A
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school is not meeting its student enrollment goals.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Site Visits, School Budget, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> The school has a small enrollment due to its geographic location in an area of scares population. The school works hard at marketing and fund-raising to offset natural enrollment fluctuations.		
2020-21 Enrollment as of 2/23/2021 <b>43</b> – increased enrollment due to surrounding school safe learning plan models		
2020-21 Student Enrollment by Grade:		
K: 8; 1: 9; 2: 7; 3: 8; 4: 5; 5: 6		
Number of students served 2019-2020: 24.65		
Number of students served 2018-19: 30.77		
Number of students served 2017-18: 28		
Number of students served 2016-17: 28		

<b>Standard 9: The school institutes a fair and open student admission process that complies with Minnesota law.</b>		
X	<b>2 -Meets</b>	The school provides evidence of adherence with state laws and guidelines pertaining to student admission.
	<b>1- Partially Meets</b>	The school provides evidence of adherence with state laws and guidelines pertaining to student admission. The school has been the subject of state investigation with findings.
	<b>0- Does Not Meet</b>	The school could not provide evidence of adherence with state laws and guidelines pertaining to student admission.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Website, Application Form, Policy, Authorizer-School Discussion.		
<b>Analysis:</b> The authorizer reviews the school application process and student application annually during school site visits to ensure compliance.		
Policy 102 - Equal Educational Opportunity – on website		
Policy 102/2 - Admission Policy – on website		

**Standard 10: The school’s employment process complies with state and federal law.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school provides evidence that its employment process complies with state and federal law.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school is making progress meeting standard.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school could not provide evidence that its employment process complies with state and federal law.

**Data / Source:** Policy Review, Authorizer-School Discussion.

**Analysis:** Background checks are done at employment / first volunteer activity, and then every 3-4 years.

Policies on website:

Policy #401 – Equal Employment Opportunity

Policy #402 – Disability Nondiscrimination

Policy #406 – Public and Private Personnel Data

Policy #422 – Nepotism

Director Blanchette is responsible for oversight of teacher licensing. Offer letters are distributed annually. Job descriptions verified by authorizer electronically. Copies of each teacher license is contained in the compliance binder and emailed to VOA-MN annually.

Teachers receive three observation/evaluations per year aligned to the school Q-Comp plan and one formal at year end with director. Nonteaching staff are reviewed annually.

Q-Comp 3 observations are completed for 20-21.

Student / Employee legal records are filed in a separate locked cabinet.  X  Yes   No   NA

Location: school office locked cabinet, but school does not have any at this time. Authorizer verified that health records are filed separate from the academic records and are only shared on a “need to know” basis.

Student/Employee health records are filed in a separate locked cabinet.  X  Yes   No

Location: school office in locked cabinet, but school does not have any at this time (accept for immunization records). Authorizer shared that health records must not be filed in the same cabinet as the academic records (should only be available on a “need to know” basis).

School has Tennessee Warnings for both the enrollment and employment process.  X  Yes   No

- Sample contained in the Compliance Binder and forms get signed annually.

Only designated school employees have access to files containing student/employee records.  X  Yes   No

School has a board approved Data Request Policy / Procedures.  X  Yes   No  
Policy #515 (near the end) - Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records

School maintains a detailed register/log of all data requests.  X  Yes   No

**Standard 11: The school has defined job descriptions and defined evaluation process for all personnel.**

<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school could provide evidence of job descriptions for all employee positions and aligned to an evaluation process.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school could provide evidence of job descriptions for most employee positions but did not have a defined evaluation process.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school could not provide evidence of job descriptions for all employee positions and aligned to an evaluation process.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Job Descriptions and evaluation forms, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> Job descriptions are incorporated with employment offer letters.		

<b>Standard 12: The school complies with IDEA, special education laws and school’s TSES plan, including “Child Find.” Applicable training is provided to faculty annually.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school could provide evidence of compliance with IDEA, special education laws and school’s TSES plan, including “Child Find.”
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school could provide evidence of compliance with IDEA, special education laws and school’s TSES plan, including “Child Find.” However, the school has been the subject of MDE complaint investigation with findings.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school could not provide evidence of compliance with IDEA, special education laws and school’s TSES plan, including “Child Find.”
<b>Data / Source:</b> School Policies, Handbook, Child Find and Child Study Process Documents/Forms, Sped Director Contract, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> Child Find generally begins in the classroom, by classroom teacher. Due to small teacher to student ratios, concerns/issues can be observed fairly quickly and efficiently. Concerns/issues are discussed at weekly staff meetings that include the special education teacher. Appropriate interventions are discussed, implemented, documented and discussed to find if successful or if potential referral needed. Parents and staff involved in referral potential. Informal discussions also occur during weekly meetings and special education teacher participates. Brief description of how school ensures adherence to Child Find/Study process: School special education teacher and school director ensure adherence to school Child Find, Child Study/Response to Intervention, and documentation throughout the IEP process monitoring compliance at each stage.		

<b>Standard 13: The school provides professional development annually to faculty on special education to ensure school compliance with Child Find and other special education laws.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school could provide evidence that it provides training to faculty at least annually.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	N/A
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school could not provide evidence of training to faculty on special education.
<b>Data / Source:</b> Professional Development Calendar, Authorizer-School Discussion		
<b>Analysis:</b> Annual faculty training Topics include: Child Find, Child Study / RtI, and evaluation process completed on 08/28/19 and again on 9/02/20 lead by Indigo Education.		

<b>Standard 14: The school is not subject to special education investigations by MDE and is not in Corrective Action.</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school is not subject to special education investigations by MDE and is not in corrective action or is adhering to their plan to resolve concerns.
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school has been the subject of MDE investigations with findings. Progress has been observed to resolve findings.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school has been the subject of MDE investigations with findings. Findings have not been resolved.
<b>Data / Source:</b> MDE Notice, Authorizer-School Discussion.		
<b>Analysis:</b> The school is not the subject of any investigations to the authorizers knowledge. Date of last special education program audit: 2019-20 during COVID – Exemplary Status achieved Date of last special education financial audit: 2016- 2017		

<b>Standard 15: The school is compliant with laws pertaining to special education directors and Advisor Council (SEAC).</b>		
<b>X</b>	<b>2-Meets</b>	The school could provide evidence that it is compliant with laws pertaining to special education directors and Advisor Council (SEAC).
	<b>1-Partially Meets</b>	The school contracts with a special education director but could not provide evidence that it has a SEAC that meets at least annually.
	<b>0-Does Not Meet</b>	The school could not provide evidence that it is compliant with laws pertaining to special education directors and Advisor Council (SEAC).
<b>Data / Source:</b> SEAC Meeting Notice, Minutes, Authorizer-School Discussion.		
<b>Analysis:</b> Noreen Foster, Indigo Education SE Director File Number: File #380968 School Evidence for Authorizer Review: Discussion. Relationship has been positive and helpful.  <b>SEAC meeting dates:</b> FY 21 meeting date: September 28, 2020 FY20 meeting date was September 16, 2019 FY19 meeting date: April 10, 2018 FY18 anticipated meeting date(s): November 14, 2017 FY 17 meeting date(S): October 18, 2016		

**Legal and Contractual Compliance**

Charter schools are required to follow many state and federal laws pertaining to all public schools and are expected to uphold all provisions of the charter school contract. VOA-MN expects compliance with legal and contractual obligations. Each VOA-MN authorized charter school shall maintain a Compliance Binder on site that includes VOA-MN defined evidence of compliance with state and federal statutes organized in the manner prescribed by VOA-MN. Additionally, VOA-MN authorized charter schools shall submit information to the authorizer in accordance with the VOA-MN prescribed Annual Submission Calendar. *This area is not calculated separately and instead is imbedded in the three sections above.*

**Weighting of Performance Measures used during the contract renewal process is as follows:**

- 50% weighting: Academic Program (statutory purposes, including primary purpose)
- 20% weighting: Financial Sustainability
- 30% weighting: Organization
- 15% governance
- 15% management & compliance

**Contract Renewal Eligibility**

VOA-MN schools must achieve 70% of points possible in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area (Academic, Financial, Organizational Performance) to be eligible for a three-year contract renewal. VOA-MN schools must achieve 80% or greater of points possible in the Performance Framework overall and meet the majority of standards in each performance area to be eligible for a five-year contract renewal. All contract renewals will be for either three or five years. Fewer than three years does not provide enough information on which to make a renewal decision.

If a school is performing below standard to receive a three-year renewal contract, but has agreed to the authorizer terms and conditions set forth in the School Improvement Plan to correct areas of deficiency, VOA-MN may agree to extend a school’s contract (not to exceed five years) to provide additional time for a school to improve performance as an alternative to termination. If sufficient school improvement is not being made by the end of the 1st year of the extension, termination proceedings will commence.

**BG Final Contract Renewal Calculation Based on Meeting Standards**

- Academic Standards Point Total: 10/10
- Financial Management Point Total: 14/20
- Board Governance Point Total: 32/34
- School Management and Operations: 30/30

	Meets Standard Points	Partially Does Not Meets Standard Points	Meet Standard Points	Total Points	Weight	Percent
Academic	10	2	0	10/10	.50	50.00%
Finance	16	2	0	14/20	.20	14.00%
Governance	30	1	1	32/34	.15	14.12%
Mgmt/Operations	30	0	0	30/30	.15	15.00%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>86/98</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>93.12%</b>

BGCS received a score of 93.12%. The school is performing strong in all areas. The section of standards where the school scored the lowest was financial management, much of which is due to being a very small rural school. Overall, BGCS is a high functioning school that VOA-MN is pleased to have in our Network of authorized charter schools. Based on the calculations above, BGCS has earned a five-year renewal contract.