

# Maine Charter School Commission



## ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2019-2020

December 2020

*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.*

## December 2020

On August 24, 2020, the Maine Charter School Commission Review Team completed Zoom meetings with Maine Academy of Natural Sciences' 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	John Bird
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

School's Mission	The Maine Academy of Natural Sciences (MeANS) is a public charter high school that inspires and engages students through project-based, student-centered instruction immersed in the natural sciences of Maine with a focus on agriculture, forestry, and the environment. MeANS challenges all students to connect with their education in order to grow as individuals, interact with their communities, and lead fulfilling lives.
School's Vision	<p><b>Values</b></p> <p><b>Respect</b> With an emphasis on honoring differences, MeANS encourages students to be compassionate and empathetic. Faculty, staff, and students employ restorative practices for community building and conflict resolution.</p> <p><b>Responsibility</b> Our individualized instruction builds confidence and empowers students to take ownership of their education. Skills such as self-advocacy and goal setting are developed alongside a commitment to helping others.</p> <p><b>Community</b> MeANS connects with students and families through close relationships with advisors, teachers, and administrators. Students are expected to contribute positively to the school and are encouraged to take advantage of the larger learning context through volunteerism, internships, and college courses.</p>

## Section 1: School Information

School Name	Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
Address	13 Easler Road, P.O. Box 159, Hinckley, ME 04944

### Governing Board

Board Chair	Cheryl Bulmer
Board Vice Chair	Cheryl Mercier
Board Secretary	Tom Edwards
Board Member	Dana Doran
Board Member	Senator Scott Cyrway
Board Member	Sally Beaulieu
Board Member	Scott Byrd
Board Member	Kimberly Patnode
Board Member	Troy Frost
Board Member	Shannon Webber
Board Member	Jesse Wechsler
Board Member	Robin Cyr

### Administrative Team

Head of School	Matthew Newberg
Dean of Students, MeANS	Danni Best
Dean of Students, Threshold	Becky Dennison
Special Education Director	Christine Sullivan

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

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

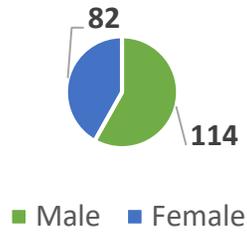
## Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

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

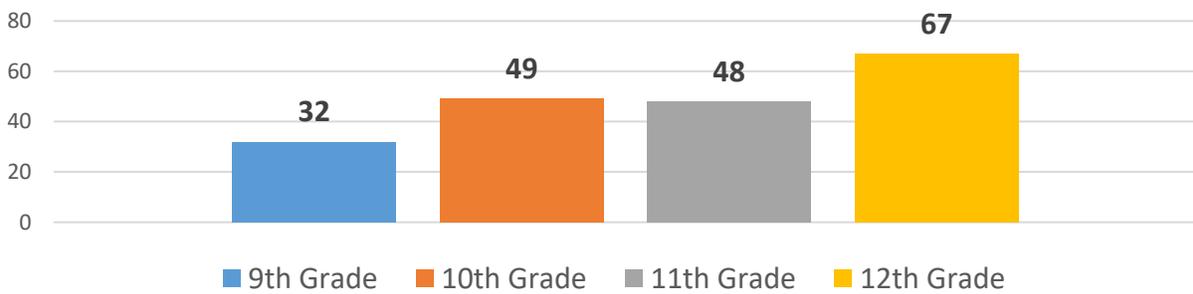
**\*Due to COVID-19 and school facility closures, many assessments and evaluations were not given.**

## Section 3: Demographics 2019-2020

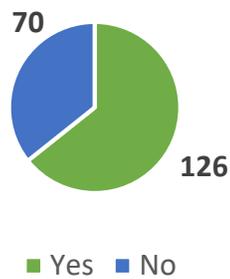
### Gender Breakdown



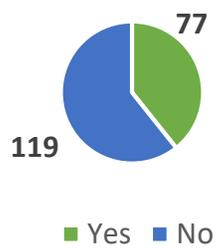
### Grade Breakdown



### Economically Disadvantaged



### Special Education



## Section 4: Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	
Percent at or above expectations on SAT – Reading	Increasing percent of students scoring at or above state proficiency level by 3% annually starting in 2016	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
Percent at or above expectations on SAT - Math	Increasing percent of students scoring at or above state proficiency level by 3% annually starting in 2016		NA
Reading NWEA	Fewer than 10% of seniors will score in the low-grade level norm in literacy	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, spring NWEA assessments were cancelled.	NA
Math NWEA	Fewer than 10% of seniors will score in the low-grade level norm in math		NA

## Section 5: Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	
Reading NWEA – Percent not meeting reading growth target	The 12 <sup>th</sup> grade will have fewer than 34% who did not meet their projected RIT growth score in reading	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, spring assessments were cancelled. Due to this cancellation, no growth data are available to report.	NA
Math NWEA – Percent not meeting reading growth target	The 12 <sup>th</sup> grade will have fewer than 28% who did not meet their projected RIT growth score in math		NA

## Section 6: Achievement Gaps

Measure	Target	Results	
Percent Well Below on SAT Reading	Reducing the number of students with an IEP who score well below by 2% annually beginning with 2015-16 year as baseline.	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
Percent Well Below on SAT Math	Reducing the number of students with an IEP who score well below by 2% annually beginning with 2015-16 year as baseline.		NA

Percent Not Meeting Growth Target on Reading NWEA in unidentified and identified groups	Reducing the number of students with an IEP not meeting growth target by 2% annually in relation to unidentified group beginning with the 2015-16 year as baseline. 2018-19 target = 10%	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
Percent Well Below Growth Target on Math NWEA	Reducing the number of students with an IEP scoring well below by 2% annually beginning with 2015-16 year as baseline. 2018-19 target = 8%		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)	65% of students were chronically absent as of March 13, 2020.	Did Not Meet
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 79%.	Did Not Meet

### 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>	88% 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.	88% of eligible students enrolled on the last day of school completed an Intent to reenroll form for the next school year	Met

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

## Section 9: Post-Secondary Readiness

Measure	Target	Result	
4-year high school graduation rate (current cohort, ACGR)	Schools will meet MDOE annual goal: 2020 –87.74%		*Awaiting DOE Release of Data
5 and 6-year average high school graduation rate (previous 2 years' cohorts averaged)	Schools will meet MDOE annual goal: 2020 – 89.74%		*Awaiting DOE Release of Data
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 course, certificate program, or internship.	50% of students in their graduating year participated in post-secondary readiness opportunities.	Did Not Meet
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.	75% of students participating in post-secondary readiness opportunities were successful.	Met

***\*Once data is released by the DOE and received by the Maine Charter School Commission, an addendum updating Post-Secondary Readiness (Targets 1 and 2) will be issued.***

## Section 10: Financial Performance and Stability

Measure	Target	Result	
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.	Met
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.	Met

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 draft Audit Report, Management Letter, and other financials have been submitted and reviewed by the Commission.	Met
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**Section 11: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship**

Measure	Target	Results	
Public Accountability: Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operation.	The Governing Board will hold a minimum of 6 meetings per school year <sup>2</sup> .	The Governing Board held 10 meetings during the school year.	Met
Public Accountability: Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operation.	Timely <sup>3</sup> publication of Board meeting agenda and minutes upon approval.	Board meeting agendas and minutes were timely published, except for 2 occurrences.	Partially Met

**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 does not have a current capital improvement plan approved by its governing board.	Did Not Meet

<sup>2</sup> A school year is July 1 – June 30

<sup>3</sup> Timely is defined as posting agenda a minimum of 5 days before the meeting and for minutes, posting within 5 days of approval.

## 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 address areas for continued improvement. Plan and outcome will be submitted to the Commission in September.	The school reviewed its Panorama Education survey results and developed an action plan to address areas for continued improvement and submitted the plan to the Commission in September 2019 as required.	Met

## Section 14: Site Visit Report

### **Maine Charter School Commission Monitoring Site Visit Report**

SITE VISIT DATE	August 24, 2020 (via Video Conference)
SCHOOL NAME:	Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
ADDRESS:	13 Easler Road, P.O. Box 159, Hinckley, ME 04944
GRADES SERVED:	Grades 9 - 12
ENROLLMENT:	179 (school reported 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
- 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 site-visit manual, as well as school specific questions, were discussed during the visit.

Group interviews held by the team included:

- MEANS Leadership Team
  - Danni Best, Dean of Students
  - Christine Sullivan, Special Education Director
  - Becky Dennison, Dean of Threshold Program
  - Matt Newberg, Head of School
- MEANS Head of School
  - Matt Newberg
- MEANS Governing Board:
  - Cheryl Bulmer, Board Chairperson

## Monitoring Site Visit Findings

### A. Mission Alignment

- MEANS has submitted an amendment to revise its Mission and Vision Statements. The MEANS Board and school leadership worked collaboratively to ensure that the revised mission/vision statement was "more inclusive" and it was clear that MEANS' programming was "focused on agriculture, forestry and the environment" and was "student-centered" with "project-based learning." The school believes its current mission/vision statement was limiting and focused on students who were "profoundly disconnected" from their education.
- The MSCC Review Team provided MEANS with feedback regarding its proposed revision to the mission statement.

### B. Student Achievement

- Since MEA and NWEA testing were suspended in the spring of 2020 due to COVID-19, MEANS was unable to provide information on student achievement and performance.
- In discussion with school leaders, they stated that their priority for 20/21 is to better align curriculum, instruction, and assessment, ensuring that everyone is on the same page with respect to expectations for students meeting all required graduation standards. MEANS has hired an "Instructional Coach" to work with teachers to develop a "more structured and cohesive" curriculum that will be used at the campus school and in the Threshold program.
- MEANS reported that administrators participated in NWEA training in 2019 in hopes of using it as a tool for improving teaching and student achievement. They believe they have made

some progress in changing MEANS' teachers "cultural attitude around testing," with "teachers more willing and open to the NWEA testing platform." MEANS will be considering expanding NWEA to include winter testing for underperforming students in order to better assess student progress and to provide support.

- MEANS school leadership stated that it needs to "bolster" students' Personal Learning Plans (PLP) in order for students and advisors to better understand each student's status regarding student "achievement and pacing."

#### C. Student Support Programs

- MEANS administration is now solely responsible for the admission of students to MEANS, which was previously managed by Good Will-Hinckley staff. The MEANS admission process includes a personal visit including a site tour of MEANS. This new admission process has been successful in "getting kids invested in being here (MEANS)" and in "establishing a rapport and relationship" with them.
- It was reported that MEANS has a Response to Intervention (RTI) Coordinator who oversees the process of identifying underperforming students and providing them with the support services (academic and social/emotional) they need in order to be productive students who are meeting school expectations and outcomes. MEANS continues to "tinker" with the RTI processes, in hope of expanding opportunities for support and time which currently include in classroom support by Ed Techs, a weekly study hall during which teachers can work with students, and weekly Project Blocks.
- For students receiving Special Education services who struggled with an online environment in the spring, additional instructional support by Ed Techs was provided after the regular school day had ended, and also by teachers who were available between 11 am and 2 pm to work with students.
- The plan for starting school year '20-'21 is for teachers to meet with Threshold students (outdoors) one day per week with teachers and students wearing masks. At the time of the site visit it had not yet been determined how teachers would meet with Threshold students during the winter months. Video conferencing and daily check-ins had been used by Threshold teachers since March 2020.

#### D. School Climate and Family Engagement

- The Panorama Survey was not administered in school year '19-'20 year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, MEANS conducted surveys with students and parents regarding future programming, as well as a check-in regarding students' online learning experiences.
- Student Survey results showed overwhelming support for nontraditional, hands-on, and project-based learning experiences held outdoors, which affirmed MEANS' mission.
- Parent Survey results stated that parents believed communication and teacher online engagement was "adequate", but it "did not fit with students' learning styles." Parents stated overwhelmingly that they wanted students to return to MEANS in person in September 2020.

#### E. School Leadership

- School leadership was particularly pleased with the low rate of staff turnover during '19-'20 school year. No certified classroom teachers resigned from MEANS, although a part-time PE/Health teacher position was eliminated due to budget constraints.

- In respect to supervision and evaluation practices, It was reported that a mid-year review with every teacher and staff member was conducted with hour long meetings used to discuss a set of pre-valuation reflective questions, self-evaluation questions, and goal setting. The Head of School mentioned that someone was hired (via a stipend position) to oversee teacher professional development e.g., creating a year-long professional development and in-service calendar, working with teachers to help them maintain certification, and working with the instructional coach to improve teachers' instructional practices. The Head of School stated that increasing classroom observations is an area that needs to be improved in school year '20-'21. It was unclear if MEANS had implemented its MDOE required teacher Professional Evaluation and Professional Growth plan (PEPG) with fidelity over the past several years.
- The Head of School has been at MEANS for one year. He believes MEANS is moving in a positive direction for both staff and students. He is also confident that teachers and staff see him as a "straight shooter", not one to "play games", transparent in what he is thinking, and reliable in his actions. He believes a good administrative decision requires the "involvement of all the constituents: parents, students and teachers."
- It was evident that Head of School works to maintain meaningful and frequent levels of communication with Good Will-Hinckley (GWH) administration and MEANS administrators, teachers and staff via weekly meetings with GWH, twice a week meetings with MEANS administrators, and daily check-ins with teachers with an every other week one-hour staff meeting. The Head of School is currently investigating publishing a formal MEANS Newsletter, which has not been done at MEANS in the past. He also stated that the school's website is now more user friendly and MEANS will be using Infinite Campus as its messenger system to increase communications with students and their families.
- School administrators explained that they have a Standards Based Credit System in place for students to earn credits towards graduation. The Head of School stated that MEANS needs to work on its curriculum in order to ensure there is a "curricular sequence" in place that verifies students have been taught and have demonstrated with proficiency all required standards for graduation.

#### F. Governance

- The Board Chair reported the MEANS Board is comprised of 12 members, soon to be increased to 15 members, who have a variety of backgrounds and work experiences in finance, education, technology, business, and science. The Board is currently looking to add a board member with legal expertise.
- With the assistance of a consultant, a small focus group of Board members, school administrators, and teachers have begun to craft a "strategic plan" for guiding the future direction of MEANS. Even though this work was interrupted by COVID-19, this focus group has a list of priorities and a tentative work plan which they have developed for year one. This plan will be submitted to the full Board for review and action.
- The Board Chair believes the Head of School maintains effective and timely communications with Board members regarding important financial and educational issues, as well other topics of Board interest. The Head of School provides the Board with written reports, agendas with detailed information, and attends all Board committee meetings.
- It was reported that the Board did not conduct a formal evaluation of the Head of School in '19-'20. The Board is currently reviewing the HOS evaluation process with possible revisions and a new timeline. All agreed that the primary purpose of an evaluation is to provide timely

and meaningful feedback for improving one's performance. The Board hopes to have the Head of School evaluation process revised and ready to implement by September or October of 2020.

- The Board Chair believes that Board members have a sound understanding of issues and challenges facing MEANS, which have included revising MEANS' mission and vision statements, hiring an Instructional Coach to help with curriculum and instruction alignment, and the need for strategic planning. The Board Chair did state that Board members need more information regarding student achievement and growth, which has not been provided to them in the past.

#### G. Finance

- The Review team discussed several issues related to MEANS' finances. These issues included:
  - *MEANS MOU with Good Will-Hinckley* – MEANS has met with Good Will-Hinckley and has modified the MOU to remove services that MEANS will provide in-house:

- MEANS will now handle new student admissions
- MEANS will eliminate grant writing and marketing position(s).

The Head of School believes the reduction of these services will not have a negative impact on MEANS' relationship with Good Will-Hinckley because GWH understands why MEANS made these decisions.

- *Transportation* – MEANS has decided not to contract with a bus company for student transportation in '20-'21. The school's five buses will be providing student transportation as a cost savings measure, as well as for additional benefits such as bus availability.
- *Deficit Budgeting in '20-'21* – It was noted that MEANS will be deficit budgeting in '20-'21. Concern – what is the plan to limit/stop this trend within the capacity of available cash?
- *GWH Financial Reporting* – The Head of School reported he has met with the new GWH Business Manager and has requested generating monthly instead of quarterly financial statements. He stated he is more knowledgeable about MEANS' finances due to having to dig "a little deeper into spending categories" this year.
- *Grant for Threshold Program* – It was noted that MEANS is in year 3 of a 5-year grant which funds the MEANS Threshold Program. It was recommended that other funding sources be investigated as soon as possible if MEANS wishes to continue this program.
- Recommendations:
  - Continue to regularly review/renegotiate MEANS contract regarding pricing, delivery, and elements that might be better handled by the school or are no-longer valuable.
  - Develop and refine educational and operational metrics with financial elements such as revenue per student and students per teacher to inform leadership about how resources are being spent.
  - Consider setting and tracking goals/limits on overhead. Metrics around program and staff support spending and performance trends are usually useful.
  - Recommend a standardized Finance Committee agenda and report for the board.
  - A multi-year planning process should be an on-going effort; plans would be reviewed regularly and before every budgeting process is undertaken. This is

particularly important during periods of change in enrollment, student-mix and economic stress.

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

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

In the 2019-2020 school year, MeANS began to bolster its commitment to its mission and vision. The school undertook a complete website redesign that incorporated items from the original mission and emphasized them - agriculture, forestry and the environment. The school has re-branded its logo and colors and created what it believes is a more unified look. Student enrollment is now being handled "in house," rather than through Good Will-Hinckley, and student tours and visits are being conducted to be certain that enrollees understand the mission and values of the school. The school launched a Strategic Planning process with teachers, administrators and board members that began with a re-write of the Mission.

The school hired an Instructional Coach to supporting teachers in the delivery of project based, hands on learning. Work was done to develop clear expectations for the school's Intensives (3-week, deep dives into areas such as Maple Sugaring, Forestry, Aquaponics, etc.) and began to standardize delivery. Additional work has been done to overhaul the four-year sequence of Intensives, creating a structure for the delivery of more traditional content area.

During the spring, the school created a cohort of nine teachers and administrators to be trained on Restorative Practices. This cohort underwent a 16-week course designed in part to "train the trainers." These staff will lead workshops during in-service days, to launch a newly invigorated commitment to schoolwide Restorative Practices. The school feels that this approach, along with its Advisory system, supports the core values of respect, responsibility, and community.

## Section 16: Commendations and Considerations

### Commendations

- The school conducted an inclusive review of its mission and vision. This resulted in the approval of an updated mission and vision that more appropriately reflected what the school is and what it offers to students and communities.
- The relationship between MEANS and GWH continues to be regularly reviewed and have changes made that strengthen that relationship and the respective organizations.
- The new head of school has taken the time to become familiar with the school and has initiated actions that build on MEANS's strengths and addresses its weaknesses in a collaborative and inclusive manner.
- MEANS has hired an instructional Coach to help with curriculum and instruction alignment.

### Considerations

- MEANS would benefit from an enhanced promotion of the programs at MEANS that would result in a stable and appropriately sized enrollment.
- Continued and expanded training and use of the NWEA could benefit planning for individuals learning opportunities and results.
- MeANS should continue to use and improve its PEPG implementation.
- The governing board should have a review of student achievement and growth as an item on its agenda at appropriate times during the year.