

Maine Charter School Commission

October, 2017

On May 26 and June 19, 2017, announced on-site visits were made to Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) 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	Mike Wilhelm
Commission	Laurie Pendleton
Commission	Nichi Farnham
MCSC Executive Director	Bob Kautz
MCSC Director of Program Management	Gina Post
DOE Special Services team member	Roberta 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 2016-2017

October 2016

Section 1: School Overview

School Name	Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA)
Address	Ballard Center, Suite 230, 6 Chestnut Street Augusta, Maine 04330

Board Chair	Amy Carlisle
Head of School	Dr. Melinda Browne

Year Opened	School year 2015-2016
Years in Operation	2
Number of Sending Districts	107
Grades Served	7-12
Number of Students	355 (October 1 count, 2016)
Student - teacher Ratio	22:1

Mission	Maine Virtual Academy's (MEVA) mission is to develop each student's full potential with learner-centered instruction, research-based curriculum and educational tools and resources to provide a high quality learning experience for grade 7-12 students who are in need of alternative educational options. MEVA will develop an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) with specific learning goals to meet each student's needs.
Vision	MEVA will be a leading 21st century public charter school in Maine and will improve student learning outcomes through individualized instruction, as evidenced by student academic proficiency, student academic growth, post-secondary readiness, and the demonstration of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and self-direction. MEVA will empower students to acquire the academic and life skills needed to succeed in post-secondary education and career opportunities. Our graduates will be prepared for college or other postsecondary career training opportunities.

Section 2: Indicator Summary Table

Indicator	Meets Contract agreement	Partially meets	Does not meet
Student Academic Proficiency		X ¹	
Student Academic Growth		X ²	
Achievement Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups ³			
Student Attendance		X ⁴	
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		
Transportation	X		
School Social and Academic Climate		X ⁵	
Parent and Community Engagement			X ⁶

¹ MEVA met the proficiency target on the Maine State Assessments in 2 of 8 areas.

² The growth target of 80% was not met for reading or math. Other growth targets were met.

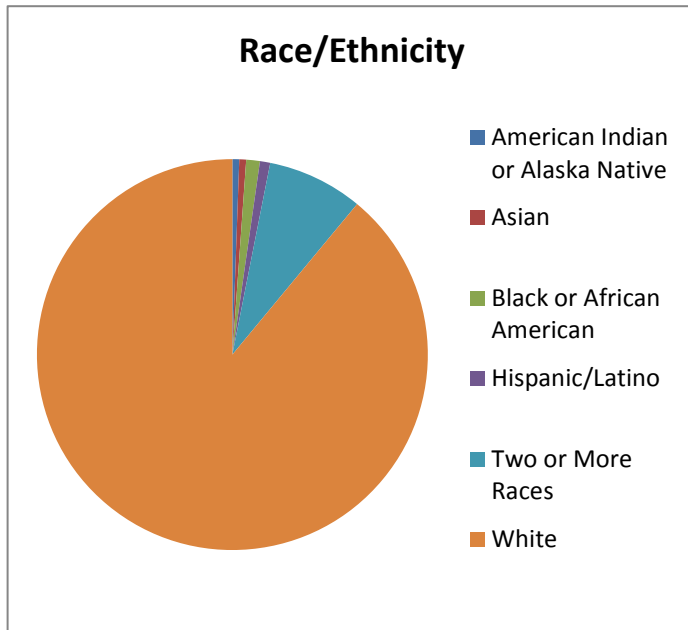
³ Baseline data collected

⁴ The average attendance rate for MeVA students was 87%. The state average is 93%. MeVA did not meet the target of being at or above the state averages for attendance.

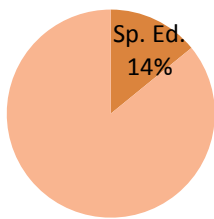
⁵ MEVA did not meet the 85% participation target for student survey completion.

⁶ MEVA did not reach the 100% target of families will meet with teachers for Individualized Learning Plans (ILP's) at a minimum of once a year. 97% meet with teachers for Individualized Learning Plans (ILP's) at a minimum of once a year. MEVA did not reach the target of 100% of Learning Coaches logged into the Online School (OLS) at a minimum of once a week. 97% of Learning Coaches logged into the Online School (OLS) at a minimum of once a week.

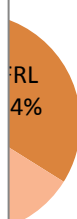
Section 3: Demographics



Special Education



Free Lunch



Section 4: Student Academic Proficiency

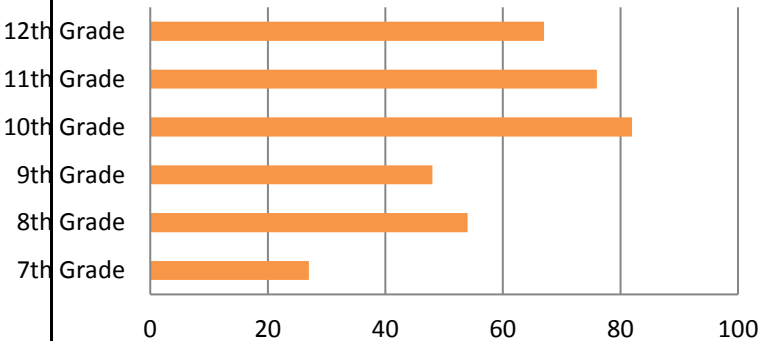
MEVA partially met its Student Academic Proficiency targets.

Targets:

State Assessments

- Percent of grade 7 students scoring proficient on the ELA portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.
- Percent of grade 8 students scoring proficient on the ELA portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.
- Percent of grade 11 students scoring proficient on the ELA portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.
- Percent of grade 7 students scoring proficient on the math portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.

2016-17 Enrollment by Grade



- Percent of grade 8 students scoring proficient on the math portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.

- Percent of grade 11 students scoring proficient on the math portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.
- Percent of grade 8 students scoring proficient on the Science portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.
- Percent of grade 11 students scoring proficient on the Science portion of the Maine State Assessment will meet or exceed the state average.

School Selected Assessments

- Year 1: Establish baseline using NWEA Reading Assessment for each grade level 7-12.
- Year 1: Establish baseline using NWEA Math Assessment for each grade level 7-12.
- Year 1: Establish baseline for the percent of course enrollments in which students meet the standards for that course. Meeting standard will be defined as mastering 80% or more of the course objectives and will be reported using the OLS system.

Performance:

Student Academic Proficiency:

MEVA’s academic proficiency targets were for the percent of grade 7, 8 and 11 students scoring proficient on each subject area of the Maine State Assessment to meet or exceed the state average (math and ELA 7, 8, 11 and science 8 and 11). MEVA met the target in 2 of 8 areas. See table below.

	# of students tested	% at or above state average	State Average	Difference	Target met?
ELA					
Grade 7		36%	54%	-18%	no
Grade 8		59%	52%	+7%	yes
Grade 11		53%	59%	-6%	no
Math					
Grade 7		16%	41%	-25%	no
Grade 8		9%	35%	-26%	no
Grade 11		22%	35%	-13%	no
Science					
Grade 8		78%	69%	+9%	yes
Grade 11		38%	47%	-9%	no

MeVA will establish a baseline using NWEA Math and Reading Assessment data from years one and two for each grade level 7-12. Data provided in the tables below.

Percent of students in each grade 7-12 scoring in the average to above average RIT band in reading on the NWEA. (Based on Spring 16 scores.)	
7 th grade	92%
8 th grade	80%
9 th grade	71%
10 th grade	90%
11 th grade	86%
12 th grade	not tested

Percent of students in each grade 7-12 scoring in the average to above average RIT band in math on the NWEA. (Based on Spring 16 scores.)	
7 th grade	50%
8 th grade	60%
9 th grade	52%
10 th grade	83%
11 th grade	64%
12 th grade	not tested

MeVA measured the percent of course enrollments in which students meet the standards for that course. Meeting standard is defined as mastering 80% or more of the course objectives. The School-wide Passing Rate for the first semester was 78%, and for the second semester it was 91%.

Section 5: Student Academic Growth

MEVA partially met its academic growth targets.

Targets:

State Assessments

- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of same cohort students who reach proficiency from 7th grade to 8th grade in ELA.
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of same cohort students who reach proficiency from 7th grade to 8th grade in math
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of successive cohort of students who reach proficiency on the state reading assessment from one year to the next for each grade level tested.
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of successive cohort of students who reach proficiency on the state math assessment from one year to the next for each grade level tested.
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of successive cohort of students who reach proficiency on the state science assessment from one year to the next for each grade level tested.

School Selected Assessments

- Percent of students who meet their individual growth targets with the fall administration of the Reading NWEA establishing the baseline and the spring administration establishing the end point on a yearly basis. Yearly Target: 80% of students will meet their individual growth targets in reading.
- Percent of students who meet their individual growth targets with the fall administration of the Math NWEA establishing the baseline and the spring administration establishing the end point on a yearly basis. Yearly Target: 80% of students will meet their individual growth targets in Math
- 80% of students will meet the benchmarks established on their ILP's.

Performance:

Targets for student academic growth on the state assessment will be determined based on the 2 years of baseline data the school currently has.

75% of students met their individual growth targets in reading, and 63% of students met their individual growth targets in math. The target of 85% was not met for reading or math.

Grade	Percent of students meeting projected growth - READING	Percent of students meeting projected growth – MATH
7	72%	50%
8	61%	52%
9	78%	69%
10	90%	82%
11	NWEA projection not provided for grade 11	

97% of students met the benchmarks established on their ILP's, exceeding the 80% target.

Section 6: Achievement Gaps in proficiency and growth between major student subgroups:

MeVA met the target to gather baseline data.

Targets

- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of students in identified subgroups reaching proficiency as measured by the state assessment in grades 7, 8, and 11 in reading.
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of students in identified subgroups reaching proficiency as measured by the state assessment in grades 7, 8, and 11 in math.
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of students in identified subgroups meeting their individual goals as measured on the NWEA in grades 7-12 in reading.
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of students in identified subgroups meeting their individual goals as measured on the NWEA in grades 7-12 in math.
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of students in identified subgroups meeting their Individual Growth Targets on their ILP's

Performance:

Baseline data were collected. Targets will be established.

Section 7: Enrollment & Attendance

MeVA partially met the targets for enrollment and attendance.

Targets:

- The Average attendance rate as reported in the State data system for MEVA will be at or above the state average.
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of students enrolled on state “count day” who are still enrolled on last day of school.
- Year 1: Establish baseline. Percent of students enrolled on last day of school indicating intent to return the following school year.

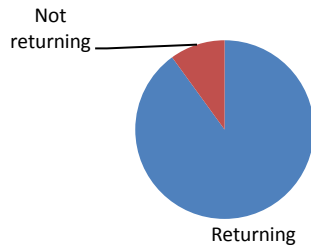
Performance:

The average attendance rate for MeVA students was 87%. The state average is 93%. MeVA did not meet the target of being at or above the state averages for attendance.

The percent of students enrolled on state “count day” who were still enrolled on last day of school was 73%. The school will use this baseline data to establish targets.

The percent of students enrolled on last day of school who indicated intent to return the following school year was 90%. The school will use this baseline data to establish targets.

Intent to Re-enroll



Section 8: Post-Secondary Readiness:

MeVA met the targets for Post-Secondary Readiness.

Targets:

- Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate.
- Percentage of students accepted to post-secondary schools.

Performance:

Graduation Rate

- Of the juniors enrolled on October 1, 2015, 30% graduated in June 2017.
- Of the seniors enrolled on October 1, 2016, 70% graduated in June 2017.
- Of the seniors enrolled in June of the 2016-17 school year 90% graduated that month.
- MEVA expects a few students to complete their remaining credits during the summer and graduate in August, for a graduation rate of seniors enrolled in June of the 2016-17 school who graduated to 98%.

31% of students were accepted to post-secondary schools.

Out of 60 students:

- 70% plan to continue education after high school;
- 16% plan to enter the world of work. Most of these students are continuing with their current employers;
- 1% plan to enlist (or have already enlisted) in the US Military;
- 13% plan to return to MEVA next year to recover credits needed for a diploma.

Section 9: Governance

MeVA met the targets for Governance.

Targets

- Board will meet one time per month at a minimum.
- Evidence of required bylaws and policies are in place and are regularly reviewed as indicated in minutes.
- 100% of Governing Board agendas and minutes are made available to the public.

- Bylaws and policies in application regularly reviewed.

President of the Board	Amy Carlisle
Board Member	Peter Mills
Board Member	Ed LeBlanc
Board Member	Kevin Pomerleau
Board Member	Dennis Medora

The MeVA Governing Board is composed of five members of diverse skills and experiences. The Board meets monthly. All board meetings are posted on the school’s website and are open to the public. Minutes are kept and, after approval, are shared on the school’s website. MEVA’s governing board is dedicated to the school. The governing board works to provide visionary

leadership and executive oversight. The Head of School sees to it that the governing board is kept informed by providing it with weekly updates.

Section 10: Administration

During the 2016-17 school year MeVA was under the leadership of its returning Head of School. The Head of School continues to serve as the school’s Special Education Director. The CFO also continued to work with MeVA in year two. The K12 Operations Manager was replaced with a new Manager of School Programs and Operations, also a K12 position.

Head of School	Dr. Melinda Browne
CFO	Jennifer Hight
Manager of School Programs and Operations	Fadia Afaneh

Section 11: School Climate

MeVA partially met its targets for School Climate.

Targets:

- School will report the number of behavioral incidents using the state and federal reporting requirements and in Year 1: will establish baseline.
- School will gather and respond to family, student, and staff perceptions of the quality of the school’s social and academic climate. Percent of participation in state student climate surveys will be 85%.
- Year 1: will establish baseline of percent of students who participate in at least one school sponsored or outside activity.

Performance:

MeVA did not have any reportable behavior incidents during the 2016-17 school year.

MeVA offered Field trips throughout the state during the 2016-17 school year. Approximately 50% of MEVA students participated in at least one school sponsored activity.

MeVA met the target of gathering and responding to family, student, and staff perceptions of the quality of the school’s social and academic climate. MeVA participated in Panorama Education Surveys for a second year in 2017. Families, students, and staff/teachers provided feedback for MeVA. The tables below and on the

following page, provided by Panorama Education as part of a larger Insights Report, summarizes MeVA’s strengths and areas of growth, as demonstrated by the survey results.

- Teacher/staff survey participation was 100% (19)
- Family survey participation was 185 out of around 260 families. While some families may have participated twice, it appears as though there was a 71% participation rate in the family survey.
- Percent of participation in student climate surveys was 72%. MeVA did not meet the 85% participation target for students.

	STRENGTHS	AREAS OF GROWTH
STUDENT	<p>+HIGH STUDENT PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL SAFETY: Students’ perceptions of School Safety place Maine Virtual Academy near the 99th national percentile for this topic. Compared to other schools in the MCSC, Maine Virtual Academy is 10 points above average (93% vs 83% average) for School Safety.</p> <p>+POSITIVE PERCEPTIONS FROM 7TH, 8TH, AND 9TH GRADE STUDENTS: Students in the lower grades respond more favorably on all topics compared to students in the older grade levels. What might be causing students in lower grades to have higher perceptions than students in other grades in these topics? Are there strategies that are implemented in these grades that increase students’ perceptions in these areas that can be shared with older students?</p>	<p>-TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS, PARTICULARLY COMPARED TO 2016 RESULTS: At 71% favorable, Maine Virtual Academy’s average score in Teacher-Student Relationships is slightly above the MCSC average (69%). Yet this score is a 5 point decrease from last year’s results. While still in the average range compared to the national dataset, this dip reflects a change in student perceptions on varying facets of these relationships.</p>
FAMILY	<p>+IMPROVEMENT IN SCHOOL CLIMATE: Families of Maine Virtual students rate the school’s climate in the average range compared to other schools in Panorama’s national dataset and to the MCSC overall. However, the school saw a 10 point increase on the topic from Spring 2016’s family surveys, with all questions seeing steady improvement.</p>	<p>- DECREASE IN PERCEPTION OF STUDENT GRIT: While many family survey topics saw improvements from last year at Maine Virtual, families’ perceptions of their own students’ Grit saw a decrease of 11 percentage points, the largest change in either direction across all family topics.</p>

	STRENGTHS	AREAS OF GROWTH
STAFF & TEACHER	<p>↑ FEEDBACK AND COACHING: At 50% favorable, Maine Virtual's School Climate score is 24 percentage points higher than the MCSC average of 34% and near the 70th percentile compared to all schools. Additionally, this topic saw a 10 point increase from 2016.</p>	<p>- CHANGE IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: On all topics, teachers report least favorably on School Leadership with an overall score of 49% favorable. This score places Maine Virtual 8 percentage points below the MCSC average and near the 30th national percentile compared to other schools. Comparing to last year's score, there is potential room for improvement when it comes to teacher perceptions of the school's leadership.</p> <p>- STUDENT GRIT: Teachers perceive student Grit as less favorable than both students' and families' perceptions of the same. While students are most positive in their self-perceptions at 56% favorable and families in relative agreement at 49% favorable, teachers report student Grit as 36% favorable. It's worth exploring why teachers have lower perceptions of student Grit than both students and families.</p>

*Teachers only

Section 12: Parent and Community Engagement

MeVA partially met its targets for Parent and Community Engagement.

Targets:

- 100% of staff, students, and families will utilize k-mail communication and documentation system.
- School Improvement Team and the Parent Advisory Committee meetings will have parent participation. In Year 1 a baseline of the number of parents participating will be collected.
- 100% of families will meet with teachers for Individualized Learning Plans (ILP's) at a minimum of once a year.
- 100% of Learning Coaches will log into the Online School (OLS) at a minimum of once a week.

Performance:

Kmail is no longer used by the K12 system. The Kmail use target is no longer applicable.

School Improvement Team and the Parent Advisory Committee meetings are held and recordings are sent out to all families.

97% of families met with teachers for Individualized Learning Plans (ILP's) at a minimum of once a year. MEVA did not reach the 100% target.

97% of Learning Coaches logged into the Online School (OLS) at a minimum of once a week. MEVA did not reach the 100% target.

Section 13: Finances

MeVA met its target for Finances.

Targets:

- When monthly financials vary by more than 5%, the variance will be flagged for special governing board consideration to ensure a positive cash flow at the end of each school year.

Performance:

The operating budget is balanced. The governing board is engaged in strategic discussions about the school's needs and its operating expenses in creating annual budgets.

An annual financial audit was completed by MacPage in December 2016 for the 2015/16 fiscal year and was submitted to the MCSC and the Department of Education. It was determined there were no findings or other matters about which the auditor had concerns.

MEVA recently completed two internal audits, (1) in special services and (2) operations, which provide evidence that MEVA's procedures are compliant with state and federal laws, as well as the needs of the school community.

Section 14: Facilities & Maintenance and Transportation

MEVA met its targets for Facilities and Maintenance.

Targets:

- Facility will meet all applicable state expectations for public schools
- School will provide record of costs and student utilization if applicable.

Performance:

Maine Virtual Academy's office suite accommodates all teaching and collaborative activities. The office suite is fully utilized by the entire faculty. The owner of the property provides a weekly cleaning service. The school's maintenance log-book is up to date. MeVA met the target of having its facility meet all applicable state expectations for public schools.

MeVA did not have any costs for student transportation during the 2016-17 school year.

Section 15: Evidence of Mission and Vision Implementation

MeVA serves students and their families who need the flexibility that virtual education affords. This flexibility may be necessary for a variety of reasons including providing time for talent development, accommodating internship schedules and other experiential learning opportunities.

In its second operating year, Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA) has grown in serving the school's mission and vision. The school has implemented a comprehensive academic plan that has increased the effectiveness of

the program by focusing on data-driven instruction, assessment, observation/feedback, school culture and professional development.

Section 16: Commendations and Recommendations

Commendations

1. The institution of a summer Title I program provides academic continuity for students through the summer months.
2. The school has developed a comprehensive academic plan which holds promise for greater academic coordination.
3. Monthly open-houses events have made the school more accessible to parents.
4. The average school-wide student passing rate was 84.6%.
5. The NWEA participation rate increased substantially.
6. Student and parent interviews largely described a school that met student needs.
7. Teachers reported the school offers a positive teaching experience and a collaborative professional camaraderie.
8. The school has developed a PEPG plan.
9. MEVA realizes it has room to grow and is actively looking at data and setting goals for improvement.

Recommendations

1. An exploration of socialization options to address the student-expressed need to meet more with their peers.
2. Concerns expressed by students regarding the curriculum should be explored.
3. Concerns expressed by teachers regarding the ease by which modifications can be made to the K12 curriculum, the tech support for the K12 curriculum, and the loss of the chat platform should be considered.
4. Further efforts should be made to provide new students with an understanding of the expectations of the virtual academic experience to help reduce student withdrawal.
5. Further efforts should be made to engage family support for struggling students.
6. Efforts to improve the retention of special education staff should be considered.
7. The school should review its current achievement data in the area of math and make a plan to address the lack of student progress.