

**Cornville Regional Charter School
Early Childhood Center and Downtown
90-Day Visit
December 20, 2017**

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On December 20, 2017, the Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) Review Team for Cornville Regional Charter School, MCSC staff, and MDOE Special Services team members met at Cornville Regional Charter School to review the school's new early childhood and high school programs.

Early Childhood Center

CRCS opened its early childhood center for 32 pre-K students (2 classrooms of 16 students each) on August 28, 2017. Topics discussed at the 90-day visit included student enrollment, facility, staffing and programming, and parent engagement.

Student enrollment

The Early Childhood Center opened with 32 students. The current enrollment is 30 students. Families who unenrolled the 2 students did not cite a reason for leaving.

Approximately one third of the Early Childhood Center's students are from Skowhegan. The other two thirds are from Athens, Madison, Cornville, Hartland and more.

Facilities

The last remaining items for completing the required facilities work will be completed during the December 2017 vacation. The ceiling in the foyer will be coated with a fire-retardant sealant, which was a requirement of the fire marshal.

Staffing and Programming

Each of the 2 classrooms has a lead teacher and an assistant teacher (ed. tech. III and certified teacher). Both lead teachers attended training for Tools of the Mind¹, which is the curriculum being used at the center.

Teachers are using Teaching Strategies Gold² for assessing students. Information on each student is available to parents online and instructions on its use were given at student conferences.

It was reported that acquiring the materials for the curriculum has been tricky due to waiting for grant funding to come through. Due to MDOE technical issues, the upload and certification of student enrollment was delayed.

¹ Tools of the Mind is a research-based early childhood model combining teacher professional development with a comprehensive innovative curriculum that helps young children to develop the cognitive, social-emotional, self-regulatory, and foundational academic skills they need to succeed in school and beyond.

² Grounded in 38 research-based objectives for development and learning, *GOLD*® supports effective teaching and assessment, while providing teachers with more time to spend with students. Accessed through *MyTeachingStrategies*™, *GOLD*® automatically links teaching and assessment.

Students requiring special services are referred through Child Development Services. Students who are currently receiving speech and language services are receiving the services outside of the school. The school's executive director is looking at implementing more coaching and additional professional development time in the second half of the school year.

Parent Engagement

Parents are involved in the school at special events, volunteering in the school or completing tasks at home, attending field trips, and attending conferences. Parents are welcome to visit the school. Conferences are planned for 3 times this year. The school is looking at offering "celebrations of learning" bi-annually next year instead of conferences.

Downtown Campus (grades 6-12)

CRCS opened its downtown campus to 45 students in grades 6-12 on August 28, 2017. Topics discussed at the 90-day visit included student enrollment, facility, staffing and programming, and parent engagement.

Student enrollment

The Downtown Campus opened with 45 students enrolled. A few students never showed up and a few have unenrolled, citing sports participation and wanting a larger school. Other students have joined the school and there are currently 45 students enrolled.

Facilities

The school's main level, where all classes take place this year, is nearly completed. The crown molding is being installed when school isn't in session. Sensors, key fobs and a new boiler are being installed during the December 2017 vacation. Central Maine Power is backed up and as a result the phase 3 power has not yet been installed.

The school is working to secure the remaining funds for the renovation through Bangor Savings Bank. The USDA loan was delayed at the federal level.

Staffing and Programming

The Downtown Campus has 2 teachers, one teaching principal, and an Ed. Tech. III. One of the teachers is the special education case manager at the school.

All 3 teachers teach the same subject at the same time and students can attend a class addressing the standards they are working on. The school uses Empower to track student progress on meeting standards.

Students have created a career action plan. There are students exploring internships, employment, and participating on local boards. Students have been to college campuses and will continue to explore other post-secondary opportunities.

Parent Engagement

The school reports that events such as parent nights, student-led conferences, meet and greets, curriculum overviews and others have been well attended. Generally, about 3/4ths of the parents participate and the staff makes the effort to contact parents who are unable to attend. The school maintains communication with parents via weekly newsletter, Facebook, texts, and streaming. Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time.

Conclusion

Cornville Regional Charter School has grown to include both pre-K and high school grades in addition to K-8 in the 2017-18 school year. This growth has been an incredibly demanding process for the school's administration. The Maine Charter School Commission has noted that while the school (all 3 campuses) appears to be meeting the needs of its students, every required report has been late, or has not submitted, during this 2017-18 school year, which is not customary for the school. This was addressed at the visit and will be monitored.

