

**ECS**

**2020-2021**

**VISITATION/**

**FINAL**

**REPORTS**



# New York State Education Department

## ***Renewal Site Visit Report*** **2020-2021**

### **Enterprise Charter School**

**Visit Date: January 12 and 26, 2021**  
**Date of Report: February 21, 2021**

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## SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

### Charter School Summary<sup>1</sup>

<b>Name of Charter School</b>	Enterprise Charter School
<b>Board Chair</b>	Michael Donlon
<b>District of location</b>	Buffalo City School District
<b>Opening Date</b>	August 2003
<b>Charter Terms</b>	Initial: March 2003-March 2008 1 <sup>st</sup> Renewal: March 2008-June 30, 2010 2 <sup>nd</sup> Renewal: July 1, 2010-June 30, 2013 3 <sup>rd</sup> Renewal: July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014 4 <sup>th</sup> Renewal: July 1, 2014- June 30, 2016 5 <sup>th</sup> Renewal: July 1, 2016-June 30, 2019 6 <sup>th</sup> Renewal: July 1, 2019-June 30, 2021 7 <sup>th</sup> Renewal: TBD
<b>Current Term Authorized Grades/ Approved Enrollment</b>	K – Grade 8/ 405 students
<b>Proposed Renewal Term Authorized Grades/ Proposed Approved Enrollment</b>	TBD
<b>Comprehensive Management Service Provider</b>	None
<b>Educational Partners</b>	None
<b>Facilities</b>	275 Oak Street, Buffalo, New York 14203
<b>Mission Statement</b>	<i>Engaging Young Minds Through Projects and Partnerships</i>
<b>Key Design Elements</b>	N/A
<b>Requested Revisions</b>	None

**Noteworthy:** It is also important to note that Enterprise Charter School was able to transition staff and students quickly and efficiently to full remote instruction due to COVID-19 pandemic. ECS ensured students socio-emotional needs were the priority providing meals and technology to families.

### Renewal Outcomes

The following renewal outcomes are possible:

- **Full-Term Renewal:** A school's charter may be renewed for the maximum term of five years. For a school to be eligible for a full-term renewal, during the current charter term the school must have compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or exceeding Benchmark 1, and at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all other performance benchmarks in the Framework.
- **Short-Term Renewal:** A school's charter may be renewed for a shorter term, typically of three years. As discussed above, the Regents will place an even greater emphasis on student performance for schools applying for their second or subsequent renewal, which is consistent

<sup>1</sup> The information in this section was provided by the NYS Education Department Charter School Office.

with the greater time that a school has been in operation and the corresponding increase in the quantity and quality of student achievement data that the school has generated. In order for a school to be eligible for short-term renewal, a school must either:

- (a) have compiled a mixed or limited record of meeting Benchmark 1, but at the time of the renewal analysis, have met substantially all of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework which will likely result in the school's being able to meet Benchmark 1 with the additional time that short-term renewal permits, **or**
- (b) have compiled an overall record of meeting Benchmark 1 but falls far below meeting one or more of the other performance benchmarks in the Framework.
- **Non-Renewal:** A school's charter will not be renewed if the school does not apply for renewal or the school fails to meet the criteria for either full-term or short-term renewal. In the case of non-renewal, a school's charter will be terminated upon its expiration and the school will be required to comply with the Charter School Office's Closing Procedures to ensure an orderly closure by the end of the school year.

**Please Note:** The Regents may include additional terms, conditions, and/or requirements in a school's Full-Term or Short-Term Renewal charter to address specific situations or areas of concern. For example, a school may meet the standards for full-term renewal or short-term renewal with regard to its educational success, but may be required to address organizational deficiencies that need to be corrected but do not prevent the Regents from making the required legal findings for renewal. A school may also meet the standards for full-term renewal or short-term renewal of only a portion of its educational program (e.g., for the elementary school program, but not the middle school program). Such additional terms and/or requirements may include, but are not limited to, restrictions on the number of students and grades to be served by the school, additional student performance metrics, heightened reporting requirements, or specific corrective action.

### SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

#### Current Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2016 to 2017	Year 2 2017 to 2018	Year 3 2018 to 2019	Year 4 2019 to 2020	Year 5 2020 to 2021
Grade Configuration	Grades K - 8	Grades K - 8	Grades K - 8	Grades K - 8	Grades K - 8
Total Approved Enrollment	405	405	405	405	405

#### Proposed Renewal Term Grade Levels and Approved Enrollment

	Year 1 2019 to 2020	Year 2 2020 to 2021	Year 3 2021 to 2022	Year 4 2022 to 2023	Year 5 2023 to 2024
Grade Configuration	Grades K - 8	Grades K - 8	Grades K - 8	Grades K - 8	Grades K - 8
Total Approved Enrollment	405	405	405	405	405

## METHODOLOGY

A virtual **two-day** renewal site visit was conducted at **Enterprise Charter School (ECS)** on both January 12<sup>th</sup> and January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The Buffalo City School District- Office of Shared Accountability (BPS-OSA) team conducted interviews with the school leadership team, students, and parents as well as classroom observations.

The team conducted fifteen virtual classroom observations in Grades K-8. The observations were approximately 15-20 minutes in length and conducted jointly with BPS Content Area Directors: C. W. Brandy (Social Studies), Dr. Julie Romain (English Language Arts), Tatiana Merrick (Science), and JaDawn Wagstaff (Mathematics); BPS Multilingual Department: Elizabeth Zuch and Dan Murtha; BPS Special Education Department: Robyn Tate; along with the ECS leadership team Julie Schwab, Principal.

The documents and data reviewed by the team before, during, and after the site visit included the following:

- **School Curriculum**
- **Board materials (roster, minutes, and strategic plan, if applicable) submitted during school year**
- **School self-reflection and inventories (a. curriculum and instruction, b. professional development, c. social-emotional learning, d. family and community engagement)**
- **Benchmark 1, Benchmark 2, Benchmark 3, Benchmark 7, and Benchmark 8 evidences**

## BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The Performance Framework, which is part of the oversight plan included in the Charter Agreement for each school, outlines 10 Performance Framework benchmarks in three key areas of charter school performance:

- Educational Success
- Organizational Soundness
- Faithfulness to Charter and Law

Observational findings from the review of the renewal application, supporting data, and the site visit will be presented in alignment with the Performance Framework benchmarks and Indicators according to the rating scale below, although not all indicators will necessarily be assessed on every site visit. A brief summary of the school's strengths will precede the benchmark analysis. Each benchmark will be rated; however, the report narrative will highlight those indicators not fully met by the school.

Level	Description
<b>Exceeds</b>	The school meets the performance benchmark; potential exemplar in this area.
<b>Meets</b>	The school generally meets the performance benchmark; few concerns are noted.
<b>Approaches</b>	The school does not meet the performance benchmark; a number of concerns are noted.
<b>Falls Far Below</b>	The school falls far below the performance benchmark; significant concerns are noted.

For the site visit conducted on January 12<sup>th</sup> and January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at Enterprise Charter School, see the following Performance Framework benchmark scores and discussion.

**New York State Education Department  
Charter School Performance Framework Rating**

	Performance Benchmark	Level
Educational Success	<b>Benchmark 1: Student Performance:</b> The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).	Approaches
	<b>Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning:</b> School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.	Approaches
	<b>Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Family Engagement:</b> The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.	Meets
Organizational Soundness	<b>Benchmark 4: Financial Condition:</b> The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.	Meets
	<b>Benchmark 5: Financial Management:</b> The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.	Approaches
	<b>Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance:</b> The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.	Meets
	<b>Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity:</b> The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.	Approaches
Faithfulness to Charter & Law	<b>Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements:</b> The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.	Meets
	<b>Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention:</b> The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.	Approaches
	<b>Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance:</b> The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.	Meets



## Summary of Findings

### Consultant (one page maximum):

- *Enterprise Charter School is in year 18 of operation and serves students in Grades K through 8. During its current charter term, the school is rated in the following manner: exceeding 0 benchmarks, meeting 5 benchmarks, approaching 5 benchmarks, and falling far below 0 benchmark.*
- **Areas of Strengths:** Enterprise Charter has a mission of *Engaging Young Minds Through Projects and Partnerships*. ECS has placed a lot of effort in providing students with such experiences through various community partnerships (as cited in Benchmark 8) and resources to support the behavioral and instructional program design. It is important to note that ECS quickly opened a food pantry to supports students and families in the midst of a pandemic and technology and hot spots were provided to all students to ensure they has access to instruction.
- **Areas in Need of Improvement:** The school leaders must continue to have a strong focus on instruction and ensuring that instruction is both rigorous and aligned to the curriculum and authentic assessments so that data can be utilized to make instructional decisions that are best for all learners. Additionally, teachers must continue to be supported in ways that provide them with the skills to differentiate lessons for multiple modalities of learners and student groups, as well as create and deliver lessons that engage students in higher order thinking skills.

### Benchmark 1: Student Performance

*The school has met or exceeded achievement indicators for academic trends toward proficiency, proficiency and high school graduation. At all grade levels and all assessments, scoring proficiently means achieving a performance level of 3 or higher (high school Regents and Common Core Regents exam score of 65 or higher).*

#### Finding: Approaches

#### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 1:

##### Indicator 1: All Schools

###### *1.a.i. Accountability - ESEA Accountability Designation:*

This school is designated as a school in Good Standing under current New York State criteria as defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

###### *1.b.i. Similar Schools Comparison – Comparative Proficiency:*

This metric is being updated.

##### Indicator 2: Elementary/Middle School Outcomes

*2.a.i. and 2.a.ii. Trending Toward Proficiency – Aggregate and Subgroup Standards-Based Trend Toward Proficiency: See Table 1 below.*

**Table 1: Elementary/Middle School Trending Toward Proficiency – Target = 75%**

		2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
ELA	All Students	32%	21%	39%	27%
	SWD	26%	24%	29%	22%
	ELL/MLL	15%	29%	38%	25%
	ED	31%	21%	41%	26%
Math	All Students	18%	26%	14%	19%
	SWD	20%	23%	11%	12%
	ELL/MLL	4%	18%	13%	6%
	ED	18%	26%	13%	19%

*\*See NOTES (2), (3), (7), and (8) below.*

###### *2.a.i. Trending Toward Proficiency – Aggregate Standards-Based Trend Toward Proficiency:*

Twenty-seven percent of all students in ELA and 19% of all students in mathematics are currently trending towards proficiency for the most current year of academic data. The trend toward proficiency shows a slight increase in mathematics and a decline in ELA from the previous year. **No State assessment data has been collected for SY2019-20 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the cancellation of NYS Assessments.**

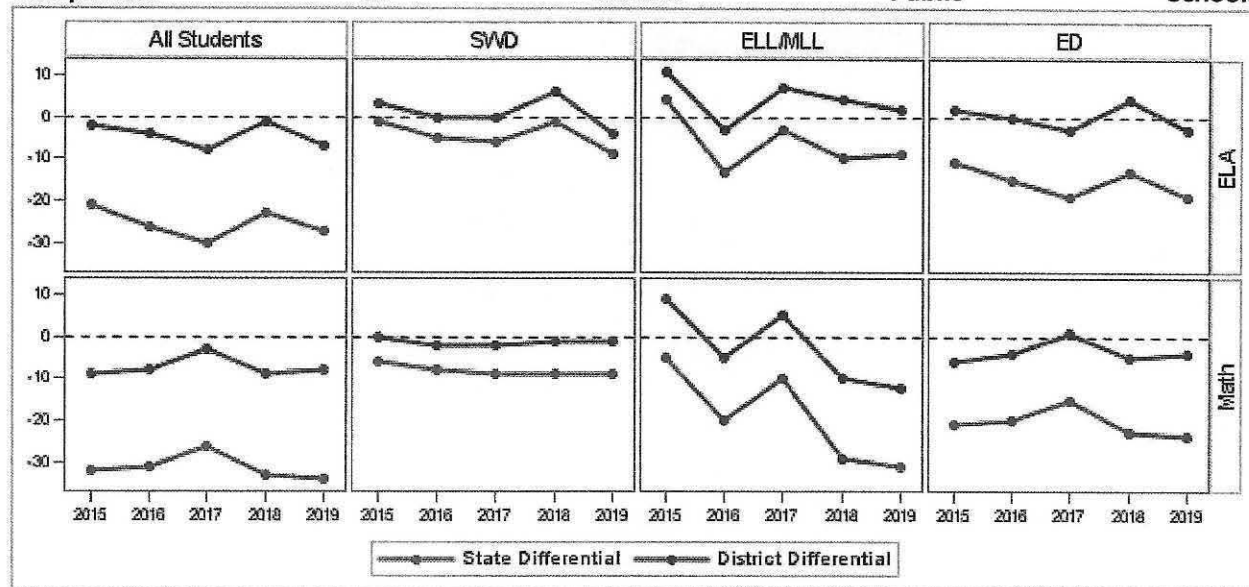
###### *2.a.ii. Trending Toward Proficiency - Subgroup Standards-Based Trend Toward Proficiency:*

No subgroups have met the target for trending toward proficiency. Across subgroups, there was a decline from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019. All subgroups average approximately 25% proficiency in ELA. In mathematics, there was a small increase for students with disability and economically disadvantaged

students, but a marked decrease of 50% among ELL/MLL students. There continues to be a decline in proficiency for all subgroups since 2016-2017. **No State assessment data has been collected for SY2019-20 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the cancellation of NYS Assessments.**

2.b.i. and 2.b.ii Proficiency - Aggregate and Subgroup School Level Proficiency: See Figure 1 and Table 2 below.

**Figure 1: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency State and District Differentials Over Time Comparison to Buffalo Public Schools**



\* See NOTES (1), (2), (3), and (6) below.

**Table 2: Elementary/Middle School Assessment Proficiency Outcomes: Charter School, District, and NYS**

		ELA					Math				
		Enterprise CS	Buffalo City SD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Enterprise CS	Buffalo City SD	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
All Students	2014-2015	10%	12%	-2	31%	-21	6%	15%	-9	38%	-32
	2015-2016	12%	16%	-4	38%	-26	8%	16%	-8	39%	-31
	2016-2017	10%	18%	-8	40%	-30	14%	17%	-3	40%	-26
	2017-2018	22%	23%	-1	45%	-23	12%	21%	-9	45%	-33
	2018-2019	18%	25%	-7	45%	-27	13%	21%	-8	47%	-34
SWD	2014-2015	6%	3%	+3	7%	-1	6%	6%	0	12%	-6
	2015-2016	4%	4%	0	9%	-5	4%	6%	-2	12%	-8
	2016-2017	5%	5%	0	11%	-6	5%	7%	-2	14%	-9
	2017-2018	15%	9%	+6	16%	-1	8%	9%	-1	17%	-9
	2018-2019	6%	10%	-4	15%	-9	9%	10%	-1	18%	-9
ELL/MLL	2014-2015	14%	3%	+11	10%	+4	14%	5%	+9	19%	-5
	2015-2016	0%	3%	-3	13%	-13	0%	5%	-5	20%	-20
	2016-2017	9%	2%	+7	12%	-3	9%	4%	+5	19%	-10
	2017-2018	15%	11%	+4	25%	-10	0%	10%	-10	29%	-29
	2018-2019	16%	14%	+2	25%	-9	0%	12%	-12	31%	-31
ED	2014-2015	10%	8%	+2	21%	-11	6%	12%	-6	27%	-21
	2015-2016	12%	12%	0	27%	-15	8%	12%	-4	28%	-20
	2016-2017	10%	13%	-3	29%	-19	14%	13%	+1	29%	-15
	2017-2018	23%	19%	+4	36%	-13	11%	16%	-5	34%	-23
	2018-2019	17%	20%	-3	36%	-19	13%	17%	-4	37%	-24

\*See NOTES (1), (2), (3), (6), and (7) below

2.b.iii. Aggregate Grade Level Proficiency: See Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Aggregate Grade Level Proficiency**

		ELA					Math				
		Enterprise CS	Buffalo Public Schools	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS	Enterprise CS	Buffalo Public Schools	Differential to District	NYS	Differential to NYS
Grade 3	2014-2015	11%	12%	-1	31%	-20	15%	18%	-3	42%	-27
	2015-2016	11%	20%	-9	42%	-31	13%	20%	-7	44%	-31
	2016-2017	4%	18%	-14	43%	-39	9%	22%	-13	48%	-39
	2017-2018	24%	32%	-8	51%	-27	20%	31%	-11	54%	-34
	2018-2019	12%	32%	-20	52%	-40	14%	28%	-14	55%	-41
Grade 4	2014-2015	14%	14%	0	33%	-19	2%	18%	-16	43%	-41
	2015-2016	7%	16%	-9	41%	-34	9%	18%	-9	45%	-36
	2016-2017	17%	18%	-1	41%	-24	29%	18%	+11	43%	-14
	2017-2018	17%	23%	-6	47%	-30	9%	20%	-11	48%	-39
	2018-2019	20%	28%	-8	48%	-28	14%	21%	-7	50%	-36
Grade 5	2014-2015	9%	11%	-2	30%	-21	6%	18%	-12	43%	-37
	2015-2016	11%	15%	-4	33%	-22	9%	18%	-9	40%	-31
	2016-2017	5%	15%	-10	35%	-30	12%	19%	-7	43%	-31
	2017-2018	16%	16%	0	37%	-21	16%	18%	-2	44%	-28
	2018-2019	7%	18%	-11	38%	-31	11%	20%	-9	46%	-35
Grade 6	2014-2015	7%	11%	-4	31%	-24	5%	15%	-10	39%	-34
	2015-2016	11%	15%	-4	34%	-23	9%	17%	-8	40%	-31
	2016-2017	15%	15%	0	32%	-17	20%	20%	0	40%	-20
	2017-2018	33%	25%	+8	49%	-16	18%	22%	-4	44%	-26
	2018-2019	30%	25%	+5	47%	-17	17%	22%	-5	47%	-30
Grade 7	2014-2015	8%	10%	-2	29%	-21	.	12%	-12	35%	-35
	2015-2016	8%	14%	-6	35%	-27	5%	12%	-7	36%	-31
	2016-2017	3%	20%	-17	42%	-39	3%	15%	-12	38%	-35
	2017-2018	28%	18%	+10	40%	-12	8%	19%	-11	41%	-33
	2018-2019	18%	18%	0	40%	-22	11%	16%	-5	43%	-32
Grade 8	2014-2015	11%	14%	-3	35%	-24	3%	9%	-6	22%	-19
	2015-2016	22%	18%	+4	41%	-19	2%	10%	-8	24%	-22
	2016-2017	14%	20%	-6	45%	-31	6%	7%	-1	22%	-16
	2017-2018	16%	25%	-9	48%	-32	.	14%	-14	30%	-30
	2018-2019	22%	27%	-5	48%	-26	7%	17%	-10	33%	-26

\*See NOTES (1), (6), and (7) below

**Indicator 3: High School Outcomes**

*Not applicable to this charter school.*

## Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

*School leaders have systems in place designed to cultivate shared accountability and high expectations and that lead to students' well-being, improved academic outcomes, and educational success. The school has rigorous and coherent curriculum and assessments that are aligned to the New York State Learning Standards (NYSLS) for all students. Teachers engage in strategic practices and decision-making in order to address the gap between what students know and need to learn so that all students experience consistent high levels of engagement, thinking and achievement.*

### Finding: Approaches

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The school has a documented curriculum that is aligned to the NYSLS.</li><li>b. Teachers use unit and lesson plans that introduce complex materials, stimulate higher order thinking, and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content.</li><li>c. The curriculum is aligned horizontally across classrooms at the same grade level and vertically between grades.</li><li>d. The curriculum is differentiated to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts.</li></ul>
2. Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The school staff has a common understanding of high-quality instruction, and observed instructional practices align to this understanding.</li><li>b. Instructional delivery fosters engagement with all students.</li></ul>
3. Assessment and Program Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The school uses a balanced system of formative, diagnostic and summative assessments.</li><li>b. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to inform instruction and improve student outcomes.</li><li>c. The school uses qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the academic program and modifies the program accordingly.</li></ul>
4. Supports for Diverse Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The school provides supports to meet the academic needs for all students, including but not limited to students with disabilities, English language learners, and economically disadvantaged students.</li><li>b. The school has systems to monitor the progress of individual students and facilitate communication between interventionists and classroom teachers regarding the needs of individual students.</li></ul>

### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2:

Within the school's professional development plan no evidence is provided regarding a focus on students with disabilities or Multilingual Learners. With the lack of coherence throughout the school to meet the needs of all students this is an area of professional development which needs an academic focus to ensure equity and access for all students, while building the staff's understanding of what specific subgroups of students need in order to be successful.

It is recommended that the leadership of Enterprise Charter School work with teachers to strengthen and improve their craft in the areas of student engagement, higher order thinking questions, and



differentiation-specifically as it related to subgroup populations, and employ strategies that align to the science, ELA and mathematics content, including the use of academic/content language.

1. Element: ***Curriculum (ELA)***:

- Indicator a: Documents submitted demonstrated that K-8 curriculum is aligned to current New York State standards. Based on the curriculum audit, the ELA curriculum was rated as 'Approaches' in alignment to the current New York State Learning Standards.
- Indicator b: While lesson plans included components designed to provide deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content, lessons were not modified to meet the needs of individual students or groups of students.
- Indicator c: Plans submitted and reviewed as part of the curriculum audit did not outline how grades are aligned horizontally or vertically.
- Indicator d: Differentiation was included in the plans submitted. However, the plan lists the same strategies for each class: "Teachers will use the following strategies and accommodations for students as directed or needed: Checks for Understanding (CFU) Wait Time (WT) Repeated Directions (RD) Preferential Seating (PS) Modified Classwork/Homework (M-CW/HW) Breaks As Needed (BAN) Task Analysis of Projects or Assignments (TA) Directions Simplified (DS)". There was a lesson plan card included for CT/Resource Grade 8. There was little evidence of Specially Designed Instruction or instructional supports for individual MLLs.

Element: ***Curriculum (Math)***

- Indicator a: The school has a documented curriculum aligned to the current New York State standards. However, it was not evident based on documents submitted for review that the curriculum and corresponding materials are differentiated for all student populations (ELL/MLL, SWD, etc.), nor was it evident that this curriculum is systematically reviewed and revised.
- Indicator b: During the teacher focus group, it was shared that Envisions Math does not spiral in the concepts like the NYS Modules and so the school is slowly rolling out the modules each year. According to teachers, Envisions Math lacked problem solving and critical thinking students needed to be successful in mathematics.
- Indicator c: The NYS Modules used is both horizontally and vertically aligned.
- Indicator d: Lesson plans submitted were not modified to meet individual student or groups or student's needs. It was not evident based on documents submitted or classroom observations how instruction was to be differentiated for all student populations (ELL/MLL, SWD, etc.). Eight math classes were observed on 1/26/2021. During those visits, there was little to no evidence of differentiation. As a result, differentiation of instruction to ensure equity and access was rated 'Falls far Below' as part of the curriculum audit.

Element: ***Curriculum (Science)-Additional Notes***

- Generation Genius aligns to the New York State Science Learning Standards. Generation genius has various resources for grades K-8 that includes for each Lesson-Videos, discussion questions, teacher guides, vocabulary, reading material, an activity guide and assessment resources.
- While the lesson plans submitted introduced complex materials, stimulate higher order thinking, and build deep conceptual understanding and knowledge around specific content, it was not observed during the instructional visits.



- The curricular evidence received did not include information about differentiation opportunities in grades K-8. In the Generation Genius website, the team was able to review lesson resources but none of the resources provided differentiation strategies that the teachers can use to support their ENL, SPED, struggling or accelerated students. Additionally, the curriculum guides for Grade 7 & 8 did not include strategies to provide opportunities for all students to master grade-level skills and concepts, including students with disabilities, English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners, and other subgroups. Based on observations of differentiation opportunities in five Science classrooms at Enterprise Charter School, neither differentiation techniques and strategies aligned to the science curriculum nor evidences of teachers supporting their students as described that they would in their lesson plans were observed
2. Element: ***Instruction:***
- Indicator a/b: During classroom visits, instruction was primarily teacher led. There were some opportunities for students to participate, but student engagement was low where the teacher provided the 'heavy lift' and students primarily ask/answered questions. Instructional practice/delivery did not foster high levels of student engagement with all students.
3. Element: ***Assessment and Program Evaluation:***
- Indicator a/b/c: Although iReady, reinforcement activities and mock NYSESLAT assessment activities were cited in plans, plans did not indicate how instruction was differentiated based on the data. Teachers shared that the MTSS data coordinator organizes assessment data before sharing it with the curriculum team and then discussed as part of PLC meetings with GL teams for data analysis and next steps. This may include, adjusting student groups or adjusting learning goals. However, it is unclear if individual teachers understood the DDI process, how to analyze their own data and then to use that data to impact teaching and learning.
4. Element: ***Supports for Diverse Learners:***
- Indicator a: There was not enough evidence to determine whether or not the school provides enough support to meet the needs of all students, including SWD, ED, and MLL/ELL subgroup groups. At this time, special educational and ENL teachers are providing push in and pull out services virtually. It is not yet clear the impact for students academically.
  - Indicator b: Outside of the DDI process and formative and summative assessments, according to the leadership team, NYSESLAT results are used to write goals on what students need the most.

### Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate and Family Engagement

*The school has systems in place to support students' social and emotional health and to provide for a safe and respectful learning environment. Families, community members and school staff work together to share in the responsibility for student academic progress and social-emotional growth and well-being. Families and students are satisfied with the school's academics and the overall leadership and management of the school.*

#### Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Behavior Management and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The school has a clear approach to behavioral management, including a written discipline policy.</li><li>b. The school appears safe and all school constituents are able to articulate how the school community maintains a safe environment.</li><li>c. The school has systems in place to ensure that the environment is free from harassment and discrimination.</li><li>d. Classroom environments are conducive to learning and generally free from disruption.</li></ul>
2. Family Engagement and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Teachers communicate with parents to discuss students' strengths and needs.</li><li>b. The school assesses family and student satisfaction using strategies such as surveys, feedback sessions, community forums, or participation logs, and considers results when making schoolwide decisions.</li><li>c. The school has a systematic process for responding to parent or community concerns.</li><li>d. The school shares school-level academic data with the broader school community to promote transparency and accountability among parents, students and school constituents.</li></ul>
3. Social-Emotional Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. School leaders collect and use data to track the socio-emotional needs of students.</li><li>b. School leaders collect and use data regarding the impact of programs designed to support students' social and emotional health.</li></ul>

#### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 3:

1. While providing instruction virtually, ECS utilizes a check-in/check-out system for mental wellness checks. School leaders shared that the school will continue to work with MTSS and has included a student success plan to help students stay on track with missing work, including Saturday tutoring. Students reported feeling intellectually safe in the virtual setting and having felt physically safe when school was in session.
2. Beyond the school-based platforms for parent communication (progress reports, reports cards, Remind App, parent teacher conferences, Schoology, and Seesaw), reciprocal communication has increased during school closure. Teachers and parents alike shared that communication includes emails and personal text messages to touch base regarding student behavior and/or missing assignments. Parents shared that teachers are very responsive at various times including weekends.
3. ECS has implemented 'Love in the Big World' as their SEL program. Teachers and school leaders reported that CICO mental wellness is conducted every morning, and that data collected as part of this

process goes to the teacher and social worker. This data is triaged based on need and the dean of student checks it every morning to create break out rooms to talk with students right away. Additionally, 10-minute brain breaks have been built into the master schedule for students. Lastly, teachers reported informal check ins with each other. Members of the socio-emotional learning team has shared their contact numbers for teachers to reach them, if needed. Teachers reported that administration checks in with them every Wednesday as well.

#### Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

*The school is in sound and stable financial condition as evidenced by performance on key financial indicators.*

#### Finding: Meets

##### Important Notes:

- The key financial indicators used to evaluate this benchmark will be presented within a separate fiscal dashboard instrument that will provide context for the school's performance on each of the metrics, outline the specific targets for each metric, and also provide additional subsidiary detail on each calculation.
- Unless otherwise indicated, financial data is derived from the school's annual independently audited financial statements.

<b>1. Near-Term Indicators:</b>	
1a.	Current Ratio
1b.	Unrestricted Days Cash
1c.	Enrollment Variance
1d.	Composite Score
<b>2. Sustainability Indicators:</b>	
2a.	Total Margin
2b.	Debt to Asset Ratio
2c.	Debt Service Coverage Ratio

#### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 4:

##### Financial Condition

Enterprise Charter School appears to be in good financial condition as evidenced by performance on key indicators derived from the school's independently audited financial statements.

The Charter School Office reviews the financial performance and management of charter schools using quantitative and qualitative methods. Near-term indicators, such as the current ratio and unrestricted days cash, are measures of liquidity and of the charter school's capacity to maintain operations. Long-term indicators, such as total margin and debt-to asset ratio, are measures of the charter school's capacity to remain viable and to meet financial obligations.

##### Overall Financial Outlook

A *composite score* is an overall measure of financial health calculated by a formula developed by the United State Department of Education. This score is based on a weighting of primary reserves, equity, and net income. A charter school with a score between 1.5 and 3.0 is considered to be in strong financial health. Enterprise Charter School's 2019-20 composite score is 2.36.

### Enterprise Charter School's Composite Scores

<i>Year</i>	<i>Composite Score</i>
2018-2019	2.32
2019-2020	2.36

#### Near-Term Indicators

Near-term indicators of financial health are used to understand the current financial performance and viability of the school. The Charter School Office uses three measures:

The *current ratio* is a financial ratio that measures whether or not a charter school has enough resources to pay its debts over the next 12 months. The ratio is mainly used to give an idea of the school's ability to pay back its short-term liabilities (debt and payables) with its short-term assets (cash, inventory, receivables). The higher the current ratio, the more capable the school is of paying its obligations, with a ratio under 1.0 indicating concern. For 2019-2020, Enterprise Charter School had a current ratio of 9.2.

*Unrestricted cash* measures, in days, whether the charter school can meet operating expenses without receiving new income. Charter schools typically strive to maintain at least 60 days of cash on hand. For fiscal year 2019-2020, Enterprise Charter School operated with 338 days of unrestricted cash.

#### Long-Term Indicators

A charter school's *debt to asset ratio* measures the extent to which the school relies on borrowed funds to finance its operations. It is calculated as total liabilities divided by total assets. A ratio of 1.0 or less meets a standard of low risk. For 2019-2020, Enterprise Charter School's debt to asset ratio was 0.5.

*Total margin* measures the deficit or surplus a charter school yields out of its total revenues; in other words, whether or not the school is living within its available resources. Total margin is calculated as net income divided by total revenue. A total margin that is positive indicates low risk. For 2019-2020, Enterprise Charter School's total margin was 0 percent.

### **Benchmark 5: Financial Management**

*The school operates in a fiscally sound manner with realistic budgets pursuant to a long-range financial plan, appropriate internal controls and procedures, and in accordance with state law and generally accepted accounting practices.*

#### **Finding: Approaches**

Renewal is based on evidence that the following indicators are generally present:

1. The school has an accurate and functional accounting system that includes monthly budgets.
2. The school sets budget objectives and regularly analyzes its budget in relation to those objectives.
3. The school has allocated budget surpluses in a manner that is fiscally sound and directly attends to the social and academic needs of the students attending the school.
4. The school has and follows a written set of fiscal policies.
5. The school has complied with state and federal financial reporting requirements.
6. The school has and is maintaining appropriate internal controls and procedures.
7. The school follows generally accepted accounting principles as evidenced by independent financial audits with an unqualified audit opinion, a limited number of findings that are quickly corrected, and the absence of a going concern disclosure.

#### **Summative Evidence for Benchmark 5:**

ECS has an accounting system that includes monthly and annual budgets that are regularly analyzed in relation to school objectives and student social and academic needs.

However, as it relates to following appropriate procedures and internal controls for fiscal decisions and contracted services, it was communicated with members of the review team that there were staff concerns allegedly related to ethnic and racial discrimination practices. It was also alleged that the independent contractor delegated to investigate these allegations is a personal acquaintance of the ECS Board President. It is unclear as to whether or not an RFP process was followed to retain such contracted services, regardless of dollar amount, as this practice could be interpreted as a conflict of interest.

### Benchmark 6: Board Oversight and Governance

*The board of trustees provides competent stewardship and oversight of the school while maintaining policies, establishing performance goals, and implementing systems to ensure academic success, organizational viability, board effectiveness and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.*

#### Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Board Oversight and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The board recruits and selects board members with skills and expertise that meet the needs of the school.</li><li>b. The board engages in strategic and continuous improvement planning by setting priorities and goals that are aligned with the school's mission and educational philosophy.</li><li>c. The board demonstrates active oversight of the charter school management, fiscal operations and progress toward meeting academic and other school goals.</li><li>d. The board regularly updates school policies.</li><li>e. The board utilizes a performance-based evaluation process for evaluating school leadership, itself and providers.</li><li>f. The board demonstrates full awareness of its legal obligations to the school and stakeholders.</li></ul>

#### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 6:

The Board of Trustees recruits and select board members with the skills and expertise that meet and support the school needs. The Board of Trustees work in collaboration with school administrators, parents and community members to seek input and make necessary changes, as needed. The Board of Trustees provide oversight into curricular, logistical, legal, and fiscal matters as it pertains to the school.



### Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

*The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure, clearly delineated roles for staff, management, and board members. The school has systems and protocols that allow for the successful implementation, evaluation, and improvement of its academic program and operations.*

#### Finding: Approaches

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>School Leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The school has an effective school leadership team that obtains staff commitment to a clearly defined mission and set of goals, allowing for continual improvement in student learning.</li><li>b. Roles and responsibilities for leaders, staff, management, and board members are clearly defined. Members of the school community adhere to defined roles and responsibilities.</li><li>c. The school has clear and well-established communication systems and decision-making processes in place which ensure effective communication across the school.</li><li>d. The school successfully recruits, hires, and retains key personnel, and makes decisions – when warranted – to remove ineffective staff members.</li></ul>
2. <i>Professional Climate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The school is fully staffed with high quality personnel to meet all educational and operational needs, including finance, human resources, and communication.</li><li>b. The school has established structures for frequent collaboration among teachers.</li><li>c. The school ensures that staff has requisite skills, expertise, and professional development necessary to meet students' needs.</li><li>d. The school has systems to monitor and maintain organizational and instructional quality—which includes a formal process for teacher evaluation geared toward improving instructional practice.</li><li>e. The school has mechanisms to solicit teacher feedback and gauge teacher satisfaction.</li></ul>
3. <i>Contractual Relationships</i> ✓N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with the management company or comprehensive service provider.</li><li>b. Changes in the school's charter management or comprehensive service provider contract comply with required charter amendment procedures.</li><li>c. The school monitors the efficacy of contracted service providers or partners.</li></ul>

#### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 7:

1. The roles of the leadership team are not quite clear. In fact, the Superintendent is now the School Principal and there is no identified assistant principal. The Technology Coach and Data coach are heavily relied on for administrative duties. Unfortunately, the visitation team learned during the course of the school visit, that there was a change among the leadership team. This change in administration was never disclosed to the review team, even when queried about the



absence of specific members of the previous leadership team. The change in leadership and lack of transparency was concerning to the review team.

2. Teachers shared there is time for collaboration formally and informally. School leaders and teachers feel the support has been great and beneficial especially in the virtual setting. School leaders have reported that part of our PD plan is to continue to train teachers to become more familiar with the standards and NextGen. It was shared that an expert was brought in to meet two times a week with teachers on Schoology to support them with creating higher level questions. Teachers invited her into their classrooms to observe and model lessons. This is a continuing cycle practice that began at the end of last year. In addition, Coaches also go in and provide feedback or model lessons and then go revisit classes to see how the PD info was being used. School leaders and coaches monitor the professional development strategy implementation through walk throughs and PLC discussions.

### Benchmark 8: Mission and Key Design Elements

*The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.*

#### Finding: Meets

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Mission and Key Design Elements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. School stakeholders share a common and consistent understanding of the school's mission and key design elements outlined in the charter.</li><li>b. The school has fully implemented the key design elements in the approved charter and in any subsequently approved revisions.</li></ul>

#### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 8:

**1 a/b.** Most stakeholders share a common and consistent understanding of the school's mission and key design elements as outlined in the charter. In fact, when asked, teachers were able to provide specific examples of how the school uses project-based learning in and outside of the school and how they connect what they do in school to the community at large (Junior Frontiers, Little Match Girl Foundation, use of the green screen to create news (when in session), and middle school science projects). However, students and parents were not knowledgeable of the school's mission, key design elements, or overall school goals.

### Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, and Retention

*The school is meeting or making annual progress toward meeting the enrollment plan outlined in its charter and its enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced priced lunch program; or has demonstrated that it has made extensive good faith efforts to attract, recruit, and retain such students.*

#### Finding: Approaches

<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. <i>Targets are met</i>	a. The school maintains sufficient enrollment demand for the school to meet or come close to meeting the enrollment plan outlined in the charter.
2. <i>Targets are not met</i>	<p>a. The school is making regular and significant annual progress toward meeting the targets.</p> <p>b. The school has implemented extensive recruitment strategies and program services to attract and retain students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible for free and reduced priced lunch. Strategies include, but are not limited to: outreach to parents and families in the surrounding communities, widely publicizing the lottery for such school, efforts to academically support these students, and enrollment policy revisions, such as employing a weighted lottery or enrollment preference, to increase the proportion of enrolled students from the three priority populations.</p> <p>c. The school has implemented a systematic process for evaluating recruitment and outreach strategies and program services for each of the three categories of students, and makes strategic improvements as needed.</p>

Table 4: Student Demographics

	SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	Enterprise CS	Buffalo Public Schools	Differential to District	Enterprise CS	Buffalo Public Schools	Differential to District	Enterprise CS	Buffalo Public Schools	Differential to District
2015-2016	19%	24%	-5	10%	16%	-6	94%	84%	+10
2016-2017	18%	24%	-6	7%	17%	-10	89%	82%	+7
2017-2018	16%	25%	-9	7%	22%	-15	91%	84%	+7
2018-2019	13%	25%	-12	6%	23%	-17	100%	86%	+14

\*See NOTES (2), (3), and (6) below.

**Table 5: Retention – Aggregate and Subgroups**

	All Students			SWD			ELL/MLL			ED		
	Enterprise Charter School	Buffalo Public Schools	Differential to District	Enterprise Charter School	Buffalo Public Schools	Differential to District	Enterprise Charter School	Buffalo Public Schools	Differential to District	Enterprise Charter School	Buffalo Public Schools	Differential to District
2016-2017	85%	89%	<b>-4</b>	84%	89%	<b>-5</b>	87%	88%	<b>-1</b>	86%	89%	<b>-3</b>
2017-2018	86%	88%	<b>-2</b>	87%	89%	<b>-2</b>	86%	89%	<b>-3</b>	86%	88%	<b>-2</b>
2018-2019	85%	88%	<b>-3</b>	82%	89%	<b>-7</b>	79%	89%	<b>-10</b>	87%	88%	<b>-1</b>

*\*See NOTES (2), (3), and (6) below.*

**Notes:**

1. "\*\*" indicates that too few students (less than 5) are in the subgroup.
2. "-" indicates that there are no students in the subgroup.

**Summative Evidence for Benchmark 9:**

The school is at capacity with enrollment figures of 405 students, as per the Charter the school continues to trail the Buffalo Public District for enrollment of all students, including subgroup populations (MLL/ELL, SWD, and ED). While enrollment figures have remained consistent over the last three years, ECS was able to hire a new English New Language (ENL) teacher to help provide supports to MLL and provide turnkey training to teachers.

ECS has exceeded the District as it relates to enrollment figures for Economically Disadvantaged (ED) students, but continues to trail the District with enrollment of Students with Disabilities (SWD) and Multilingual Learners (MLL).

### Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

*The school complies with applicable laws, regulations, and the provisions of its charter.*

#### Finding: Meets

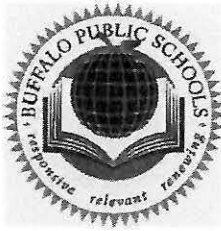
<u>Element</u>	<u>Indicators</u>
1. Legal Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. The school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with applicable state and federal laws and the provisions of its charter including, but not limited to: those related to student admissions and enrollment; FOIL and Open Meetings Law; protecting the rights of students and employees; financial management and oversight; governance and reporting; and health and safety requirements.</li><li>b. The school has undertaken appropriate corrective action when needed and has implemented necessary safeguards to maintain compliance with all legal requirements.</li><li>c. The school has sought Board of Regents and/or Charter School Office approval for significant revisions.</li></ul>

#### Summative Evidence for Benchmark 10:

The school maintains a record of compliance and has undertaken any corrective action, as needed.

**\*NOTES:**

- (1) Data in the table above represents tested students who scored proficiently (level 3 or above) on the NYS ELA and/or math assessment.*
- (2) For the students with disabilities and the ELL/MLL subgroups, both current and former members of the subgroups have been combined.*
- (3) Pursuant to NYSED business rules, the data was suppressed for subgroups containing <5 students and the subgroup category may not be included for the metric.*
- (4) Data in the table above represents students who passed the Annual Regents or equivalents (score of 65 or better).*
- (5) The 4- and 5-year graduation rates reported are as of August. The 6-year graduation rates are as of June.*
- (6) Data in the table above represents a comparison between those grades served in the charter school to only those same grades in the district.*
- (7) A "." in any table indicates that the data was suppressed, no student sat for the exam, or the exam was not given.*
- (8) Data in the table above represents tested students who either maintained a proficient score from one year to the next or students whose proficiency level increased from one year to the next (a proficient score is level 3 or 4).*
- (9) Data in the table above represents students within their respective subgroups who have passed three out of the five Annual Regents and Regents Common Core Examinations (score of 65 or better) or equivalents.*
- (10) Data in the table above represents the percentage of students from the original 9th grade cohort who persisted within the same school to a 4-year graduation (includes August graduates).*



## BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Student Representative

May 5, 2021

President Rita Eisenbeis  
Westminster Community Charter School  
24 Westminster Avenue  
Buffalo, New York 14215

Dear President Eisenbeis:

Pursuant to the Resolution (attached) passed by the Buffalo Board of Education at a Special Meeting held on Wednesday, March 31, 2021, the charter for Westminster Community Charter School will not be renewed after June 30, 2021. Senior staff of Buffalo Public schools will be in contact with you to discuss next steps. In the meantime, please review the *Closing Procedures Guide and Checklist for New York State Charter Schools*, previously sent to you by Dr. Lorenda Chisolm.

We look forward to partnering with you, for a smooth closure and transition for your students. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Will Keresztes, Chief of Intergovernmental Affairs, Planning and Community Engagement by phone (716) 816-3596, or by e-mail: [wkeresztes@buffaloschools.org](mailto:wkeresztes@buffaloschools.org).

Sincerely,

Mrs. Sharon Belton-Cottman  
President, Buffalo Board of Education

SBC:lmk



## REBUTTAL TO RENEWAL SITE VISIT 2020-2021

<b>Factually Inaccurate Statement (please quote exactly)</b>	<i>"No State assessment data has been collected for SY2019-20 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the cancellation of NYS Assessment."</i>
<b>Page Factually Inaccurate Statement is found on:</b>	Page 8
<b>What the District believes would be a factually accurate statement</b>	<i>Data was submitted and those data results were discussed at length with ECS Teacher and Leadership Focus Groups during the Renewal Site Visit. The data presented in both forums strongly demonstrates student growth throughout COVID-19.</i>
<b>Specific evidence the district is sharing to support this revision</b>	<p><i>The email dated July 16, 2020 from The Office of Shared Accountability stated, "Benchmark 1 allows for the use of longitudinal data ... NYSED supports charter schools submitting supplemental data in the school's renewal application to demonstrate the work they have been doing in support of all 10 Performance Framework Benchmarks during the current crisis. This supplemental data may include, but is not limited to, school administered interim assessment data, protocols to support continued high-quality teaching and learning, student, staff, and family engagement efforts and measures..."</i></p> <p>The incorporation of Benchmark 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8 data that was requested by the Office of Shared Accountability for renewal purposes which was presented through email on January 8, 2021.</p>



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## REBUTTAL TO RENEWAL SITE VISIT 2020-2021

<b>Factually Inaccurate Statement (please quote exactly)</b>	<i>Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning</i>  <i>The entire Summative Evidence for Benchmark 2</i>
<b>Page Factually Inaccurate Statement is found on:</b>	<i>Page 14 and 15</i>
<b>What the District believes would be a factually accurate statement</b>	<i>A Curriculum Audit began during the February 2020 visitation and went throughout the next several months. The findings were that the elements of curriculum, instruction, assessment and program evaluation, and support for diverse learners are all present.</i>
<b>Specific evidence the district is sharing to support this revision</b>	<i>A Curriculum Audit was performed during the February 2020 visitation with a confirmation email sent by the Office of Accountability on March 24, 2020 stated, "We are finalizing your report." Two follow-up emails requesting the findings were sent (May 28, 2020 and January 11, 2021). Had the February 2020 curriculum audit been shared or found deficits, the school should have been notified and a conversation had for corrective action.</i>  <i>Further evidence should have been incorporated from the Teacher Focus group which provided specific and detailed examples of curriculum, instruction, assessment and program evaluation, and supports for diverse learners.</i>