

Monitoring Report
Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences
August, 2014

1. Introduction

Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences opened its doors on September 3, 2013 for preschool, kindergarten, first graders and second graders serving 42 students. Located at 25 Shaker Road in Gray, Maine first year students were from eighteen communities.

The Charter School is designed to be based on the Reggio Emilia philosophy with place based, multiple intelligences, art integration and inquiry based learning. Jacinda Cotton-Castro is the Principal.

Throughout its first year students have been observed to be excited, and able to share what they are learning, including Spanish. Student work is evident everywhere on tables, on walls. Displayed with work on shapes were drawings and statements such as, “a triangle is just a triangle until you give it a tiara and long hair and then it becomes a princess.” Students share that at this school kids are kind and gentle.

Parents love the school and what it has done for their children. They have been guided by the administration to see themselves not as fundraisers but integral partners focusing on creating a sense of community.

Teachers in this first year have been working to maintain the Reggio Emilia philosophy and be able to translate what they know and observe about students into proficiency on standards maintaining program integrity while demonstrating a state compatible assessment system. Teachers reported that the most exciting aspect of their work in this first year was the progress of the students, the organic learning under the philosophy. One teacher commented that, “it feels like life” when learning occurs in the building and out into the community.

Fiddlehead identified special education students quickly as school opened necessitating the hiring of additional personnel. The special education director and teacher are working to bridge the regulations of special education with the philosophy of the school, trying different approaches and making adjustments based on the needs of students.

The Governing Board has gone through many firsts, continuing to develop policies, procedures, problem solving, fundraising and at the end of this first year taking part in strategic planning using the Planning Ahead tool. The Board feels that this first year has been a success-“The school is financially on target, you see smiling faces, kids are busy and there is a vibrant teaching staff.”

2. Process for Monitoring the Public Charter School

The Maine Charter School Commission established a visiting review team accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, Department of Education Special Education Personnel. Members of the review team were Chair, Shelley Reed, Jana Lapoint and Laurie Pendleton. Laurie was reassigned whereby Nichi Farnham replaced her on the Review Team .The Commission team conducted 2 announced on-site visits during the 2013-2014 school year. The dates of the visits were November 19, 2013 and June 10, 2014. Representatives of the review team were also present for opening day and the 2013 lottery on March 28, 2013 and the 2014 lottery, March 5, 2014 of students.

The review team held interviews with school leadership, staff, students, parents, community and governing board. They also reviewed ed available data provided by the school. Documents provided by the school are available from the Maine Charter School Commission office. Additional data was collected from the Maine Department of Education website.

Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was used to determine the extent to which the school has met their contracted performance targets.

Section 3: Charter Commission Annual Report on Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences Performance Indicators August, 2014

| Indicator and Measure | 2014 Targets negotiated in the Contract | Documented Results Reported | Notes and Comments from Monitoring Visits | Outcome |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| Student Academic Proficiency: State Assessments | Percentage of (age 8/gr 3 and above) at proficiency level will increase by3% on NECAP(on Smarter Balance in the future) | DNA in 2013-2014 as no grade 3 students | In preparation for student participation and reporting as school grows and grades added | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Student Academic Proficiency: School developed assessments | Local assessment Pearson Work Sampling system | October 2013, March 2014 documentation, year- end data In categories of personal & social development, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts, and physical development and health | Reported process and training for working with Pearson work sampling system | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Student Academic Growth: Value added nationally normed individual and group assessment or equivalent for English and Math | Literacy, math and science -80% of students will meet or exceed, 10% will achieve 75%, 10 % will achieve 50% | 2013-2014 year end assessment data results for Benchmark year Pre-K Literacy Nov to June 28.6 % to 100% proficient Pre-K Math Nov to June 7.1% to 92.9% proficient Pre-K Science Nov to June 21.4% to 100% proficient K Literacy from 40% to 92.3% proficient K Math from 0% to 84.6 proficient K Science from 0% to 76.9% proficient Gr 1 Literacy 40% to 100% proficient Gr 1 Math from 80% to 66.7% proficient 33.3% in process Gr 1 Science 0% to 100 % proficient Gr2 Literacy from 63.6% to 83.3% proficient Gr 2 Math from 0% to 58.3% proficient 41.7% in process | Grade K-2 raw data received. Student work evident on tables, and walls | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets In Grades Pre-k, K, Gr 1 in Literacy and Science and Gr 2 in Literacy <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet for Gr 2 Math and Science |

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| | | Gr 2 Science from 0% to 8.3% proficient 91% in process | | |
| Established Benchmarks for each student | | Individual student targets established in learning plans and collected in portfolio | | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Rubric specific to charter school | | DNA | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Achievement Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups using ESEA-based system | Goal of 4-5 % growth in identified Students | Benchmark year | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Student Attendance | | | | |
| Average Daily Attendance Rate | 94% attendance target | Maine Department of Education attendance reporting portal data verification of 94% attained female, 95% male | | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Individual Student Attendance Rate | | Data not collected statewide-not available | Reported by teacher that a student who previously hated to go to school of residence said, "now I can't wait to go to school" demonstrating major changes | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Unexcused Absences | Process to be created for working through unexcused and excessive absences | Need plan | To date excessive absences have not been a problem | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Recurrent enrollment from Year-to-Year | | | | |
| Student re-enrollment from one year to next | 90% target | Documentation verification email July 29, 2014 demonstrated 89% attainment FSAS Year End Enrollment Statistics 2013-2014.doc | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Continuous enrollment of students for multiple years | | FSAS Year End Re-enrollment Statistics demonstrated in first year 89% | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Post-Secondary Readiness | | | | |

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| Graduation Rate | DNA | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Success in Dual Enrollment Courses | DNA | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| SAT or ACT scores | DNA | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Enrollment in post-secondary institutions | DNA | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Students employed full-time or enlisted | DNA | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| School Social and Academic Climate | | | | |
| Instances of bullying, harassment or other abusive behavior | Reports of actual or suspected bullying, harassment or other abusive practices | Behavior Certification 2014.xls emailed July 29, 2014 verified no reported incidences of bullying, harassment or other abusive practices | In class observation students stated that at this school kids are kind and gentle | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Confidential surveys of parents, staff and students regarding social and academic climate | School survey and State survey Participation | Fiddlehead School Family & Student Survey 2014 provided in Yearend documents notebook | Governing Board has created action items presented June 30, 2014 Parent Survey Action Steps with 15 items | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Emotional, social growth of students | Survey | Survey completed | Youngest children reported answers with a smiley or a frown face | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Financial Performance and Sustainability | Monthly financial reports Item flagged when 5% | Fiddlehead School Balance sheet as of May 31, 2014 Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual July 2-13 through May 2014 | Received documents in year-end notebook | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |

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| | variance for board | | | Meet |
| Governance Board Performance and Stewardship | Monthly meetings Review of bylaws and policies, Increase of Governing Board membership | Board minute in year-end notebook provided Minutes posted on website | Board and Staff participation in self-evaluation resulting in Planning Ahead Notes and action steps on what worked well and what needs to change to make the school even better Board consideration of additional members with expertise in law, fundraising, HR. Board forming subcommittees and assigning work tasks. | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program | Quarterly Building Committee meetings Cleaning log | Year-end notebook cleaning grid and log, floor plan | Plan for building renovations and expansion, tour of school and walked through new floor plan for 2014 | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Food Service | DNA | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Transportation | As outlined in the application | Year-end notebook transportation from 32% student usage in the am, 38% student usage in the pm. No new pick up/drop off sites added | Looking into bus acquisition | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Educational Partnerships in the Community | Partner with community organizations | Year-end notebook field trips to Libby Hill, Orchard, Animal park,Alpacca Farm, Transfer Station,Planetarium,Pineland,Artic Museum, Six Rivers Boat Building,KinderKonzerts,Maine Wildlife Park, Lewiston Public theater,Mackworth Island | Regular field work , not field trips as evidenced by student work | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Parent Communication Systems | Regular and clear communication | | Parents reported access to and responsively of administration and staff, felt welcome and included, “get a ton of communication with newsletters, web, emails, teacher /classroom news, use of shutter fly and other media | X Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |

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| Parent participation in their children's education and operation of school | 80% parent participation of meaningful involvement Plan for parent conferences established List of engagement opportunities available to parents and community Record kept of volunteer and parent participation | Year-end notebook data November 2013 and March 2014 parent conferences show pre-k with 92.86% attending, grades K-2 100% attending Fiddlehead Volunteer Hours Sept. 4, 2013-June 10, 2014 log 241 people gave 1059 hours | Parent focus group reported immediate response to an issue raised about the parking lot safety, love what the school is doing for their children, have participated on teacher selection committees, spoke of the balance of values, behaviors, and expectations with learning being kids directed. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |
| Other Requested Information | | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Meets <input type="checkbox"/> Does Not Meet |

Summary

| <i>Indicator</i> | <i>Meets Contract agreement</i> | <i>Partially meets</i> | <i>Does not meet</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Student Academic Proficiency | X | | |
| Student Academic Growth | Pre-k,K, 1 | | Gr 2 Math and Science |
| Achievement Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups | Benchmark year | | |
| Student Attendance | X | | |
| Recurrent Enrollment from Year to Year | X | | |
| Postsecondary readiness | DNA | | |
| Financial Performance and Sustainability | X | | |
| Governance Board Performance and Stewardship | X | | |
| Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program | X | | |
| Food Service | X | | |
| Transportation | X | | |
| School Social and Academic Climate | X | | |
| Parent and Community Engagement | X | | |

4. Commendations

Administration, staff and governing board have learned and grown from this first year making adjustments as needed to maximize charter school success

Roles and responsibilities are identified and sorted for the effective and efficient daily functioning of the school

Governing Board members have established policies and practices that ensure a well- run school. In looking forward they have created committees, HR development, and created orientation for new members which includes orientation to the philosophy of the charter school

Financials are on target with expected goals.

Parents felt communication between themselves and the school was excellent. The Director was always open and a very effective communicator. Multiple avenues for communication amongst parents, teachers and administration have been created.

Parent teacher conference attendance excellent ranging from Pre-K 92.86% to Gr K, 1, 2 100% participation

Parents participated in the development of their expectations before conferences enabling a deep conversation with teachers about their child

Spring conferences with students were very successful, parents rating them as very useful on the survey

Children reflect a loving and respected environment.

Children participated in an abundance of field work instead of field trips.

Vision of school was well understood by everyone.

Unusually high number of volunteer hours given to the school recorded as 1,059 hours and PTO parents over 100 hours a month

Statistical recordkeeping was well done in great detail.

Expansion of the charter school with the addition of grades is well planned out logistically and with the creative remodeling of space

5. Recommendations

Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences has a strong understanding of its strengths and weaknesses as identified in its data collection and planning ahead process. Building on a strong first year the school needs to follow through on their findings establishing priority goals for year two.

Continuing staff training on the Pearson Work Sampling and its relationship to a system of assessment will continue to build a comfort in gathering evidence of student proficiency.

Continue the process established for parent-teacher conferences .Parents expressed a desire to see conferences extended to 45 minutes.

Create ongoing Governing Board development including a thorough understanding of the application, performance framework, contract, philosophy, evaluation and monitoring procedures.

To increase the number of board members with special areas of expertise which would benefit the school.

Consider use of a Pradeo Chart in future planning which examines issues in the light of if we do this what else is affected?

Consolidate communication vehicles for the Board, Parents and Administrator.

6. Closing Summary

In summary The Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences is staying true to its mission and vision building an exciting learning community supportive and inclusive for students, staff and parents. One parent's comment stands out, "Kids are allowed to be who they are, not what they are not." Teachers set the tone throughout the school believing there are not your kids and my kids but all of ours to nurture. The Governing Board and Staff are moving forward in a strategic manner analyzing data to make informed choices about adjustments that need to be made for improvements, maintain effective communication and build on their vision of school.

Review Team Members

Shelley Reed, Chair

Jana Reed

Nichi Farnham