

Maine Charter School Commission

September, 2016

On May 12 and June 30, 2016, announced on-site visits were made to Harpswell Coastal Academy public charter school. The Maine Charter School Commission (MCSC) review team of 3 members was accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director, MCSC Director of Program Management, and Department of Education Special Services team member. The visiting team held interviews with school leadership, staff, students, parents, community partners, 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.

Commission Member, Review Team Chair	Laurie Pendleton
Commission	John Bird
Commission	Shelley Reed
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post
DOE Special Services team member	Robert Lucas

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.

Maine Charter School Commission

ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT

September 2016

Section 1: School Overview

School Name	Harpswell Coastal Academy (HCA)
Address	9 Ash Point Rd. Harpswell, Maine 8 Leavitt Drive, Brunswick, Maine

Board Chair	Sally Mackenzie
Head of School	John D'Anieri
Associate Head of School	Carrie Branson
Principal	Matt Hamilton
Special Education Director	Deryl Holt

Year Opened	2013-2014 school year
Years in Operation	3
Number of Sending Districts	12
Grades Served	6-11
Number of Students	176 (Oct. 1 count, 2015)
Student - teacher Ratio	10:1

Mission	To offer a rigorous, personalized, project-based education to mid-coast Maine students in grades 6-12.
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.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

Indicator	Meets Contract agreement	Partially meets Contract agreement	Does not meet Contract agreement
Student Academic Proficiency		X	
Student Academic Growth	X		
Achievement Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups	X		
Student Attendance			X ¹
Maintaining Enrollment from Year to Year	X		
Recurrent Enrollment from Year to Year	X		
Post-Secondary Readiness	X		
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 ²	
Parent and Community Engagement		X ³	

¹ HCA's Average Daily Attendance for school year 2015-16 was 92%. Division 1 attendance was 93% and Division 2 was 90%. Both Division 1 and 2 attendance were below the targets (Div 1 95%, Div 2 92%).

During the school year the number of unexcused absences increased from 2.4 on average, per day, during the first trimester, to 2.9 during the third trimester; HCA did not meet the goal of the number of unexcused absences decreasing from the fall to the spring trimester.

² Students & families received reports on HOWLs at Student Led Conferences in the fall (October) and winter (March), and with the end of year reports (June). Overall, HOWL grades remained steady at 2.3 in the fall and in the spring. HCA did not meet the goal for HOWLS, as HOWL grades did not improve and were not proficient.

³ 92% of students presented to the larger school community at least twice during the school year; HCA did not meet the 100% target.

Section 3: Academics

Targets:

Student Academic Proficiency:

State Assessments in Reading & Math

- Difference between the percentage of HCA students scoring proficient (or exceeds) on the MEA and the percentage of all Maine students scoring proficient (or exceeds) in the state: Grade 6=0, Grade 7=0, Grade 8=0, HS= 0
- Percent of students scoring proficient on MEA Reading: Grade 6 = baseline, Grade 7 = 40%, Grade 8 = 60%, HS = 10%
- Percent of students scoring proficient on MEA Math: Grade 6 = baseline, Grade 7 = 34%, Grade 8 = 46%, HS = 10%

School selected standardized tests in Reading & Math

- Percent of students in grades 6-12 scoring in the average to above average RIT band in reading on the NWEA: Grade 6 = 45%, Grade 7 = 65%, Grade 8 = 45%, Grade 9 = 45%, Grade 10 = 70%, Grade 11 = 45%, Grade 12 = 45%
- Percent of students in grades 6-12 scoring in the average to above average RIT band in math on the NWEA: Grade 6 = 45%, Grade 7 = 45%, Grade 8 = 45%, Grade 9 = 40%, Grade 10 = 40%, Grade 11 = 45%, Grade 12 = 45%.

School designed assessment program measuring Maine Learning Results

- DIVISION 1: 6th grade: 95% students will approach proficiency (score 2 or higher) in 50% of Division 1 measurement categories.
7th grade: 80% students will approach proficiency in 85% of Division 1 measurement categories.
8th grade: 80% students will approach proficiency in 100% of Division 1 measurement categories.
- DIVISION 2: 9th grade: 80% students will approach proficiency in 75% of Division 2 measurement categories.
10th grade: 90% students will approach proficiency in 75% of Division 2 measurement categories.
11th grade: 80% students will approach proficiency in 80% of Division 2 measurement categories.
12th grade: 80% students will approach proficiency in 80% of Division 2 measurement categories.
- 95% of students will submit three satisfactory portfolio pieces.

Student Academic Growth

- Establish baseline for growth on State Assessment

Achievement Gaps

- Establish baseline for gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups on Maine State Assessment

Performance:

HCA students participated in NWEA testing during the fall, winter, and spring during the 2015-16 school year. HCA students met the established target for % average to above average RIT band in 5 of 12 areas. Results are in the tables below.

Reading

Grade	% average to above average RIT band	Target % average to above average RIT band	Met target?
6	46	45	met +0
7	52	65	did not meet -13
8	42	45	met +3
9	100	45	met +55
10	62	70	did not meet -8
11	74	45	met +29

Math	Grade	% average to above average RIT band	Target % average to above average RIT band	Met target?
	6	22	45	did not meet -23
	7	41	45	did not meet -4
	8	39	45	did not meet -6
	9	33	40	did not meet -7
	10	35	40	did not meet -5
	11	59	45	met +14

NWEA results show that in Division 2, 64.3% of students met or exceeded their projected RIT for reading, 67.7% for mathematics. In Division 1, 45.8% of students met or exceeded their projected RIT for reading, 41.9% for mathematics.

Goal	2015-16 Results	Met target?
6th grade: 95% students will approach proficiency (score 2 or higher) in 50% of Div 1 measurement categories.	92%	Did not meet -3%
7th grade: 80% students will approach proficiency in 85% of Div 1 measurement categories.	84%	Met +4
8th grade: 80% students will approach proficiency in 100% of Div 1 measurement categories.	81%	Met +1
9th grade: 80% students will approach proficiency in 75% of Div 2 measurement categories.	85%	Met +5
10th grade: 90% students will approach proficiency in 75% of Div 2 measurement categories.	92%	Met +2
11th grade: 80% students will approach proficiency in 80% of Div 2 measurement categories.	87%	Met +7

95% of HCA students collected their best work and submitted three satisfactory portfolio pieces for presentation to parents at Student Led Conferences, meeting the goal of 95% of students submitting three satisfactory portfolio pieces. The school is currently in the process of implementing Project Foundry to maintain digital portfolios for each student.

HCA students were measured using the School designed assessment program measuring Maine Learning Results. This is faculty assessment of student work including papers, classwork, homework, presentations, and other work samples.

Maine state testing results are not yet available.

Section 4: Attendance and Enrollment

Targets:

- 95% Average Daily Attendance for Division. 1, 92% Average Daily Attendance for Division. 2
- In each school year the number of unexcused absences will decrease from the fall to the spring trimester
- 90% of students enrolled on state “student count day” will still be enrolled on the last day of school.
- 80% of students enrolled on the last day of school indicate intent to return the following school year.

Performance:

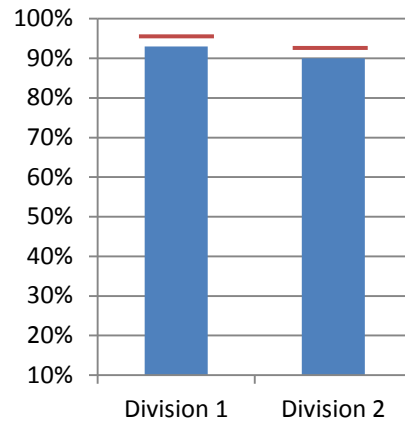
HCA’s Average Daily Attendance for school year 2015-16 was 92%. Division 1 attendance was 93% and Division 2 was 90%. Both Division 1 and 2 attendance were below the target.

During the school year the number of unexcused absences increased from 2.4 on average, per day, during the first trimester, to 2.9 during the third trimester; HCA did not meet the goal of the number of unexcused absences decreasing from the fall to the spring trimester.

HCA had 176 students enrolled on “student count day”, October 1, 2015. As of June 17, 2016, enrollment was at 163. As a result, 92% of students enrolled on student count day were still enrolled, exceeding the 90% target by 2%.

92% of students enrolled on the last day of school signed Commitment to Enroll forms for the 2016-2017 school year, exceeding the 90% target by 2%.

15-16 Attendance by Division



Section 5: Post-Secondary Readiness

Targets:

- Federal Graduation 4 year Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR)
- Maine determined graduation rate as determined under Title 20A MRSA, §5031, 1: 90%
- Percentage of students completing dual enrollment courses
- Percentage of students scoring at or above state average on SAT.
- Enrollment in postsecondary institutions
- Outcomes for students not attending postsecondary institutions.

HCA completed its third year in 2016, and did not have a 4 year ACGR.

HCA did not have a graduating class in 2016. 3 students did graduate early in spring 2016.

Seven students, approximately 28% of 11th and 12th grade students successfully completed courses at Southern Maine Community College during the 2015-2016 school year.

21 Division 2 students took the SAT in the 2015-16 school year as required by the State of Maine. Scores are not reportable due to small class size and the need to maintain student confidentiality.

Three students graduated in 2016. Two have plans to enroll in postsecondary institutions.

Section 6: Governance

Governance Board Performance & Stewardship

Targets:

- Governance Board operates in a transparent, responsible, and legally compliant manner.
- Governance Board provides oversight of school leadership team.

Performance:

The HCA Board holds public meetings. Both meeting agendas and meeting minutes are posted on the school website. Reminders of the meetings are included in weekly newsletters.

The HCA Board is comprised of seven members. The Board expressed at the MCSC visit that it would like to add additional members.

The HCA Board continues to use Board on Track, an online platform, to coordinate all the work of the Charter School board including: compliance, meeting scheduling, document storage, governance training, evaluation support, and more. The HCA governing board expressed that using Board on Track has enhanced the work of the Board.

Chair of the Board	Sally MacKenzie
Board Member	Joe Grady
Board Member	Eileen Horner
Board Member	Sharon Whitney
Board Member	Cynthia Shelmerdine
Board Member	Ed Harris
Board Member	Dave Eldridge
Board Member	David Jean

At the MCSC's on site meeting with the HCA Governing Board, the Board shared that it had a retreat last summer and focused on what it needed to do to focus on sustainability. The Board members determined that connecting to the charter contract was a priority.

The Board also reported that it believes its proficiency-based focus gives students the ability to show what they know and that in-house measures reflect HCAs' students' abilities more accurately than the other assessments being administered.

The Board conducted an evaluation of the Head of School at the end of the 2015-16 school year. The Head of school is responsible for evaluating the Principals.

Board members expressed that the addition of a second facility for Division 2/3 for the 2015-16 school year was both a challenge and a success. The Board members felt that the growth and location were positive, while having two locations made it difficult to get to both locations. The Board is exploring a location for HCA's Division 2/3 for 2016-17, as it will no longer be at the same address at Brunswick Landing.

The Board members reported some other challenges during the school year were funding, wanting to add more programs particularly in the area of the arts, the high percentage of students with special needs and the high cost associated with educating them.

The Board has restructured the Administrative team for the coming 2016-17 school year. There will continue to be a Head of School and a Principal at Division 1. Additionally, there will be an Operations Manager, and a Dean of Students will take the place of a Division 2/3 Principal. The Special Education Director Consultant will not be with HCA for the 16-17 school year, but is assisting the school in its transition to a new Special Education Director.

Section 7: Administration

During the 2015-16 school year the Administrative team consisted of a Head of School and two principals who also held other duties. Moving into the 2016-17 school year the Administrative team has been restructured. There will continue to be a Head of School and a Principal at Division 1. Additionally, there will be an Operations Manager, and a Dean of Students will take the place of a Division 2/3 Principal.

At the MCSC's end of year monitoring visit the HCA administrative team reported one of the successes during the 2015-16 school year was the deepening of Investigations. Investigations are place-based and project – based and are grounded in Maine Learning standards. During Investigations HCA uses flexible scheduling and regrouping of students.

The investigation team has been using Jump Rope to track the standards the students work on. Next year HCA will use Project Foundry, which they report will allow flexibility in tracking standards. The administrative team feels Project Foundry will be aligned with the gradual release of responsibility for curriculum design.

Section 8: School Climate

School Social and Academic Climate

Targets:

- Decrease in instances of bullying, harassment, or other abusive practices
- Student (HOWLs) Habits of Work and Learning
 - HOWLs are reported to students & families 3 times yearly
 - HOWLs improve or reach proficiency from fall to spring each year for each Division
- 80% of students report via school climate survey , active participation in Restorative Justice and Community Meeting
- Annual improvement in targeted areas on student and family climate survey

Performance:

During the 2015-16 school year there were 40 reported incidents of bullying or harassment representing about 23% of the student body. During the 2014-2015 school year, a total of 35 incidents were reported, about 28% of the student body. While the number of occurrences was higher, proportionately, this indicates a 5% decrease in the percent of reported incidents between years two and three. HCA met the target of decreased incidents of bullying and harassment.

Students & families received reports on HOWLs at Student Led Conferences in the fall (October) and winter (March), and with the end of year reports (June). Overall, HOWL grades remained steady at 2.3 in the fall and in the spring. HCA did not meet the goal for HOWLS, as HOWL grades did not improve and did not reach proficiency.

80% of students participated in Restorative Justice model during the 2015-16 year, and 100% participated in Community Meeting, meeting the target of 80% participation in Restorative Justice and Community Meetings. HCA reported that Resolution Circles were used routinely at Division 1 throughout the year, and that Division 2 implemented the practice less frequently. HCA plans to instruct faculty on the use of Restorative Justice practices during professional development time during the 2016-17 school year. HCA reported that students,

parents and faculty have commented on the efficacy of Restorative Justice at HCA, and students have reported that Community Meeting participation increases their feeling of empowerment and ownership of the school. Parents and students participated in the Panorama Education Surveys.

Parents	
Area	% favorable
Barriers to Engagement	82
Family Engagement	18
Grit	31
School Fit	64
School Climate	73
School Safety	84

Students	
Area	% favorable
Grit	52
School Engagement	31
School Climate	55
School Safety	65
Rigorous Expectations	61
Student/Teacher Relationships	62

Overall, the surveys show that parents and students are favorable toward HCA. HCA had consistently slightly lower favorable percentages than the Maine Charter School average in all areas. The school has identified Family engagement and school culture as areas that the school will address in the coming year.

It was noted by HCA that the grade levels with students that had been attending HCA the longest (8th, 11th) reported being more favorable results than the other grades. HCA feels that its model takes time for students and families to understand and buy into.

Section 9: Parent and Community Engagement

Parent and Community Engagement

Targets:

- Student participation in activities provided by Community Partnerships: Each student participates in at least one Workshop, club or internship during the year
- Parent Communication
 - Parent checks JumpRope portal at least once every other week.
 - Parent opens weekly newsletter
- Parent participation in their children’s education and operation of school
 - Division 1: 90% of parents attend at least one Student Led Conference (SLC) per year
 - Division 2: 60% of parents attend at least one SLC per year
- Celebration of Learning & Passages: Each student presents to the larger school community twice each year at minimum.

Performance:

All HCA students participated in an activity with a community partner at least once, and the majority participated 3-5 times, meeting the minimum of one per year. These experiences included workshops, Field Work, and club activities. HCA reported that meaningful relationships with community partners deepened during the 2015-16 school year. Some partnerships include the Holbrook Community Foundation, the Harpswell Heritage Land Trust, and the Boats of Maine Project.

Parent usage of JumpRope continues to be inconsistent. Individual parent logins to JumpRope from the beginning of the school year range from 154 to 0 times; resulting in HCA not meeting its goal of bi-weekly parent logins. The average number of total logins per week was 2,030. HCA has noted that JumpRope usage peaks around Student Led Conferences, and drops off toward the end of the year.

HCA held meetings explaining how to use JumpRope, and included information in the weekly newsletter and at Student Led Conferences. Despite these efforts, HCA reports it has not seen the level of engagement it hoped to see from parents. Beginning in fall 2016 HCA will be using Project Foundry as its Learning Management System, and believes it is more user-friendly and accessible to students and parents.

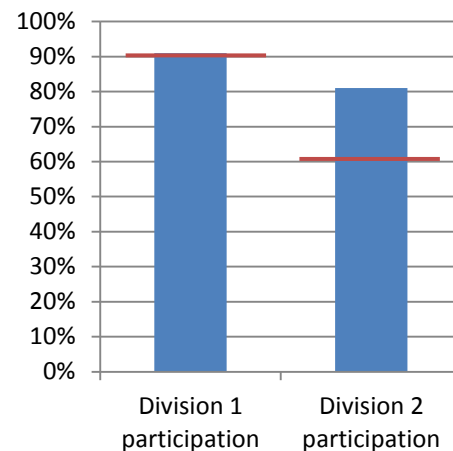
HCA's weekly newsletter is sent to a list of approximately 350 people, including parents, faculty, Charter Commission members, Board members, and Heads of other Charter Schools. On average, 45% of recipients open the newsletter. It is not possible to tell how many others read or skim it in the preview function. The newsletter is also sent to HCA students.

Based on survey data and conversation with parents, it seems that most families are accessing the weekly newsletter to stay up to date with events and information from HCA. HCA also sends documents home with students and mail certain things to parents using the USPS when they want to ensure receipt.

91% of Division 1 parents attended at least one SLC this year, and 81% of Division 2 parents attended at least one SLC this year. HCA met its targets of 90% and 60%. HCA reports it is happy with the participation in SLCs, and would like to continue to improve on this participation rate.

92% of students presented to the larger school community at least twice during the school year; HCA did not meet the 100% target. Students presented as a culmination to a number of different investigations including the Journey of Clothes, Narwhal Tank, Voices of the Working Waterfront, Solar Lobster Boats, Forestry Survey, and Aquaculture. Presentations were oral, multimedia, and often involved demonstrations.

Parent Participation in Conferences



Section 10: Finances

Financial Performance and Sustainability

Targets:

- Governance Board reviews budget and makes appropriate adjustments to ensure school remains financially healthy.
- School conducts an external audit.

Governance Board and/or Finance Committee review the budget on a quarterly basis. The Board Finance Committee met monthly, with additional meetings as necessary, to review reports and provide oversight to Finance Director and Head of School. The Finance Committee refined its practices this year, and supported the Finance Director in the implementation of routines and procedures.

HCA had an audit completed in the fall for FY15 and did not have any findings for the fiscal year 2015.

HCA's advancement committee has continued to be active and has raised \$158,000 through various fundraising efforts.

Section 11: Facilities & Maintenance, Food Service, and Transportation

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in Support of Program

Targets:

- School facilities meet educational and health and safety standards.
- Site Development

Performance:

HCA has the appropriate certifications for health and safety including a health inspection of the kitchen; monthly water testing as required for a public water supply; Boiler and air ventilation system serviced and inspected; and an inspection of fire equipment. Additionally, HCA has contracted with a Nurse, following guidelines for school health.

The Board Facilities Committee has addressed two main goals for the year: finding a suitable site for Division 2 students for the fall of 2016 and planning for updates, upgrades, maintenance and repair of the 9 Ash Point Road.

In August, 2016 the school entered a lease for a new location for the Division 2 & 3 students next year. The location is on Brunswick Landing and is close in proximity to the 2015-16 Division 2 & 3 location. The new location has more space and is suitable for the needs of the school.

Food Service & Transportation

Targets:

- Food Service: Record of costs and student utilization of food service.
- Transportation: Record of costs and student utilization of transportation service.

Performance:

Food Service

Fewer than 5% of HCA students take part in the Breakfast program daily.
Approximately 50% of HCA students take part in the lunch program daily.

HCA continued to contract with the SchoolHouse Cafe to provide school lunch for students. Typical offerings include BBQ chicken sandwich, coleslaw, buttermilk cake, grilled cheese, green salad, applesauce, fettuccine sausage and cabbage, veggie sticks, berry crisp, veggie fried rice, broccoli salad, cranberry oatmeal cookie, beef stew, brownie. Menu items are made with health benefits in mind; including low sugar and local and organic options when possible.

HCA is looking to expand its breakfast program at Division 1 next year. It did not participate in the National Free/Reduced School Lunch plan this year, though it did provide free/reduced lunch for students out of its

budget. Approximately 38% of HCA’s students qualify for free/reduced lunch. The majority of these students eat HCA school lunch daily.

HCA is in the process of putting structures in place to be able to participate in the national free/reduced lunch program for the 2016-17 school year.

Transportation

Approximately 90% of HCA students utilize HCA’s transportation service daily.

HCA received some complaints about student behavior on the buses. The behaviors were addressed in the same way other complaints are handled, with disciplinary interventions and conversations with drivers. HCA has bus expectations that are agreed to by students and parents, which lay out consequences for behaviors.

Section 12: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

Mission	Vision
To offer a rigorous, personalized, project-based education to mid-coast Maine students in grades 6-12.	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.

HCA’s program is project based, place based and proficiency based. Its curriculum is designed around investigations that are rooted in mid-coast Maine. Students at HCA are encouraged not only to learn content, but to acquire the skills necessary to make learning a lifelong passion, goal, and habit. In order to encourage learning as a long-term goal, students are given autonomy and ownership in their learning. HCA has many community partners who act as clients for authentic work.

During the 2015-16 school year some of the investigations units were: Voices of the Working Waterfront project, during which Division 2 students worked for the Holbrook Foundation to create a documentary about the Cundy’s Harbor Community; the Story of Clothes investigation during which Division 1 students learned about the history of the clothing manufacturing industry in Maine, and visited several local businesses who are currently manufacturing gear and clothing. In these investigations, students not only learned about a variety of ways people are making a living in Maine today, but also about how different industries have changed in recent years, and the impacts- environmental, financial, and cultural, that these industries have had in Maine.

Section 13: Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

- The school’s attention to the mission is evident in the type of the projects students are engaged in.
- Both students and families speak positively about the impact the school has had on their education.

- The Governance Committee and the administration of the school appear to have a close working relationship that is supportive of each other and beneficial to the school.
- The school has established close working relationships with their community.

Recommendations

- Early in the 2015-2016 school year, it was discovered that HCA had failed to provide certain related services to students with an IEP and had failed to complete initial and triennial evaluations following the time lines required by law. The school hired a special education director consultant and provided compensatory services to students, as well as completed evaluations as required. The Review Team recommends that school continue to focus on ensuring needs of special education students are met.