

# Maine Charter School Commission



## ACADIA ACADEMY

*A Charter Academy for Developing Independence & Achievement*

### ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2019-2020

November 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.*

**November 2020**

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020, the Maine Charter School Commission Review Team completed Zoom meetings with ACADIA Academy teachers/staff, students, parents, and members of the school’s leadership 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 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	Jim Rier
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post
Consultant	Joe Drago, CPA
Consultant	Dr. Joe Mattos
MDOE Special Services	Leora Byras

School’s Mission	ACADIA, A Charter Academy for Developing Independence and Achievement, will provide a rigorous, comprehensive educational program for children of the Lewiston/Auburn area in grades PreK through 6 <sup>th</sup> . ACADIA will promote high educational achievement through direct teaching opportunities that are entwined with extensive experiential learning opportunities. ACADIA faculty and staff will support the development of the whole child as each student develops academically, socially and emotionally in a safe community that requires personal accountability and meaningful participation. It is our intent to support our individual students in developing their full potential, while teaching them the value of belonging, connectedness and contribution to our larger community.
School’s Vision	ACADIA, A Charter Academy for Developing Independence and Achievement, will provide for a unique and innovative educational experience. ACADIA students will fully participate within our learning community, experiencing rigorous daily instruction comprised of carefully selected curricula to allow for academic acceleration, small group interaction and meaningful application. Authentic, relevant experiential activities will provide critical opportunities for our students to grasp real world application of concepts and skills, through the delivery of multi-modal learning opportunities that are necessary to meet the learning preferences of our students. Our students will be challenged to meet high expectations for academic performance, social and emotional competence, and demonstrate evidence of commitment to their community. We expect students to embrace high standards of personal accountability and commitment to their personal learning journey through innovative projects of self-study and interest.

## Section 1: School Information

School Name	ACADIA Academy
Address	12 Westminster Street, Lewiston, ME 04240

### Governing Board

Board President	Amy Dieterich
Board Vice President	Sean Siebert
Board Treasurer	Samantha Pederson
Board Secretary	Mary Verrill
Board Member	Chris Brann
Board Member	Danielle Moreau
Board Member	Victoria Stanton
Board Member	Sean Bushway
Board Member	Joey Beaudette

### Administrative Team

Principal	Brittany-Rae Perron
Special Education Coordinator	Emily Giorgetti
Facilities Manager	Tracy Turner

Year Opened	2016
Years in Operation	5
Number of Sending Districts*	12
Grades Served	PreK – 6
Current Enrollment*	257
Students on Waiting List*	70

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

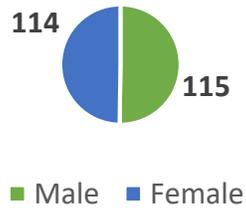
## Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

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

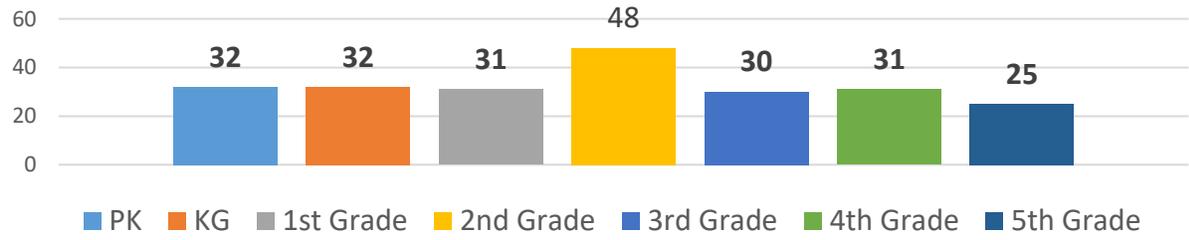
***\*Due to COVID-19 and school facility closures, many assessments and evaluations were not given***

### Section 3: Demographics 2019-2020

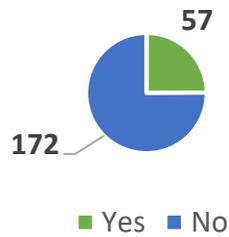
#### Gender Breakdown



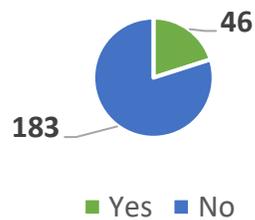
#### Grade Breakdown



#### Economically Disadvantaged



#### Special Education



## Section 4: Student Academic Proficiency

Measure	Target	Results	
Proficiency on State Assessments in reading	The number of students meeting or exceeding state expectations will be equal to or greater than 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 number of students meeting or exceeding state expectations will be equal to or greater than the state average.		NA
Proficiency on the spring administration of the Brigance	75% of PreK students will score at or above the cut off score for their age bracket on spring testing.	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, spring assessments were cancelled. Due to this cancellation, no data are available to report.	NA

## Section 5: Student Academic Growth

Measure	Target	Results	
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.	Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, spring assessments were cancelled. Due to this cancellation, no growth data are available to report.	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 <sup>1</sup> students will meet their projected growth on NWEA ELA reading and language by the end of the school year 2022-2023.		NA
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 2022-2023.		NA

<sup>1</sup> Eligible is defined as having both a fall and spring score for students in grades k-10

Growth on ELA reading and language Teaching Strategies Gold scores from fall to spring.	PreK students will show progress in their learning through growth in their ELA reading and language TSG scores from fall to spring.		NA
Growth on math Teaching Strategies Gold scores from fall to spring.	PreK students will show progress in their learning through growth in their math TSG scores from fall to spring.		NA

### Section 6: Achievement Gaps

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)	6% of students were chronically absent as of March 13, 2020.	Exceeded
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 96%.	Exceeded

## 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>2</sup> .	95% of eligible students enrolled on the last day of school were the same students who were enrolled on state student count day.	Exceeded
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.	97% of eligible students enrolled on the last day of school completed an Intent to reenroll form for the next school year	Exceeded

## Section 9: 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.	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	Unmodified opinion on [consolidated] financial statements: no material weaknesses, significant deficiencies or reportable instances of noncompliance and other matters identified in the other	The Board has engaged a firm to conduct the FY20 financial audit of the school. The draft Audit Report and	Met

<sup>2</sup> State student count day is October 1.

material findings or misstatements.	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.	Management Letter have been submitted and reviewed by the Commission.	
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### Section 10: 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.	The Governing Board held 12 meetings during the school year.	Exceeded
Public Accountability: Transparent, responsive, and legally compliant Board operation.	Timely publication of Board meeting agendas and minutes upon approval.	Board meeting agendas and minutes were timely published.	Met

### Section 11: 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 12: 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.		
Panorama Survey- Teacher/Staff Participation	70% of teachers/staff will participate in the Panorama survey.		
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 13: Site Visit Report

### Maine Charter School Commission Monitoring Site Visit Report

REPORT DATE:	September 24, 2020
SCHOOL NAME:	ACADIA Academy
ADDRESS:	12 Westminster Street, Lewiston, ME 04240
GRADES SERVED:	PreK – 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade
ENROLLMENT:	257 ( <i>school reported as of 9-9-20</i> )
YEAR OPENED:	2016

#### 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, school climate and family engagement, governance, and finance. Note: Classroom observations and school walk-throughs were not conducted due to social-distancing during COVID-19.

The following participants conducted the monitoring site visits (via Zoom):

- Bob Kautz, Executive Director
- Gina Post, Director of Program Management
- Amy Allen, Senior Support Coordinator
- Dr. Joseph Mattos, MCSC Consultant
- Joseph Drago, CPA, MCSC Financial Consultant
- Leora Byras, MDOE Special Services

The monitoring site visits were conducted virtually by Zoom on September 21<sup>st</sup> (Board and Administration), September 22<sup>nd</sup> (Students and Parents), and on September 23<sup>rd</sup> (Teachers and Staff). Team members used the Site Visit Manual to plan for 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:

- Renewal Application
- Year 4 Performance Report
- 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

Focus group interviews were held via Zoom. Groups were asked a standard set of questions as well as school specific questions created for this visit. Governing Board and Leadership were asked a set of questions specific to the Renewal Application.

Focus group interviews held by the team:

- Governing Board:
  - Amy Dieterich, Board Chair
  - Samantha Pedersen, Board Treasurer
  - Chris Brann, Board Member
- School leaders/administrators:
  - Brittiny-Rae Perron, Director
  - Emily Giorgetti, Special Education Coordinator
  - Tracy Turner, Facilities Manager
- Teachers: 20 [PreK through Grade 4 and Grade 6 including teacher assistants, behavioral technician, special education, music and art]
- Students: 10 [Grades 4, 5 and 6]
- Parents/Families: 4 [PreK, Kindergarten, Grade 2 and Grade 5]

### Monitoring Site Visit Findings

#### A. Mission Alignment

- There was significant alignment between staff, school administration and the Board, and parents regarding the mission and vision of ACADIA Academy. Specifically, each of the groups talked about the importance of experiential and exploratory learning, as well as significance of addressing students' social and emotional needs. Various examples were provided that demonstrated how ACADIA Academy implements these aspects of learning into its instructional practices e.g. community field trips, "virtual field trip, students' WINK (What I Need to Know) projects, daily "mindfulness" activities, schoolwide use of Restorative Justice practices, and hands-on classroom learning experiences.

#### B. Student Achievement

- Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, MEA and NWEA assessment were not administered, and subsequently, there were no MEA proficiency or NWEA growth data available for '19-'20.
- ACADIA's Year 4 Performance Report showed that in the prior three years ('16-'17, '17-'18, and '18-'19) students "Partially Met" Student Academic Proficiency each year. In respect to Students Academic Growth, ACADIA students improved from "Partially Meeting" in '17-'18 to "Meeting" this standard in '18-'19. ACADIA Academy students have exceeded the Student Enrollment and Student Attendance standards every year since '16-'17.
- ACADIA Academy provided evidence that students' percentage of proficiency in ELA and Math increased from '17-'18 to '18-'19 school years. Also, '19-'20 winter NWEA showed that 60% of students were at or above grade level in math and 64.8% of students were at or above grade level in reading.
- It was noted that usually 70% of students demonstrate growth on spring to Fall NWEA assessments. ACADIA Academy believes its summer programming is responsible for this growth.

- In '17-'18 ACADIA Academy scored below many of the schools in Lewiston and surrounding areas on the MEA. However, in '18-'19 ACADIA Academy performed better than all the Lewiston Schools, as well as higher than many schools in the surrounding area.

### C. School Climate and Family Engagement

- Student Focus Group
  - Students report that teachers and principal expect them to do their very best, follow directions, be respectful and responsible.
  - Students report that teachers understand their needs and help when needed.
  - Students report that WINK (What I Need to Know) projects are one of their favorite learning activities.
  - Students report a positive school environment where teachers help them solve problems if they can't figure them out on their own. Students are encouraged to solve their own problems before asking for help from an adult.
  - Students report feeling safe at the school.
  - When students were asked one thing that they might change at the school to make it better the most common response was a bigger playground and/or outdoor space.
- Parent Focus Group
  - Parents report choosing to send their children to ACADIA Academy because of its mission which includes experiential and hands-on learning, social-emotional instruction, and personalized learning.
  - Parents report feeling connected to the school through various activities and multiple ways of two-way communication (e.g., Bloomz app, email, face-to-face meetings, student-led conferences and surveys).
  - Parents feel comfortable with the level of communication they get regarding their students' academic and social-emotional growth and abilities.
  - Parents report feeling that their children are safe and happy at school and all agreed that they would or have recommend the school to friends or relatives.
  - When parents were asked one thing that they might change at the school to make it better responses included more outdoor or playground space, increased compensation for teachers for higher teacher retention and hoping the school might expand to higher grade levels in the future.
- Teacher and Staff Focus Group
  - Teachers and staff report choosing to work at ACADIA Academy because of its mission which includes experiential and hands-on learning, social-emotional instruction, and personalized learning.
  - Teachers report using NWEA MAP to look at student needs and achievement in order to inform instruction and for designing personalized learning.
  - Teachers report the need for more formal observations and evaluations and for meaningful feedback from administration.
  - Teachers report wanting the opportunity to engage in peer observations to improve teaching and student learning.
  - Teachers report having the ability to give input and feel like they're being heard.
  - When teachers and staff were asked one thing that they might change at the school to make it better responses included:

- A full-time assistant in both kindergarten classes
- More outdoor space
- More training for new teachers
- Staff retention
- Sinks and bathrooms in the kindergarten space
- An assistant director to free up our director to be in the classroom
- An RTI/MTSS Coordinator
- Better pay and insurance
- Time off during the summer while maintaining the summer program.
- To have time to really develop staff relationships

#### D. School Leadership

- School Leadership (and Board) believe its administrative structure is stable and should provide ACADIA Academy with the personnel needed to operate in a more effective and efficient manner. New positions (Director of Facilities and a Behavior Technician) were created and staffed in '19-'20.
- Specific questions addressed by school leadership included:
  - *Cross Grouping of Students in Reading and Math* – School leaders (and teachers) report that this program of cross-grouping students every 6 weeks is allowing students to make more growth (e.g., both “catch-up growth” for slower learners, and accelerated growth for advanced students).
  - *Restorative Justice Program* – This program is used both at the classroom and administrative levels. Many teachers have been trained in this program, although there needs to be additional training for new teachers.
  - *Summer School* – As measured by spring to fall NWEA assessment results, approximately 70% of students who participate in the summer program demonstrate growth during the summer. A lack of student attendance was identified as one factor which might explain why 30% of students did not demonstrate growth, though most of the students who did not show growth did not suffer the “summer slide.”
  - *Multi-Tiered Systems of Support* – ACADIA’s teachers participated in this state initiative in '19-'20, which was cut short due to COVID-19. This system is intended to monitor and provide support to students not meeting academic or behavioral expectations. Teachers recommended that there be an individual assigned as a RTI/MTSS Coordinator to oversee this important support system for students.
  - *One-on-One Ed Tech Support* – ACADIA Academy reported that currently there are 17 students who have one-on-one Ed Techs for academic or behavioral support. It was pointed out that although no students have progressed to the point of not needing this Ed Tech, there are students who are in their regular classrooms for more time and needing less one-on-one time.
  - *Exploratory Project Committee* – ACADIA Academy is establishing a committee in '20-'21 to formalize expectations and outcomes for exploratory and experiential projects. The work of this committee is intended to provide guidance to staff and new teachers in designing and implementing high quality student project activities with agreed on outcomes (knowledge, skills, and personal qualities) for students to demonstrate.

#### E. Governance

- ACADIA Academy’s Board is comprised of nine individuals with diverse backgrounds and experiences (legal, finance, business, and technology) who are committed to ACADIA’s mission. Attendance at Board meetings was 98% for ‘19-’20.
- Specific questions addressed by the Board included:
  - *Teacher Turnover* – The Board identified Teacher Turnover as one of its major concerns. Specifically, currently ACADIA Academy is unable to provide competitive compensation and benefits to teachers as compared to area public school teachers. Some steps have been taken to improve teacher compensation and benefits such as making upwards adjustments for compensation for teachers teaching five years or less and providing long-term and short-term disability insurance. Other options are being explored that increase teacher satisfaction and address the need for teacher time off in the summer.
  - *Teacher Supervision and Evaluation* – The Board realizes that due to periodic and limited administrative resources, school leaders have been unable to conduct informal and formal classroom observation. Teachers also identify this need for meaningful instructional feedback and for peer observations. The Board has set goals with the school’s director for conducting regular weekly classroom observations. The Board was encouraged to closely monitor its teacher supervision and evaluation program, as well as to provide the director with the support and resources (time, personnel, technology, professional development, etc.) needed to conduct classroom observations for improving teacher practice and student learning.
- The Board is appreciative of MCSC’s work, especially its work to help charter schools partner with other charter schools and to share research and ideas.
- The Board is looking to expand student enrollment at ACADIA Academy to include more diverse student populations, as well as seeking an individual from a minority to serve on the Board.
- In ‘19-’20 the Board conducted a performance review of the Director, based on the Director’s Job Description. This evaluation identified goals and areas to address in ‘20-’21.

#### F. Finance

- ACADIA Academy has maintained a budget surplus for all years of operation except for the current year. The Board believes ACADIA Academy is in a strong, financial position due to having a rent-free building since its inception. Most of the building’s systems (HVAC, etc.) have been replaced in past three years, with follow-up inspections and recommendations followed.
- Future budget considerations include replacement of the school roof (\$100,000) and purchasing land for expanding school playgrounds.
- ACADIA Academy applied for federal PPP funds to cover a shortfall in revenues from the summer Child Care program.
- Recommendations made to the Board included:
  - Continue to monitor contract with ESP to ensure that purchased services are needed and competitive.
  - Ensure that good budget processes are in place e.g. budgeting, approval of budgets, accepting loans, accepting bids, etc.

- Develop a formal Finance Committee agenda and template for report to the board.
- Start a Facilities Committee – consider ad hoc memberships from the broader engineering and architect community.
- Review the important Charter Contract sections as a Board meeting activity.
- Beware of overall metrics and trends when there have been large in-kind donations that can make results look better than they are on a cash basis.
- Initiate, prepare and update long range planning that includes facilities.
- Avoid adding debt – work on an annual fund, a capital campaign, a scholarship fund, a professional development fund, etc.
- Beware of deficit spending – have a plan for what you will do live within your funding.
- Consider designating a portion of net assets for capital improvements/repairs, special education, etc.

## Section 14: Mission and Vision Implementation Evidence and Results

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

ACADIA Academy has created a learning program which encompasses hands-on year-round learning. The school believes it has created a safe and welcoming community using Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports and Restorative Justice practices. The school reports that students are eager to go to school and are owners in their learning.

The school keeps a close eye on its academic data and uses it to make meaningful changes so students continue to make progress. The school reports that its Anytime Anywhere learning plan allowed it to start off with learning on the first day of building closure due to COVID-19. After the initial few weeks of closure, the school worked to adapt its programming to better suit the long-term closure.

ACADIA Academy uses a direct instruction model that incorporates carefully selected curricula augmented with relevant experiential applications. “Hands-on” activities allow for multi-modal learning necessary to meet the varied needs and learning preferences of students and support real world application of concepts and skills. Prior to the Covid-19 building closures, there were more than 30 field trips where students engaged in the application of knowledge and skills while becoming familiar with people and places in their community. During the building closure the school continued using virtual “field trips” to engage students in learning with experts in the community. Virtual field trips included science engagements around animals, plants, magnets and more. Prior to school closure, special guests visited classrooms to reinforce how and why academic concepts apply to the world around them. 2019-2020 visitors included meteorologists, dentists, scientists, police officers and more.

Throughout the year, each classroom completed multiple “What I Need to Know” (WINK) projects, which were student-selected and driven, and provided an opportunity to explore in-depth topics of interest.

ACADIA's cross-grade grouping system allowed students to access academic instruction at their level. Additional math and reading teachers help during cross-group instructional time which allows for smaller group sizes, more individual attention, and meaningful small group interactions.

At ACADIA Academy all students keep a Pride Portfolio throughout the year to monitor their progress and success. Twice per year, students share portfolios with their families at Student Led Conferences, where they discuss personal goals and report on progress made.

In summer 2020, due to COVID 19, the school was unable to hold its typical summer program which is a 6-week/3-day per week program. The program usually has over 90% of its students participate. The program reinforces attainment and mastery of important academic skills, provides exposure to real-world settings, and time to practice social skills. Morning sessions focus on math and reading instruction. During afternoon sessions, students choose a study unit that includes hands on activities and a field trips for real life application where students chose a topic to explore through a cross-curricular lens.

However, during the summer the school was able to provide remote math and reading opportunities. A website was put together with exploratory activities that families could do throughout the summer. The school also offered live weekly art classes. Additionally, the school offered special education instruction for students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students who required full days of summer school based on their IEP were able to attend. Students with specially designed instruction on their IEP attended by appointment to receive services. Counseling, speech, and Occupational Therapy were also done by in person by appointment. Families who weren't comfortable attending in person were offered the opportunity to attend via Zoom.

## Section 15: Commendations and Considerations

### Commendations

- Strong evidence of significant alignment between staff, school administration and the Board, and parents regarding the mission and vision of ACADIA Academy.
- The school exceeded its targets in the areas of very low chronic absenteeism and very high average daily attendance.
- The school has a very high percentage of students who remain with the school from year to year.
- The school provides a summer school experience for any of their students who choose to participate. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the school was able to provide a virtual summer school experience. The summer school program contributes to the continuation of academic growth and minimizes the effect of a "summer slide".
- There have been improving results in academic proficiency and growth each year.

- All focus groups interviewed for the site visit commented on the experiential and exploratory learning, and the strong evidence of the school's attention to students' social and emotional needs.
- Strong communication between parents and the school was evident at focus group interviews.

#### Considerations

- The school acknowledged the need to improve the retention of teachers.
- The school needs to assure resources and staff are in place so the teacher evaluation and peer evaluation programs can be fully implemented.
- Continued professional development in the use of NWEA is needed for new teachers and for all staff to be sure that the benefits of this assessment continue to support improving student academic growth and proficiency.
- The school should continue its efforts to provide more outside space for student and school use, as was indicated by all focus groups as a need for the school.
- It would be of benefit to the Governing Board to continue to periodically review its contract with the Education Service Provider (ESP) to be sure that the needs of the school are being appropriately addressed.
- With the generous gift of the school building, the Board should establish a facilities committee to plan for future projects to accommodate a growth of population and to ensure the building is safe and in appropriate condition.
- The Governing Board should consider developing a finance committee agenda and form for reporting to the Board and to ensure that good budget processes are in place.