

**MAINE**

**CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**

**Community Regional Charter School**



**ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2019-2020**

**January 2021**

*The Maine State Charter School Commission will provide thoughtful stewardship in authorizing and monitoring public charter schools consistent with State statutes to create unique, high-quality learning options for Maine students.*

## January 2021

On August 19, 2020, the Maine Charter School Commission Review Team completed Zoom meetings with Community Regional Charter School's administration and Governing Board. The Review Team also reviewed data provided by the school. Information gathered from documents and interviews were used to determine the extent to which the school has met its contracted performance targets. This report addresses the school's performance relative to the performance framework.

In March of 2020, due to the COVID-19 virus, the school year was abruptly interrupted by the need for schools to close their facilities and continue the remainder of the school year via remote instruction. The Maine Charter School Commission realizes that these months were stressful and difficult for students, teachers, and families, and that the learning and assessments completed during this time were likely affected by the situation. The Maine Charter School Commission will take circumstances into consideration when reviewing data and making high-stakes decisions.

Commission Liaison to the School	Shelley Reed
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post
Consultant	Joe Drago, CPA
Consultant	Dr. Joe Mattos
MDOE Special Services	Dr. Roberta Lucas
MDOE Special Services	Leora Byras

School's Mission	To create a safe, respectful, nurturing and active learning community where every child is given the opportunity to thrive academically, to be accepted, to celebrate accomplishments and to develop a lifetime love of learning.
School's Vision	To create a school where learning is built around each student so that they become engaged learners with relevant and challenging work.

## Section 1: School Information

School Name	Community Regional Charter School
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### Governing Board

Board Chair	Danielle Denis
Board Member	Kelly LaCasse
Board Member	Derek Rossignol
Board Member	
Board Member	

### Administrative Team

Executive Director	Travis Works
Special Education Director	Nicole Reinholt

Campus Name	<i>Creative Children's Academy</i>
Address	<i>48 South Factory Street, Skowhegan, ME 04976</i>
Building Principal	<i>Nicole Reinholt</i>

Campus Name	<i>Dimensions Academy</i>
Address	<i>1192 West Ridge Road, Cornville, ME 04976</i>
Building Principal	<i>Susan Martin</i>

Campus Name	<i>Overman Academy</i>
Address	<i>78 Water Street, Suite 2, Skowhegan, ME 04976</i>
Building Principal	<i>Elizabeth Firnkes</i>

Year Opened	2012
Years in Operation	9
Number of Sending Districts*	<i>Pending</i>
Grades Served	PreK-12
Current Enrollment*	<i>Pending</i>
Students on Waiting List*	<i>Pending</i>

*\*As of October 1, 2020, certified enrollment date*

## Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

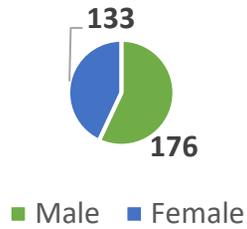
Indicator	Exceeds	Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Other
<b>Student Academic Proficiency</b> (See Page 6)					
Target 1					*
Target 2					*
<b>Student Academic Growth</b> (See Page 6)					
Target 1					*
Target 2					*
Target 3					*
Target 4					*
Target 5					*
Target 6					*
Target 7					*
<b>Achievement Gaps</b> (See Page 7)					
Target 1					*
Target 2					*
<b>Student Attendance</b> (See Page 7)					
Target 1			X		
Target 2		X	X		
Target 3			X		
<b>Student Enrollment</b> (See Page 8)					
Target 1		X			
Target 2	X				
<b>Post-Secondary Readiness</b> (See Page 8)					
Target 1					**
Target 2					**
Target 3					**
Target 4					**
<b>Financial Performance and Stability</b> (See Page 9)					
Target 1		Pending			
Target 2		Financial			
Target 3		Audit			
<b>Governance Board Performance and Stewardship</b> (See Page 10)					
Target 1	X				
Target 2				X	
<b>Adequacy of Facilities Management</b> (See Page 10)					
Target 1		X			
Target 2		X			
<b>School Social and Academic Climate</b> (See Page 10)					
Target 1		X			
Target 2					*
Target 3					*
Target 4					*
Target 5		X			

\*Due to COVID-19 and school facility closures, many assessments and evaluations were not given.

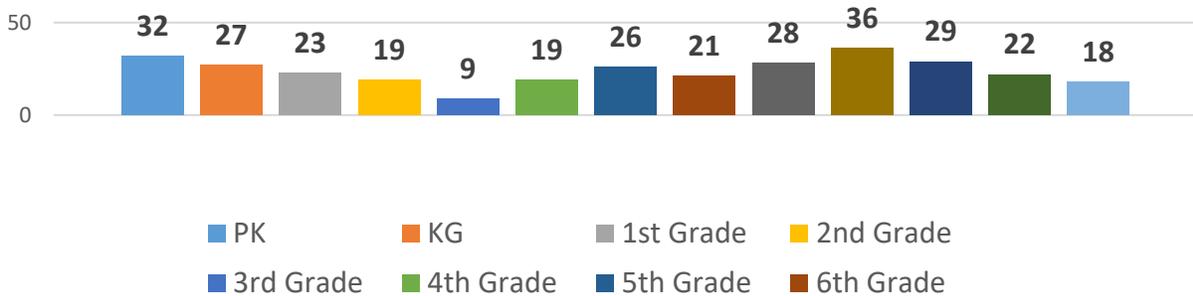
\*\* The school has not yet had a graduating cohort; these targets are not yet applicable.

### Section 3: Demographics 2019-2020

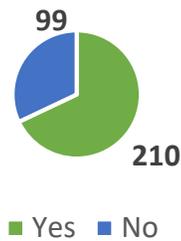
#### Gender Breakdown



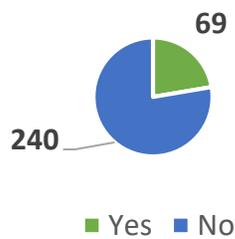
#### Grade Breakdown



#### Economically Disadvantaged



#### Special Education



## Section 4: Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	
Proficiency on State Assessments in reading	The percent of tested learners scoring proficient on the reading portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maine Department of Education applied for, and received, waivers that eliminate state assessment requirements for this year.	NA
Proficiency on State Assessments in math	The percent of tested learners scoring proficient on the math portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.		NA

## Section 5: Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	
Pre-K Students will show progress in their learning through growth on their Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS).	Pre-K Students will show progress in Uppercase Letter Identification on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening from Fall to Spring of each school year.	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, spring assessments were cancelled. Due to this cancellation, no growth data are available to report.	NA
Pre-K Students will show progress in their learning through growth on their Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS).	Pre-K Students will show progress in Lowercase Letter Identification on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening from Fall to Spring of each school year.		NA
Pre-K Students will show progress in their learning through growth on their Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS).	Pre-K Students will show progress in Letter Sound Identification on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening from Fall to Spring of each school year.		NA
Students will show progress in their learning through growth in their NWEA scores in ELA reading and language from fall to spring of each school year.	Students will show progress in their learning through growth in their NWEA RIT scores from fall to spring of each school year.		NA
Students will show progress in their learning through growth in their NWEA scores in math from fall to spring of each school year.	Students will show progress in their learning through growth in their NWEA RIT scores from fall to spring of each school year.		NA
Growth on NWEA as measured by projected growth on MAP assessment	School will meet goal of 70% of eligible students meeting their projected growth on NWEA ELA		NA

	reading and language by the end of the school year 2021–2022.		
Growth on NWEA as measured by projected growth on MAP assessment	School will meet goal of 70% of eligible students will meet their projected growth on NWEA math by the end of the school year 2021-2022.		NA

## Section 6: Achievement Gaps

*Subgroups must have at least ten students to be reportable. Subgroups may not be combined to create a super-subgroup.*

Measure	Target	Results	
Achievement gaps in proficiency between major subgroups on the Maine state assessment	The school will provide evidence of closing achievement gaps between major subgroups (EL, special education, gender, ED, 504, ethnic and racial minorities).	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maine Department of Education applied for, and received, waivers that eliminate state assessment requirements for this year.	NA
Achievement gaps in growth between major subgroups on the NWEA	The school will provide evidence of closing achievement gaps between major subgroups (EL, special education, gender, ED, 504, ethnic and racial minorities).	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the spring NWEA test window was cancelled. Due to this cancellation, no growth data are available to report.	NA

## Section 7: Student Attendance

Measure	Target	Results	
Chronic absenteeism	Schools will have 10% or fewer students classified as chronically absent on the last day of school. (Through March 13, 2020)	29% of students were chronically absent as of March 13, 2020. An 11 percent decrease from 2018-2019.	Partially Met
Average Daily Attendance	Schools will have an average daily attendance rate in grades pre-k – 8 of 93% or higher. (Through March 13, 2020)	The average daily attendance rate through March 13, 2020 was: Overman Campus 90.22%	Partially Met  Met

		Dimensions Campus 93.11% Creative Children Campus 94.99%	Met
Average Daily Attendance	Schools will have an average daily attendance rate in grades 9–12 of 91% or higher. (Through March 13, 2020)	The average daily attendance rate through March 13, 2020 was 90.81%.	Partially Met

### Section 8: Student Enrollment

Measure	Target	Results	
Enrollment throughout the school year	85% or more of eligible students enrolled on the last day of school will be the same students who were enrolled on state student count day <sup>1</sup>	87% of eligible students enrolled on the last day of school were the same students who were enrolled on state student count day.	Met
Recurrent enrollment from one year to the next	85% or more of eligible students enrolled on the last day of school will have completed an Intent to reenroll form for the next school year.	94% of eligible students enrolled on the last day of school completed an Intent to reenroll form for the next school year	Exceeded

### Section 9: Post-Secondary Readiness

Measure	Target	Result	
4-year high school graduation rate (current cohort, ACGR)	Schools will meet MDOE annual goal.	CRCS did not have a year 4 cohort in 2019-2020.	NA
5 and 6-year average high school graduation rate (previous 2 years' cohorts averaged)	Schools will meet MDOE annual goal.	CRCS did not have 5 and 6-year cohorts in 2019-2020.	NA
Of students in their graduating year, percent participation in post-secondary readiness opportunities	At the end of their graduating year, 70% of the school's eligible students will have participated in at least one post-secondary activity such as (and not limited to) college course, Advanced Placement	CRCS did not have a year 4 cohort in 2019-2020. CRCS did not have a year 4 cohort in 2019-2020.	NA

<sup>1</sup> State student count day is October 1.

	course, certificate program, or internship.		
Success rate of students participating in post-secondary readiness opportunities	70% of the school's students who participated in at least one post-secondary activity such as (and not limited to) college course, Advanced Placement course, certificate program, or internship will complete it successfully.	CRCS did not have a year 4 cohort in 2019-2020.	NA

### Section 10: Financial Performance and Stability

Measure	Target	Results	
Near Term Measures a) Current Ratio b) Unrestricted Days Cash on Hand	School evaluates its Near-Term Financial Health using the Financial Performance and Stability outline provided by the Commission.	Near-Term Financial Health was reviewed by the Commission using the Financial Performance and Stability outline.	*Pending Financial Audit
Sustainability Measures a) Total Margin b) Debt to asset ratio	School evaluates its Financial Sustainability using the Financial Performance and Stability outline provided by the Commission.	The Financial Sustainability was reviewed by the Commission using the Financial Performance and Stability outline.	*Pending Financial Audit
The school has an annual financial audit conducted. audit and management letter are submitted to the commission. audit has no material findings or misstatements.	Unmodified opinion on [consolidated] financial statements: no material weaknesses, significant deficiencies or reportable instances of noncompliance and other matters identified in the other information accompanying the auditor's report on financial statements or in the auditor's report on internal control over financial reporting and on compliance and other matters.	The Board has engaged a firm to conduct the FY20 financial audit of the school. The Audit Report and Management Letter will be reviewed.	*Pending Financial Audit

*\*Once the FY20 financial audit is received and reviewed by the Maine Charter School Commission, an addendum updating Financial Performance and Sustainability will be issued.*

### Section 11: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship

Measure	Target	Results	
Public Accountability: Transparent, responsive, and	The Governing Board will hold a minimum of 6 meetings per school year.	The Governing Board held 12 meetings during the school year.	Exceeded

legally compliant Board operation.			
Public Accountability: Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operation.	Timely publication of Board meeting agendas and minutes upon approval.	Board meeting approved minutes were published late on more than 3 occasions.	Did Not Meet

## Section 12: Adequacy of Facilities Management

Measure	Target	Results	
Meet Local and State requirements	The school certifies that its facility (or facilities) meet all local and state requirements for public school facilities.	The school certified that its facility (or facilities) meet all local and state requirements for public school facilities.	Met
Capital Improvement Plan	The school has a current capital improvement plan approved by its governing board.	The school has a current capital improvement plan approved by its governing board.	Met

## Section 13: School Social and Academic Climate

Measure	Target	Results	
Reporting of behavior incidents	The school will follow the Maine DOE required reporting for incidents of behavior.	The school reported incidents of behavior as required by Maine DOE.	Met
Panorama Survey- Family Participation	40% of families will participate in the Panorama survey.	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Panorama Surveys were not administered during the 2019-20 school year.	NA
Panorama Survey- Student Participation	65% of eligible students will Participate in the Panorama survey.		NA
Panorama Survey- Teacher/Staff Participation	70% of teachers/staff will participate in the Panorama survey.		NA
Panorama Survey	Annually, the school will review its spring Panorama Education results and develop an action plan for the following school year to	The school reviewed its Panorama Education survey results and developed an action plan to address areas	Met

	address areas for continued improvement. Plan and outcome will be submitted to the Commission in September.	for continued improvement and submitted the plan to the Commission in September 2019 as required.	
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## Section 14: Site Visit Report

### Maine Charter School Commission Monitoring Site Visit Report

SITE VISIT DATE	August 19, 2020 (via Video Conference)
SCHOOL NAME:	Community Regional Charter School (CRCS)
ADDRESS:	48 South Factory Street, Skowhegan
GRADES SERVED:	Grades PK - 12
ENROLLMENT:	350 as of 9/9/20
YEAR OPENED:	2012

#### Monitoring Site Visit Purpose

The primary purpose of site visits is to inform authorizer decisions, both imminent, such as assessing a school's readiness to open, and longitudinal, when a visit is undertaken mid-term as part of routine monitoring.

The purpose of monitoring visits is to gauge the overall progress a school is making toward the goals outlined in its charter. In most cases, the authorizer will already possess some quantitative data about that progress – test scores, attendance rates, and other annual outcomes, so a monitoring visit can help explain the context behind that data and explore the school's fidelity to its approved program.

Site visits are a mechanism for collecting additional evidence regarding a school's performance against the expectations memorialized in its contract and contribute to the body of data authorizers utilize to ultimately make renewal recommendations. They also provide staff with the opportunity to review and analyze documentation that may be better understood on-site, such as factors impacting attendance, or rates of academic growth across subgroups. Site visits can also provide a basis for authorizer judgment or intervention where there is limited state assessment data yet available.

#### Monitoring Site Visit Process

Monitoring Site Visits are based on both the criteria set forth in the school's performance framework and the school's alignment with its mission. The categories in the performance framework are student achievement, academic and support programs, school climate and family engagement, school leadership, governance, and finance.

The following individuals participated in the August 2020, monitoring visit:

- Bob Kautz, Executive Director, Maine Charter School Commission
- Gina Post, Director of Program Management, Maine School Charter Commission

- Joe Drago, CPA, Consultant, Maine Charter School Commission
- Dr. Roberta Lucas, MDOE, Special Services
- Amy Allen, Support Coordinator, Maine Charter School Commission
- Leora Byras, MDOE Special Services
- Dr. Joseph Mattos, Consultant, Maine Charter School Commission

The monitoring site visit was conducted via a video conference. Team members used the MCSC Monitoring Site Visit Manual to plan and conduct the visit. Prior to the site visit, team members reviewed documents and other information related to the school’s mission and performance framework.

Key documents and other information reviewed by the team prior to and at the time of visiting included:

- School calendar
- Current enrollment and demographics
- Staff roster
- Current organizational chart
- Board meeting minutes
- Board member meeting attendance
- School’s strategic plan [AS APPLICABLE]
- Current Education Service Provider contract [AS APPLICABLE]
- Professional Development calendar and agendas [AS APPLICABLE]
- Staff evaluation tool
- Administrator evaluation tool used by governing board
- Panorama school climate survey results
- School’s self-assessment
- Previous year’s monitoring report [AS APPLICABLE]
- School’s performance framework
- Copies of current recruitment materials
- Student enrollment application

Meetings were held with school leadership and governance via video conferencing. A standard set of questions, as per MCSC manual, as well as school specific questions were discussed during the visit.

Group interviews held by the team included:

- CRCS Leadership Team
  - Elisabeth Firnkes, Building Principal at Overman Academy
  - Crystal Priest, Special Projects, Technology, and Innovation
  - Susan Martin, Principal at Dimensions Academy and Creative Children’s Academy
  - Ashlee Savage, Administrative Assistant at Dimensions Academy
  - Travis Works, Head of School
- CRCS Executive Director
  - Travis Works
- CRCS Governing Board:
  - Danielle Denis, Chairperson

## Monitoring Site Visit Findings

### A. Mission Alignment

- School Leadership Team members agreed regarding their understanding of CRCS’s Mission and how it is displayed in CRCS’s instructional practices. Specifically, school leaders believe CRCS “meets learners where they are, creates a learning environment that honors them as individuals, and help students develop the skills they need to be

successful in whatever their world is going to look like.” They also believed their mission was to “produce learners who are advocates for themselves, self-reliant, and life-long learners.”

- School leadership provided numerous examples of how the mission was implemented through classroom instructional experiences and rooted in real life and hands on experiences at Overman Academy (high school).
- In respect to CRCS’s recent submission of a request to amend CRCS’s Mission Statement, the executive director said the CRCS Leadership Team is crafting a slightly revised mission statement, based on feedback from the MCSC Review Team. This revision is intended to tie together wording from old and new mission statements.

#### B. Student Achievement

- Because MEA and NWEA testing were suspended in the spring of 2020 due to Covid-19, CRCS was unable to provide normed information on student achievement and performance.
- During the interview with School Leadership Team members, it was mentioned that CRCS will be looking at/for additional pieces of information that provide “evidence” of student learning. In addition, Overman Academy will be using Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System in '20-'21 school year to determine students’ instructional and independent reading levels (below grade 8) in order to make informed decisions in personalizing instruction for each student. At Dimensions Academy, teachers will continue to increase their understanding of how to use and apply NWEA information during direction instruction in the classroom e.g. grouping students differently, focusing on areas of strength and growth.
- It was also mentioned that school leadership will be working closely with teachers to ensure there is alignment between curriculum, instruction, and assessment, with a special focus curriculum “learning targets” e.g., understanding the learning target, establishing expectations and evidence in meeting learning target, putting “actionable steps” in place to help students demonstrate learning targets.

#### C. Academic Support Programs

- It was explained that students who are not meeting expectations for student performance and achievement are provided with additional instruction and support in a variety of ways e.g., Response to Intervention (RTI) and Special Education services. At Dimensions Academy Ed Techs are used “to support RTI for academics in the classroom.” At the same time, Ed Techs are used to provide facilitators (teachers) with time to meet individually with students to provide additional individual academic support. At Overman Academy, time is schedule on a weekly basis when small groups can be pulled together to work on specific skills and to address other areas of students’ academic needs.
- In respect to Special Education services, students with IEPs at Dimensions receive Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) both in the “learning lab” and in the classroom. The combination of where SDI is provided is dependent on students’ academic and social needs. At Overman Academy, students receive SDI both in a “pullout” scenario, which is reportedly seen by students as just another learning opportunity in their day. Also, at times, SDI is integrated into classroom instruction and delivered by an Ed Tech III during individual or small group work.

#### D. School Climate and Family Engagement

- The Panorama Survey was not administered in 19/20 school year due to COVID-19 pandemic.

- Although there was no formal survey regarding teacher feedback and satisfaction, the school administrative team felt good that their efforts to communicate and involve teachers in decision-making pertaining to student and teacher learning issues have helped create a more open and trusting school climate. It was noted that “exit slips” were used at Dimensions Academy and Overman Academy for staff meetings and professional development activities.

#### E. School Leadership

- CRCS has recently undergone changes in their administrative structure. These changes were based on administrative needs and the skills of individuals for best meeting the performance responsibilities for specific positions. Job descriptions have been created for each of the revised positions. A primary role of the Overman Academy Principal position will be to focus on the improvement of teaching and student learning.
- During conversations with the school principals, it was apparent that improving teacher practice and student learning is their #1 priority for the ‘20-’21 school year. They were excited and looking forward to working together to introduce system-wide protocols, resources, and support for improving teacher practice. Protocols included implementing a teacher goal setting form, collecting and sharing data on teaching and student learning via technology (Seesaw), a self-reflection tool and process for teachers when evaluating progress on their goals, and providing teachers with weekly feedback on their instructional practices, goals, etc.
- School leaders were particularly pleased with the low attrition rate of CRCS teachers and staff over the past year and especially with their efforts to attract and retain qualified teachers. Reasons provided that contributed to this included: actively recruiting at pre-service teachers at the University of Maine, providing tours and interviews with interested teachers, and providing teachers with a competitive salary and benefits package.
- The executive director was also quite pleased with the progress that has been made through the work at the building leadership level and district-wide leadership team to improve CRCS organizational capacity e.g., improve communication, trust, leadership, and commitment to CRCS’s mission and vision. The ED mentioned that he works diligently to ensure that information and feedback constantly flows in both directions (e.g., from teachers to administrators back to teachers, etc.). Minutes from all leadership meetings are shared with all CRCS staff and reviewed with the CRCS Board at each Board meeting.

#### F. Governance

- The Review Team discussed with the Board Chairperson, concerns regarding CRCS having only three board members; CRCS By-laws require a minimum of five Board members. Danielle mentioned that the Board is looking for potential Board members who have legal and finance backgrounds and experience. Discussion centered on the importance of meeting bylaw requirements, but also having a knowledgeable Board that is accountable to the public in making sound decisions regarding the education of students and use of public funds.
- The Board has not conducted any strategic planning during the past school year. It was stated that it will be addressing this need in the upcoming months. A “Strategic Direction” was adopted by the Board in July 2017 and revised in August 2018 and 2019. However, this document dealt primarily with updating CRCS’s mission and vision. The Board Chairperson was vaguely familiar with this document and did not believe it was a strategic plan because it was an internal document that did not involve community members.
- The Board Chairperson stated that she had concerns with CRCS not meeting academic standards and test scores being used as “stand alone” evidence of student performance.

The Review Team provided Danielle with some ideas for collecting data (chronic absenteeism, decrease in students needing support services, etc.) which shows areas in which CRCS students are demonstrating positive outcomes.

- At the time of the “visit” the Board had plans to conduct a performance evaluation of the Executive Director in September. A performance evaluation had been completed in ‘18-’19 but it was described more as a “self-reflection” completed by the Executive Director that included goal setting.
- The Board Chairperson explained that she and the other Board members supported the restructuring of administrative responsibilities, stating that it would “shift some of the responsibilities based on people’s strength and free up some of the Executive Director’s time to do more of the school oversight.”

#### G. Finance

- The Review team discussed several issues related to CRCS finances. These issues included:
  - Does CRCS having suitable capacity and resources (time, personnel, etc.) to provide specific business operations and functions to other charter schools e.g., technology, HR, etc.
  - How will the new Eaton Mountain Project and partnership with CRCS impact on CRCS finances and student learning?
  - Is the Board meeting state requirements in respect to “Conflict of Interest” and Freedom of Access training?
  - Does the Board have a comprehensive understanding of their current budget and cost centers (e.g. % of monies used for regular and special education instruction, administration, other cost centers) and is there a plan in place if there is a reduction in state subsidy (10%?) for ‘20-’21 school year?
  - Does the current budget reflect the needs advocated by school administrators and staff?
- Based on the issues discussed, MCSC team members recommended the following:
  - Recommend a standardized Finance Committee agenda and report for the board.
  - Add financial metrics that measure operations and educational efforts – such as percent of funding spent on facilities and on overhead per student; ratio of spending on in-classroom expenses vs funding per student, etc.
  - Board should undertake a review of its Charter Contract, perhaps over the course of a few meetings.
  - Start a Facilities Committee – consider ad hoc memberships from the broader engineering and architect community.
  - Long range and facilities plans have been suggested in the past and are important to suggest again. Currently, the status of the facilities development projects is not clear.
  - CRCS has a significant investment in facilities and substantial annual depreciation expense. Monthly financial statements, annual budgets and plan need to reflect depreciation.
  - Like any organization, CRCS needs to publish an up-to-date statement of net assets, at least quarterly. This could be prepared by an outside bookkeeping service.
  - The charter holder has experienced some transition of personnel handling business management functions for the organization. While these transitions have gone smoothly, the Charter Commission encourages the Governing Board to ensure a process of continual reporting of financial data through staffing changes.
  - Consider designating a porting of net assets for capital improvements/repairs, special education, etc.
  - The Eaton Mountain Foundation (EMF) project appears to be substantial and evolving. The relationship between EMF and CRCS can have a negative impact on the operations and success of the school because it requires considerable time and

attention from school leaders. The Charter Commission will continue to monitor this relationship as it impacts the health of the school.

## Section 15: Mission and Vision Implementation Evidence and Results

*(See Page 2 for School's Mission and Vision)*

At Dimensions Academy, the daily schedule is set so that every room is doing the same subject at the same time, which allows students to move to the classroom that is working on the specific learning targets that they need. The school provides students with voice and choice for a variety of instructional and co-curricular opportunities. The school has been adding more community guests into the school to work with students and staff. Field trips and guest speakers were planned to connect with seminar topics, and a few school wide guests tied into school themes. A favorite was the Koviashuvik Local Learning School, which provided opportunities for hands-on activities for the celebration of Maine's bicentennial.

At Overman Academy, students had multiple opportunities throughout the year to connect with the community. Students participated in volunteer opportunities at the Skowhegan Humane Society, where they took care of animals, made blankets and started to help with fundraising. At the Madison Historical Society, students helped museum employees catalog artifacts. This opportunity taught students about local history and to understand the value of primary source documents. Additionally, students worked with the caretakers at the Skowhegan Cemetery where they learned about genealogy while volunteering to clean headstones. During summer 2019, students helped support the Rotary Club's lobster fest and took care of the planters in the community working with Somerset Public Health. These opportunities helped students build connections with the community and learn about the benefits of being an engaged citizen.

The school started Overman Industries, which is a micro-business that teaches students about managing small businesses. Students did projects for Titcomb Mountain, Haulk Maple Syrup and the Maine Meals. Additionally, students started to take over an art fundraiser for the PTF that involved taking student artwork and placing it on various products. Each of these projects taught students how to meet a deadline, reach a level of quality that paying customers desire, and design and construct products using the tools in the fabrication lab. They provided opportunities for students to gain skills across content areas and make connections with real world experiences.

## Section 16: Commendations and Considerations

### Commendations

- With onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the school was proactive in serving the learning and personal needs of students, and increased contact with families to be supportive.
- Evidence of the school's mission and vision can be seen in its instructional practices, community involvement and hands-on real-life learning.
- While normal testing has been interrupted by the pandemic, CRCS is seeking additional student learning information that will assist in making informed decisions in personalizing instruction for each student.

### Considerations

- The school must expand the number of governing board members with persons having qualifications that relate to the effective operation and success of the schools.
- As the school has grown in both facilities and grade levels, a review of financial planning, practices and reporting, as well as the creation of a facilities subcommittee, would be appropriate.
- CRCS has made efforts to improve student achievement. These should continue and deserve priority in the school's annual goals.
- The Charter Commission recommends that CRCS conduct a neutral, third party risk analysis of the financial and governing impact of its relationship with EMF and submit its report to the Charter Commission. In doing so, CRCS has the opportunity to provide additional transparency, avoid conflicts of interest and ensure that taxpayer dollars are being used effectively, in accordance to the law and for the purpose of educating students of CRCS.