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[](http://harpswellcoastalacademy.org/)

**ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2018-2019**

***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.***

**February 2020**

On August 19, 2019 an announced on-site visit was made to Harpswell Coastal Academy. Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) staff, Liaison, and MDOE Special Services team member held interviews with school leadership and the school’s Governing Board. They also reviewed data provided by the school. Documents provided by the school are available from the MCSC office. Information gathered from documents, interviews and on-site observation was 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. Attachment A is the site visit report, which includes observation and discussion notes from the site visit.

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| School Liaison | Shelley Reed |
| MCSC Executive Director | Bob Kautz |
| MCSC Director of Program Management | Gina Post |
| Consultant | Joe Drago, CPA |
| Consultant | Dr. Joe Mattos |
| DOE Special Services | Leora Byras |

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| School’s Mission | To offer a rigorous, personalized, project-based education to mid-coast Maine students in grades 6-12. |
| School’s Vision | To use Maine’s shorelines, working waterfronts, forests, and farms as classrooms. To partner with local organizations and businesses, entrepreneurs, and community members who are committed to our goal of preparing caring, creative, resilient citizen-scholars who will flourish in a rapidly changing economy. |

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| School Information |

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| School Name | Harpswell Coastal Academy |
| Address |  |

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| Board Chair | Cynthia Shelmerdine |
| Board Vice Chair | Ed Harris |
| Board Treasurer | David Jean |
| Board Secretary | Sally Mackenzie |
| Board Member | Nancy Andersen |
| Board Member | Alan Yuodsnukis |
| Board Member | Sue Priest |
| Board Member | Barbara Merson |
| Board Member | Peggy Muir |

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| Head of School | Scott Barksdale |
| Special Education Director | Deryl Holt |
| Business & Finance Director | Andrew Smaha |

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| Year Opened | 2013 |
| Years in Operation | 7 |
| Number of Sending Districts | 16 |
| Grades Served | 6 - 12 |
| Current Enrollment | 195\* |
| Students on Waiting List | 5\* |

\*As of October 1, 2019, certified enrollment date

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| Section 1: Indicator Summary Table |

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| **Indicator** | **Exceeds** | **Meets** | **Partially Meets** | **Does Not Meet** | **Other** |
| **Student Academic Proficiency** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  |  |  | **X** |  |
| Target 2 |  |  |  |  | NA |
| Target 3 |  |  |  | **X** |  |
| Target 4 | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| Target 5 | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| Target 6 |  |  |  |  | NA |
| **Student Academic Growth** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 2 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 3 |  |  | **X** |  |  |
| **Achievement Gaps** | | | | | |
| Target 1 | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| Target 2 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| **Student Attendance** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 2 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| **Student Enrollment** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| **Post-Secondary Readiness** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  |  |  | **X** |  |
| Target 2 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 3 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 4 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 5 |  |  | **X** |  |  |
| Target 6 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| **Financial Performance and Stability** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 2 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| **Governance Board Performance and Stewardship** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 2 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| **Facilities** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| **School Climate** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 2 |  |  | **X** |  |  |
| Target 3 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 4 |  |  | **X** |  |  |
| Target 5 |  |  |  | **X** |  |
| Target 6 |  |  |  | **X** |  |
| **Parent & Community Engagement** | | | | | |
| Target 1 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 2 |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Target 3 |  |  |  | **X** |  |
| Target 4 |  | **X** |  |  |  |

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| Section 2: Demographics |

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| Section 3: Academic Proficiency |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Proficiency on State Assessments in reading | Percentage of tested students meeting or exceeding state expectations on the ELA portion on the MEA will increase annually, reaching 38% at Division 1 by the end of 2021-22. | Division 1:  Change from 2018 to 2019 MEA = -4  Total meeting or exceeding state expectations in 2019: 32% | Did not meet |
|  | Percentage of tested students meeting or exceeding state expectations on the ELA portion on the MEA will increase annually, reaching 38% at Division 2 by the end of 2021-22. | Division 2:  Change from 2018 to 2019 MEA = Not Applicable- first year of data disaggregation by division  Total meeting or exceeding state expectation in 2019: 27.6% | NA |
| Proficiency on State Assessments in math | Percentage of tested students meeting or exceeding state expectations on the math portion on the MEA will increase annually, reaching 16% at Division 1 by the end of 2021-22. | Division 1:  Change from 2018 to 2019 MEA = -7  Total meeting or exceeding state expectation in 2019: 11% | Did not meet |
|  | Percentage of tested students meeting or exceeding state expectations on the math portion on the MEA will increase annually, reaching 14% at Division 2 by the end of 2021-22. | Division 2:  Change from 2018 to 2019 MEA = Not Applicable- first year of data disaggregation by division  Total meeting or exceeding state expectation in 2019: 17.2% | Exceeded |
| Proficiency on State Assessments in science | Percentage of tested students scoring proficient on the science portion on the MEA will increase annually, reaching 57% at Division 1 by the end of 2021-22. | Division 1:  Change from 2018 to 2019 MEA = +16  Total meeting or exceeding state expectation in 2019: 59% | Exceeded |
|  | Percentage of tested students scoring proficient on the science portion on the MEA will increase annually, reaching 44% at Division 2 by the end of 2021-22. | Division 2:  Change from 2018 to 2019 MEA = Not Applicable- first year of data disaggregation by division  Total meeting or exceeding in 2019: 25.8% | NA |

**Discussion**

Harpswell Coastal Academy exceeded two targets and did not meet two targets in the area of academic achievement. For the other two targets the school has collected baseline data and will continue to examine achievement by division.

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| Section 4: Academic Growth |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Growth on NWEA in Reading | 50% of students will meet their annual growth goal in reading. | 56.4% of students met their annual growth goal in reading. | Met |
| Growth on NWEA in Language Usage | 50% of students will meet their annual growth goal in language. | 53.8% of students met their annual growth goal in language. | Met |
| Growth on NWEA in Math | 50% of students will meet their annual growth goal in math. | 42.4% of students met their annual growth goal in math. | Partially met |

**Discussion**

In the area of Academic Growth, HCA met two of its three targets and partially met one target (math).

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| Section 5: Achievement Gaps |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on Maine State Assessment: Special Education | The percentage of students with an IEP scoring well below expectations will decrease annually, reaching 42% for reading and 70% for math in Division 1 by 2021-2022. | Division 1 Reading:  Percent change from 2018 to 2019 MEA = 32.7% decrease  Total “Well Below State Expectations” in 2019 = 41.2%  Division 1 Math:  Percent change from 2018 to 2019 MEA = 8% decrease  Total “Well Below State Expectations” in 2019 = 65% | Exceeded |
| Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on Maine State Assessment: Economically Disadvantaged. | The percentage of economically disadvantaged students scoring well below expectations will decrease annually. | SY 17/18 to SY 18/19:  Math: 3% decrease  ELA: 19% decrease | Met |

**Discussion**

Harpswell Coastal Academy met one of its achievement gap targets and exceeded the other.

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| Section 6: Attendance |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Average Daily Attendance Rate | Division 1 Annually ADA rate of 90%. | 91% Division 1 ADA | Met |
| Average Daily Attendance Rate | Division 2 and 3 targets increasing annually to 90% in 2022-23.  2018-19 target= 86% | 89% Division 2/3 ADA | Met |

**Discussion**

HCA met both of its attendance target of 90% at division 1 and its target of 86% for division 2.

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| Section 7: Enrollment |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Student enrollment from year to year | 80% of eligible students enrolled on student count day will indicate intent to reenroll for the following year. | 80% of eligible students re-enrolled. | Met |

**Discussion**

HCA met is target for student reenrollment from year to year with 80% of eligible students re-enrolling.

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| Section 8: Post-Secondary Readiness |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Federal Graduation 4 year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR) | Overall combined graduation rate (4, 5, and 6 year cohorts) for students enrolled a minimum of 2 years will be 90% | 64% overall combined graduation rate for students enrolled a minimum of 2 years | Did not meet |
| Graduation Rate | 4-year ACGR of 60% | 73% 4–year ACGR | Met |
| Percentage of students enrolling in dual enrollment courses | 70% of eligible students will enroll in a dual enrollment class. | 74% of eligible students enrolled in a dual enrollment class. | Met |
| Percentage of students achieving a passing grade in dual enrollment class | 90% of students who take a dual enrollment class will achieve a passing grade. | 94% of students who took a dual enrollment class achieved a passing grade. | Met |
| Percentage of graduating students who are accepted into a post-secondary institution | 50% of students will be accepted into post-secondary institutions by graduation. | 43% enrolled in post-secondary institutions. | Partially met |
| Percentage of graduating students who have secured full-time employment by graduation. | Establish baseline in 2018-19 for full-time employment | 57% entering workforce | Met |

**Discussion**

HCA met four of its six post-secondary readiness targets. The school met its 4-year graduation target, its dual enrollment target, success in dual enrollment courses target, and its post-graduation employment target. The school did not meet its combined graduation rate target and it partially met its post-secondary institution acceptance target.

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| Section 9: Finances |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Governance Board reviews budget and makes appropriate adjustments to ensure school remains financially healthy. | Board or Finance Committee review budget at least quarterly. | Finance committee met monthly | Met |
| School has an external financial audit conducted | Annual financial audit is completed and submitted to DOE and MCSC as required. | FY 2018 financial audit completed and submitted as required | Met |

**Discussion**

HCA met its financial target for monthly review of the budget. It also met the target for having an external financial audit completed.

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| Section 10: Governance Board Performance and Stewardship |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Governance Board operates in a transparent, responsible, and legally compliant manner | Meeting notifications, agendas, and minutes are announced and posted to the school’s website. | Meeting notifications, agendas, and minutes were announced and posted to the school’s website. | Met |
| Governance Board provides oversight of school leadership | The governing board will conduct an annual evaluation of the school’s leadership. | The Board conducted an evaluation of the Head of School at the end of the 2018-19 school year. | Met |

**Discussion**

HCA met its Governance target for posting meeting agendas and minutes. It also met the target for conducting an evaluation of the Head of School.

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| Section 11: Facilities |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| School facilities meet educational and health and safety standards. | Board certifies that the facilities meet educational and health & safety requirements | HCA certified that appropriate inspections and certifications were completed. | Met |

**Discussion**

HCA met its facilities target for certifying that inspections and certifications were complete.

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| Section 12: School Climate |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive practices | Fewer than 15 incidents reported annually | 4 incidents reported | Met |
| Participation on School Climate Survey | 90% of all students will participate in the school climate survey. | 80% of students participated in the survey. | Partially met |
|  | 90% of all faculty will participate in the school climate survey. | 90% of faculty participated in the survey. | Met |
| Percentage of respondent groups with favorable view of school climate. | 85% of parents will respond favorably on school climate scale of survey. | 76% of parents responded favorably on the school climate scale of the survey. | Partially met |
|  | 90% of students will respond favorably on school climate scale of survey. | 45% percent of students responded favorably on the school climate scale of the survey. | Did not meet |
|  | 90% of Faculty/Staff will respond favorably on school climate scale of survey. | 57% of teachers/staff responded favorably on the school climate scale of the survey. | Did not meet |

**Discussion**

HCA met two of its six School Climate targets, partially met two targets (student participation in survey and percentage of favorable responses by parents). It did not meet the targets for percentage of favorable responses by students and by teachers/staff.

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| Section 13: Parent and Community Engagement |

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| **Measure** | **Target** | **Results** |  |
| Student participation in activities provided by Community Partnerships | 95% of students will participate in at least one long-term workshop, club, or internship with a community partner. | 100% of fully-enrolled students participated in at least one long-term workshop, club, or internship with a community partner. | Met |
| Parent participation in their children’s education and operation of school: Division 1 | 90% of students have parent participation in at least one student-led conference. | 92% participation in SLCs | Met |
| Parent participation in their children’s education and operation of school: Divisions 2 and 3 | 80% of students have parent participation in at least one student-led conference. | 70% participation at SLCs | Did not meet |
| Celebration of Learning & Passages | 90% of students who are enrolled for a full year present to the school community at least once each year. | 95% of fully-enrolled students participated. | Met |

**Discussion**

HCA met three of its four Engagement targets. It met the targets for participation in a long-term workshop, club, or internship; participation in student conferences; and completing a presentation to the school. It did not meet the target for parent participation in student conferences.

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

The mission​ of HCA is to educate and develop critical thinkers, leaders, and lifelong learners who are actively engaged in their community and the broader world.

In the 2018-19 school year the school implemented the following initiatives:

* A full year Professional Development focus for faculty on Restorative Justice and trauma-informed practices, in partnership with the Restorative Justice Institute of Maine.
* A comprehensive review of its PEPG plan resulting in a Board-approved revision of the policy to bring the system in line with best practices around the improvement of teaching practices and how those fit into the HCA model.
* A review of school policies and the creation of one comprehensive school policy book to bring clarity to students, parents and faculty moving forward.
* A focus on improving investigations (courses) across all divisions and content areas, with consistent support from the Director of Teaching & Learning.
* Further establishment of structures supporting students in passage from one division to another.
* A focus on honoring student achievement through Celebrations of Learning at the end of each trimester and acknowledgements of students who met their NWEA goals.
* Student engagement in building an inclusive school culture, in particular with Division 1 Sexuality and Gender Alliance group.
* Establishment of an ‘All School Read’ program, with the novel ​Refuge​ that was tied to the “What does it mean to be an American?” Investigation at Division 1.
* Partnership with TechSpace for the composites program that culminated with the completion of two student built composite boats that will be auctioned off to support the school.

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| Section 15: Site Visit Report |

**Maine Charter School Commission**

**Monitoring Site Visit Report October 31, 2019**

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| REPORT DATE: | October 31, 2019 |
| SCHOOL NAME: | Harpswell Coastal Academy (HCA) |
| ADDRESS: | 8 Leavitt Drive, Brunswick, Maine 04011 |
| GRADES SERVED: | Grades 6 - 12 |
| ENROLLMENT: | 200 |
| YEAR OPENED: | September 2013 |

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.

The following participants conducted the monitoring site visit:

* Bob Kautz, Executive Director
* Gina Post, Director of Program Management
* Leora Byras, MDOE
* Joe Drago, Consultant
* Joe Mattos, Consultant

The monitoring site visit was conducted on August 19, 2019 at Harpswell Coastal Academy Brunswick Landing campus. 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 (as applicable):

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

Focus group interviews were held with groups at the school. Groups were asked a standard set of questions as well as school specific questions created for this visit.

Focus group interviews held by the team:

* Governing Board
  + Cynthia Shelmerdine, Chair
  + Ed Harris, Vice Chair
  + David Jean, Treasurer
  + Sally MacKenzie, Secretary
  + Sue Priest
  + Peggy Muir
  + Nancy Anderson
  + Barbara Merson
* Executive Director
  + Scott Barksdale, Head of School
* Leadership Team
  + Andrew Smaha, Director of Finance
  + Deryl Holt, Special Education Director

Monitoring Site Visit Findings

1. **Mission Alignment**

* There was not a consensus of understanding about HCA’s mission (purpose) and vision (how to achieve mission). HCA board members and school leaders were clear on how HCA was trying to achieve its vision via hands-on, project-based and place-based learning activities. However, neither group mentioned HCA’s mission’s outcomes as to “educate and develop critical thinkers, leaders, and lifelong learners.”
* HCA Leadership and Board members believe the HCA mission needs to be clarified in order to meet specific expectations for students’ learning, as well as being able to fund future student learning opportunities with adequate resources and facilities. It was stated that HCA can’t be “everything to everyone.” It was also acknowledged that HCA was initially started as an inquiry-based school and now “it’s time to go back and revisit it.”
* As part of HCA’s Board and School Leadership retreat and strategic planning, HCA’s mission and vision will be discussed and clarified.

1. **Student Achievement**
   * An interdisciplinary, investigation-based curriculum is designed to meet HCA’s mission and vision. However, there was a lack of student performance information in respect to student’s growth in the areas of critical thinking, leadership, and students as lifelong learners, which are stated in HCA’s mission. Also, there was little information regarding student performance of Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLs).
   * Comparisons of student performance versus state performance on state assessments (MEA) show that HCA students are performing below standards in ELA and Math in grades 6-8. However, the gap between HCA’s performance and State expectations is decreasing.
   * Comparisons of student performance versus state performance on state assessments (MEA) shows HCA students exceeded the state average in ELA and Science on 2018 SAT and 11th grade MEA Science. HCA student performance on SAT Math was lower than the state average for grade 11 students, with only 16% of students at or above proficiency.
   * Proficiency measures in 18/19 NWEA results show that although gains are being made in reading and math, students in grades 6 through 10 are not meeting projected growth standards. Proficiency standards were met in grade 11 for ELA and met in grades 10 and 11 for math.
   * Chronic Absenteeism is above the 10% state standard: 28% at Division 1 (grades 6-8) and 34% at Division 2/3 (grades 9-12).
2. **School Climate and Family Engagement**

* This cycle of site visits did not include meeting with focus groups of students or parents. However, the Panorama Survey conducted at the end of the 18/19 school year did provide staff, teacher, parent, and student perceptions on School Climate and Family Engagement/Relationships. These perceptions included:
  + Parent Survey - High favorable responses for School Learning Climate (76%) and School Safety (79%).
  + Staff Survey – School Climate - 57% (30% decrease), Staff-Family Relationships (41%).
  + Teacher Survey – School Climate – 56% climate (20% decrease) and Staff and Family Relationships (33%)
  + Student Survey – School Climate 45% and School Safety at 63%
* The area of Student Engagement was discussed as area of concern. Student Survey - 30%. Teacher Survey - Student Grit 7% (22% decrease).

1. **Governance**

* The HCA Board of Directors is comprised of nine individuals, which has had very little board member turnover over the past years. The majority of board members have backgrounds as educators and see the need for a more balanced board with new board members having legal and business experience.
* The Board has a firm understanding of the pressures on school leadership (“leadership burnout”) and is committed to providing the Head of School with on-going support and resources to effectively perform his leadership responsibilities at HCA. It has approved the position of an Administrative Assistant in order to provide administrative support for the Head of School, and has established stipends in the budget for new teacher leadership positions.
* The Board believes it functions in an effective manner, regularly communicating with each other on HCA issues, while setting and evaluating its annual goals in a timely manner throughout the school year.

1. **School Leadership**

* Due to several leadership resignations, there will be significant changes in leadership roles and responsibilities at HCA in the 19/20 school year. A new Head of School position has been established. The 18/19 principal of HCA’s Division 1 will ascend to this position. The new Head of School’s responsibilities will incorporate the previous performance responsibilities of the Executive Director, Principal of Division 1, Principal of Division 2/3, as well as Director of Teaching and Learning. The new Head of School will be closely monitoring his ability and capacity to perform all of the performance responsibilities of these previous leadership positions.
* The new Head of School is aware of the multiple challenges that HCA must address in 19/20, which include promoting a school climate with higher expectations for students’ behavior and academic performance, clarifying and tracking important measures for student academic performance, and promoting open and collaborative communications with all stakeholder groups in defining HCA’s mission.
* The HCA Leadership Team is comprised of the Head of School, Director of Finance and the Special Education Director. An Administrative Assistant has been hired to provide administrative support for the Head of School.
* Teacher leadership positions have been created to address both school and student needs at HCA e.g. a Team Leader at each campus, a Student Support Team Leader at each campus, a Certification Coordinator, and a Technology Coordinator.

1. **Finance**

* The functioning of the active Board/Finance Committee will be improved with reporting that is comparative and provides key analysis in an accessible format.
* This year’s strategic planning initiative creates an occasion for long-term integrated planning and the assessment of whether resource allocation is aligned with the educational mission. It may also help define the basis for larger philanthropic support.

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| Section 16: Commendations and Considerations |

**Commendations**

* The board approved a new position of Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director to allow the Executive Director more time to focus on tasks that relate more directly to the improvement of student outcomes.
* The governing board has had little turnover, and has identified the need for more members with backgrounds in fields other than education.
* At the most recent visit to the school, there appeared to be a lack of consensus between the board members and leadership team as to the school’s mission. The school has just recently undergone a rewrite of its mission.

**Considerations**

* The school should continue its efforts to bring up student academic achievement results, and increase the rate of academic growth.
* The school should identify how it will measure the “21st century skills” in its mission.
* The school continues to have a high rate of chronic absenteeism.