

Exhibit A

Chesapeake Science Point Public Charter School | Charter Renewal

Cumulative Performance Report

2005–2012

This report, developed in advance of the renewal decision, serves as a cumulative performance report that:

- summarizes the school’s performance record over the charter term;
- states the authorizer’s summative findings concerning the school’s performance;
- lists past actions taken by the Board and Administration during the history of the charter; and
- sets forth discrete findings as to the prospects for renewal.

The Board of Education, on March 2, 2005, conditionally approved the Chesapeake Science Point Public Charter School, contingent upon the development and approval of a satisfactory Charter Agreement. The Board of Education and Chesapeake Light Foundation signed a legally binding Charter Agreement on June 1, 2005 outlining the roles and responsibilities of each party in the implementation of Chesapeake Science Point Public Charter School (CSP).

2005–06

The school got off to a tumultuous start, due in large part to a late approval date and its rush to get into a facility by August 2005. As a result, CSP was delayed in opening by five days due to facility and human resource issues and subsequently experienced a great deal of turmoil in its first year of operation. Throughout the year, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) identified violations of the Agreement and worked with CSP to remediate these issues. Letters were issued on December 28, 2005, identifying issues requiring remediation and providing for opportunity to cure deficiencies by January 31, 2006, as stipulated in the Charter Agreement. Additionally, these violations were made public at the January 18, 2006 meeting of the Board of Education.

AACPS conducted an internal audit on February 9 and 10, 2006, and identified additional issues. As such, the

Board of Education issued a second letter outlining continued and additional violations to the Charter Agreement, AACPS board policies and the Negotiated Agreement.

In accordance with the Charter Agreement, Anne Arundel County Public Schools Board of Education reserved the right, in accordance with terms of the Charter Agreement, to institute revocation proceedings or to develop a plan for continuation of services to the affected students if these issues were not resolved during the cure period. CSP was issued a letter dated May 5, 2006, and provided with opportunity to cure violations of the Charter Agreement. Documentation of the recommended remedies was provided by CSP on June 5, 2006, within the 30 day period.

At that time, the Board directed CSP to complete the following tasks and submit documentation for its review at the July 12, 2006 Board meeting: to renegotiate the existing charter agreement, develop an accountability plan for implementation in the 2006–2007 school year, and submit a budget projection and cash flow statement using generally acceptable accounting principles. CSP was unable to provide the requested financial statements and related budget information at the time of the meeting. At that time, the Board President expressed concern about timelines and dates and the tardiness of requested materials. Nevertheless, Dr. Maxwell recommended that the school system continue the charter agreement with CSP on a probationary status, that milestones be established, and that the Board review and revisit the status of school operations no later than the end of the first semester of the 2006–2007 school year.

Despite a difficult first year, feedback from parents, teachers, students, and CSP leadership suggested strong support for the school environment and educational program at CSP.

2006–07

Milestones were incorporated into a Compliance Plan and discussed with CSP officials at the outset of the 2006–07 school year. Throughout the first semester of that year, AACPS provided substantial assistance to CSP to facilitate the attainment of the identified milestones. These activities included but were not limited to:

- a full day of training and technical assistance
- a series of meetings with Executive Team members (approximately every 6 weeks)
- visits by Superintendent and Executive team members
- an internal audit
- an on-site review
- a referral to Maryland Charter School Network Technical Assistance Project; and
- staff development opportunities

Additionally, as directed by the Board of Education, a financial and enrollment audit was conducted by the Board’s internal auditor from November 29, 2006 to December 1, 2006. An on-site review was conducted by a team of administrators from AACPS on December 11, 2006. This review examined the areas of: instruction, student data, special education, student discipline, human resources, facilities, transportation, finance, and governance. During the annual site visit the review team met with various school stakeholders, including administrators, teachers, students, parents, and members of the school’s Governing Board. Reviewers also had an opportunity to review records, observe classrooms and school-wide practices to inform their impressions of the school’s development. The internal audit and on-site review reflected improvement in the following areas:

- elements of the instructional environment, including the instructional vision for the program’s rigorous math curriculum, vocabulary development, and individual student tutoring available;

- implementation of the Web-based special education database to document the IEP process;
- access to a certified public accountant; and
- development of an Accountability Plan by CSP, as directed by the Board of Education on June 21, 2006.

However, CSP continued to experience organizational and management issues related to:

- accounting and accuracy of financial information reported to AACPS;
- compliance issues related to the special education process;
- facilities to adequately provide the program described in the approved application;
- accounts payable for transportation services. This was a serious issue, and failure to address would have led to unannounced termination of services. As of January 22, 2007, the entire amount had been paid off.
- the Governing Board's lack of a clear back-up plan for identifying financial resources necessary to operate the school and recognizing the challenges associated with finances and facilities; and
- a misalignment of Leave Slips and Timesheets was identified.

After extended discussion at its meeting of February 7, 2007, the Board of Education voted to maintain CSP on probationary status for the second semester of the 2006–07 school year due to continued violations of the Charter Agreement. Additionally, by its action on that date, the Board issued CSP notice with an opportunity to cure implementation problems and areas needing attention as outlined in the Recommended Actions of the On Site Review and Internal Audit, by April 25, 2007. As such, a follow-up review was conducted on April 18, 2007 to determine the extent to which CSP leadership addressed areas previously identified on the Compliance Plan as, “Falling Below Standards.”

The findings of the April 18, 2007 site visit suggest that parents, students, and teachers remain supportive of the environment and educational program offered at CSP. The commitment of the teachers, school size and accelerated math curriculum were commonly identified as the school's strengths. The instructional vision for the school was identified as rigorous in the areas of math and science.

AACPS staff continued to provide ongoing and labor intensive Technical Assistance throughout the cure period including, but not limited to:

- assigning a Special Education Compliance Specialist to the school by the Superintendent throughout the cure period;
- holding biweekly meetings between the Superintendent and the leadership of the School;
- negotiating changes, unsuccessfully, to the Charter Agreement by Counsel to the Board of Education and the Chesapeake Light Foundation Board; and
- holding meetings with the CSP leadership and AACPS facilities staff to discuss:
 - facilities options and support in accomplishing the necessary steps required to achieve the school's facilities goals; and
 - providing staff development on the correct completion of time sheets and leave authorization practices by the Division of Human Resources.

While progress was noted in several identified areas, most notably in the area of Special Education services, business and management practices continued to plague the school's organizational viability. Specifically, problems remained with regard to: long and short term financial plans aligned with the school's growth model and reflective of secured sources of funding; realistic and achievable facilities plan for the short and long term vision of the school; ability to renegotiate the Charter Agreement; and compliance with Employee Performance and Conduct Management procedures in line with Board Policy and guidelines in the Negotiated Agreements.

Based on the results of the examination in the April 27, 2007, Internal Audit, CSP submitted written certification of enrollment, and received the appropriate amount of per pupil funding. Examination of the financial statements submitted to AACPS for the period ended March 31, 2007, appeared materially accurate. Further examination of these financial statements and the additional cash flow projections continued to indicate cash flow shortages. The school attempted to address these cash flow issues by obtaining lines of credit through various banks.

As a result, the Superintendent recommended that CSP remain on probationary status through the 2007–2008 school year due to continued violations of the Charter Agreement, conditioned upon:

1. CSP providing evidence to AACPS no later than May 11, 2007, of its line of credit that is reflected in its most recent cash flow projections; and
2. Compliance with a Corrective Action Plan reflective of performance goals, strategies, milestones and activities in the areas of Special Education, Finance, Facilities and Human Resources as delineated in the Compliance Plan.

Additionally, the Superintendent stated his expectations that CSP function with a greater degree of autonomy, meaning without the intensive level of intervention the school required to comply with the agreed upon standards of the Charter Agreement. The Superintendent further recommended another on-site review and internal audit by the end of the first semester of the school year, after which a report be submitted to the Board as to the progress made by CSP to satisfy requirements identified in the Corrective Action Plan.

2007–08

On December 13, 2007, AACPS staff conducted the follow up on-site review at CSP. Additionally, an Audit was conducted by the Board’s Supervisor of Internal Audit in December 2007.

The strength of CSP continued to lie in the parents, students and staff of the school. Their passionate support for the school was reflected in the active demand for this alternative education option. The instructional program reflected content with increased rigor, specifically in the areas of math and science. The small school size, committed teachers, active parent involvement and stakeholder support of the school’s mission and vision clearly had a positive impact on the overall success of the school. Much progress had been noted in many areas previously identified as needing attention, specifically in the area of student records and current compliance with the special education process. While two potential facilities had been identified, the time had come for the Governing Board to secure an appropriate facility and develop a financial plan reflective of the lease terms, and construction and programmatic expansion costs in order to facilitate a smooth opening of the 2008–09 school year.

Organizational and operational findings continued to reflect:

- lack of transparency and availability of curriculum for all subjects;
- need to develop a High School Program of Study to ensure students meet state graduation requirements and accreditation;
- need to develop and maintain student transcripts for advisement, attainment of graduation requirements, and college applications;
- need for staff training for those who would work with student transcripts and advisement in order to perform credit checks, identification of the courses required for high school graduation, and college advisement;

- need for training related to payroll and timekeeping issues;
- inconsistent use of the Student Data System (SASixp) for teacher class schedules impacting the accuracy of data reported to Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) regarding NCLB Highly Qualified Teacher Status;
- a lack of a fully developed science lab;
- a lack of a media center;
- a lack of indoor space for physical education class and sports activities;
- a lack of specialized rooms for programs outside of science (cultural arts, FACS, Tech Ed, etc.); and
- the need to locate a facility for the 2008–09 school year;

An Internal Audit report issued on January 23, 2008, concluded the charter school submitted materially accurate enrollment counts, which resulted in accurate funding payments from AACPS. The examination of financial statements submitted to AACPS, however, caused several concerns about future cash flow that relate to the location of the school beyond this fiscal year.

As a result of these findings, the Superintendent recommended that the Board give notice with opportunity to cure the following areas requiring corrective action by February 23, 2008:

- hire and retain a certified or licensed special education service provider commensurate with the needs dictated by student IEPs;
- provide services and accommodations to students with disabilities in accordance with IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act;
- submit to the appropriate AACPS staff and Board of Education for review and approval, the lease and project design/specifications, per Public School Construction Program administrative procedures, specifically outlined in the Compliance Plan;

- submit to the State Superintendent of Schools the Board of Education approved lease of new facility for the 2008–09 school year, in order to meet CSP’s construction timeline; and
- provide to the Supervisor of Finance, an updated three year budget reflective of enrollment projections, relocation and construction costs and programmatic expansions costs.

On February 15, 2008, CSP’s Governing Board passed a resolution to delay its expansion to high school for the next three years and remain a middle school in its current facility.

CSP Board and AACPS Senior Staff and Executive Team members met weekly to collaboratively cure the items requiring immediate corrective action thusly:

- AACPS and CSP hired two certified special education teachers;
- the Division of Special Education developed and implemented a professional development model;
- the Governing Board delayed expansion of high school and resolved to remain a middle school in its current facility;
- Ed Specs were provided and approved, (failure to have approved Ed Spec had heretofore been a chronic violation);
- the decision to remain a middle school negated the lease requirement associated with the cure and the current lease extension was approved;
- CSP provided three year budget and enrollment projections reflective of 198 student middle school grades 6–8 with no additional construction or expansion costs.

After extended discussion at its meeting on March 5, 2008, the Board voted to maintain CSP on probationary status for the 2008–2009 school year. Notwithstanding that the deficiencies identified during the 2007–08 Annual Site Visit Report identified on January 23, 2008, had been cured; the Superintendent recommended—and

the Board voted to leave CSP remain on probationary status for the 2008–2009 school year due to the substantial amount of support CSP required to meet these cure requirements. Accordingly, CSP was placed on probationary status for the 2008–2009 school year.

2008–09

CSP demonstrated significant improvement in its fourth year as a charter school in AACPS. The school's decision to focus on the delivery of a middle school model and delay its proposed expansion to high school, proved sound as demonstrated by the results of the 2008–2009 Annual Site Visit. CSP met or was found to be approaching standards in nearly all areas related to Instruction/Student Services; Business and Management Services; Classroom and School Climate; Governance and Organizational Viability and Parent and Community Involvement. The only area in which CSP was found to fall below the standards was in its quarterly financial statements. This outcome was a major accomplishment and reflected the collaborative partnership established between the school and the school system to provide parents and students an alternative means within the existing public school system for additional innovative learning opportunities and creative educational approaches to improve the education of students.

CSP's identified mission of preparing students for college through a rigorous program focusing on math and science was posted in every class. In addition, the school pursued activities that addressed its mission. CSP's focus on personal attention to students was articulated by the leadership and was also a central theme in the focus group with teachers. There was a deep commitment to the individual needs of students and the parent community remained a vital and integral component to the success of the school. Parents reflected positive feelings about the rigorous coursework, high teacher expectations and respectful relationships between staff and students.

At that time, the school would have benefitted from the development and implementation of a School Improvement Plan and process. There was little evidence of a functioning School Improvement Team focusing on instructional issues. Additional collection and analysis of student academic performance indicators would enhance the outcomes of all attending students. Additionally, a School Improvement Plan would aid the development of a meaningful and focused staff development plan. Professional Development was haphazard and not focused towards a specific instructional framework. It was recommended that such a plan should be designed to incorporate data collection and data analysis processes at the school and classroom level.

Based on the Quality Assurance and Monitoring (QAM) Review of Special Education student records, CSP demonstrated 95 percent compliance with QAM standards. CSP met or was approaching standards in all areas related to the provision of special education and related services to students with disabilities.

CSP had made great strides in its ability to maintain student attendance and discipline records in SASI. However, at this point the school needed to become responsible for creating and maintaining student schedules, course history and transcript information for all high school credit bearing classes in SASI. This was of great importance for reporting to MSDE and USDE in order to meet NCLB standards and to monitor Maryland state graduation requirements.

The current facility was adequate for the school's middle school program. However, concerns remained related to the science lab, which was not yet operational and inhibited exposure to the laboratory sciences. Additionally, if the school planned to either expand in enrollment or to add a high school program, a new Ed Spec was required to be submitted for approval, as soon as possible, and a new lease would need to be submitted after the Ed Spec. CSP was told that no design or construction should begin until the AACPS Board of Education had reviewed and the appropriate office at MSDE had approved same. Allowing time for the

various submittals and approvals, the opening of a new/enlarged facility should not be planned before August, 2010.

CSP hired a new accountant prior to the 2008–09 school year. However, as encouraging as the regularly held meetings with the new accountant had been, the submitted financial statements did not support the anticipated improvement. While progress had been noted, October financial statements submitted for CSP did not tie to the General Ledger submitted with the financial statements. While much progress had been made in the area of enrollment projections and budget, quarterly financial statements and quality control issues continued to persist.

After several years of various identified deficiencies, resulting in CSP remaining on probationary status from 2006–2009, the Board approved, at its meeting of March 4, 2009, the Superintendent’s recommendation that probationary status for the middle school program be lifted. Additionally, the Board requested that any milestones required by federal, state, and local policies and regulations be met in accordance with the Charter Agreement as CSP moved forward with the development of its high school program. The Board further stipulated that any future expansion plan—for the 2010 school year and beyond—must meet with the approval of the Board of Education.

Two months later, on May 20, 2009, when the Board had before it the lease, architect agreement, schematic design and design development drawings for CSP’s new facility, the Board again had a discussion about CSP’s desire to eventually expand to high school. At that time, the Board directed the development of a timeline to monitor the progress of CSP in its quest to expand. Accordingly, a timeline was submitted to both the Board and CSP, with clearly defined milestones that needed to be met. Those milestones were critical to permitting, not only a review process with each step predicated upon the last, but also timely consideration by the Board of Education.

2009–10

Notwithstanding that CSP was advised of the timeline and that the first milestone was the submission of a draft high school program of study, that was aligned to the current Maryland and AACPS high school graduation requirements, the July 31, 2009 deadline came and went without any submission. On October 5, 2009—over two months after the established deadline—CSP submitted a document purportedly to meet this milestone. However, the submitted documents reflected only a skeleton curriculum simply listing courses to be offered to meet high school graduation requirements.

In response to a request for course descriptions and a more comprehensive curriculum beyond a mere listing, CSP submitted a second document on October 14, 2009. The review team, comprised of Senior Staff from the Office of School Performance, Curriculum and Instruction, and Student Support Services, expressed serious reservations as to CSP’s current readiness to deliver a four-year high school course of studies that would meet all state and county course requirements for graduation, taught by highly qualified personnel, within a viable budget, in instructionally suitable facilities.

AACPS had conveyed these reservations and concerns previously to the staff and Board of CSP. At that time, AACPS indicated that high school expansion may not be feasible for next year. The timeline contemplated that the expansion budget (estimated to be in the range of \$700,000), and educational specifications would have been submitted for review by staff and approval by the Board—both predicated upon the approval of a curriculum. However, CSP’s tardy submission of a program of study set this process back to the point where it could not be incorporated into the very conservative Fiscal Year 2011 budget proposed to the Board in December 2009.

AACPS staff had been working closely with the Chesapeake Lighthouse Foundation Board (CLF) and CSP leadership to develop a course of studies and curriculum building upon CSP’s strength in the areas of

math, science and technology, to develop the sequencing of courses and strands that make such a program of courses akin to an “innovative and creative” magnet that meets current AACPS and state requirements. Such a course of studies was to be developed in time to phase it in as of the beginning of the 2011–2012 school year, allowing ample time to seek funding in the normal course of the budget process.

Collaboration between CSP and AACPS senior staff was necessary to assure the development of an innovative learning opportunity and creative educational approach, which met the terms of all federal, state and local requirements or sought waivers to those that were seen as obstacles to the attainment of such creative pathways. However, if the high school were implemented as proposed there would have been numerous violations to COMAR. These deficiencies went to the heart of operating a high school program distinct from the middle school program. The Board was reminded to remain mindful of CSP’s ability to demonstrate its capacity to address student achievement for high school students up to and including graduation requirements, before granting approval. The outcome of the high school expansion steering committee yielded the following results, which gave AACPS further pause as to CSP’s readiness and capacity to launch a high school program at that time, including but not limited to:

- Maryland Student Records Manual requires schools to maintain student transcripts. CSP did not choose to schedule its courses through SASI, despite having been provided an AACPS SASI computer and participating in required SASI training. Central Office staff had historically maintained the CSP student database. At the high school level, AACPS would no longer have the capacity to continue scheduling CSP students from the Central Office.
- CSP would be required to maintain student schedules in SASI, or the current student information system, for monitoring student transcripts and for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) reporting requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT).

- Mathematics and Science pathways reflected a common course of study for AACPS students. Pathways reflected neither innovation nor a creative instructional approach as mandated by the Maryland Charter School law.
- Liberal Arts pathways lacked an option for rigorous courses, including Advanced Placement (AP), designed to prepare students for the most competitive post secondary institutions.
- CSP’s proposed schedule reflected only 26 potential credits with no options or flexibility for students who failed a class over the course of four years or those wishing to take additional electives.
- The proposed program neglected to address requirements related to the delivery of Library Media Services as required by COMAR.
- The proposed program reflected no increases in Special Education staffing from 2009–2010 until capacity is reached in 2012–2013, in spite of enrollment increases, which more than double their current student body.
- The proposed program neglected to reflect related service providers incorporated within proposed staffing formulas.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, AACPS was also cognizant of CSP’s ongoing fiscal difficulties, exacerbated by its holding onto its original \$260,000 lease while moving into a larger facility. AACPS staff met with CSP’s staff and independent certified accountants on January 12, 2010, at which time enrollment and budget assumptions were discussed. CSP agreed to provide five-year budget projections under three scenarios:

1. No change to the currently proposed middle school with high school expansion for FY11,
2. Expand to high school and increase middle school enrollment, and
3. Expand middle school enrollment only. CSP provided information by the established deadline, of January 13, 2010.

Analysis of the scenarios provided by CSP reflected no positive fund balance at the end of FY2011 for any of the three scenarios, and only one of the three scenarios provided a positive fund balance at the end of FY2012.

Finally, it is important to note that there remained significant concerns surrounding some of the assumptions embedded within CSP's submitted scenarios that further called into question the long-term financial viability, given its proposed business plan. Therefore, the Superintendent recommended that the Board approve, in concept, expansion of CSP to the high school level, phasing in as of the 2011–2012 school year, provided that the creative and innovative curriculum be aligned with federal, state and local policies and regulations, with the understanding that final approval by the Board of the program, education specifications, and budget would be sought no later than September 30, 2010.

Despite these concerns, the Board approved expansion of CSP in relation to any or all of the existing middle school grades, as well as ninth grade only, at least at that specific time. AACPS and the CSP board were directed by the Board of Education to resolve favorably all pending administrative concerns no later than August 1, 2010; and that both sides make a joint report regarding the status of all unresolved issues no later than March 31, 2010; May 31, 2010; and July 31, 2010.

2010–11

The 2010–2011 Annual Report noted overall progress in many areas as CSP completed its sixth school year. CSP completed construction and relocated the middle school program into a new facility. The new facility was a great improvement over the previous location, with larger classroom size, a dedicated cafeteria (for lunch and assemblies), and a working science laboratory. The new facility went a long way to improve the climate and define the culture of this high performing charter school.

Students continued to excel in math and science competitions, locally, statewide and nationally. Field trips were arranged annually to visit to Ivy League schools. Focus group participants identified the curriculum as challenging, and valued the many academic clubs and nationwide competitions. Parents continued to provide extraordinary levels of support and contributions, which ensured that students and staff had what they needed to accelerate student achievement. Parents regularly recognized the value of before and after-school support and Saturday school programs. They felt the school was providing not only a stellar education, but a social niche the community was otherwise unable to provide their students. The culture of the school had created a competitive academic environment wherein it was “acceptable” to be successful. Students were highly motivated to achieve and extremely well behaved.

Staff continued to dedicate significant time to support students in their quest to excel as our next generation of engineers and scientists. School-based stakeholders reported that there were high expectations for all students and staff. The school leadership identified that there were no attendance issues in this school of choice.

Community stakeholders continued to be extremely generous in their fiscal and in-kind support of furniture, technology, and political recognitions of student success. The Governing Board had generated significant levels of business/ industry and community partnerships, which had contributed substantially to the development of the program.

The student body of CSP was very diverse (53 percent White; 32 percent African American; 7 percent Hispanic; 12 percent FARMS; and 3 percent Special Education and) at that time. CSP students excelled on the Maryland State Assessments (MSA), with 96 percent of all students scoring Proficient or Advanced in Reading, and 94 percent in Math. CSP had consistently made AYP each year. The Curriculum Road Map, designed collaboratively between the AACPS Central Office support staff and CSP leadership, was in place to ensure all students met graduation requirements.

Of concern, were the challenges that continued to plague the school in its implementation of special education and related services, as well as the delivery of services to students with 504 Plans. In the comprehensive review of special education student records at CSP on May 14, 2010, AACPS again found egregious violations. These violations impacted provision of free and appropriate public education (FAPE) and posed the risk of costly litigation as well as major fiscal impact related to potential federal and state sanctions. As such, a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) was developed and shared with CSP leadership. The plan was monitored for evidence of compliance by the Division of Special Education, according to the identified timeline. Sanctions for any continued noncompliance would be implemented as outlined in the CAP.

By November 2010, fiscal sanctions were looming. As an intermediate corrective action step, MSDE was asked to conduct a focused monitoring visit. In its report, MSDE recognized the commitment, diligent efforts and extensive technical assistance provided by AACPS to reach satisfactory standards of compliance during the onsite visits. The school was acknowledged for its assistance and cooperation during the visit and was commended for providing an excellent learning environment for students with disabilities observed by QAM staff during the visit.

AACPS staff, in its annual site visit, regularly commented on the traditional stand-and-deliver instructional pedagogy evident in most classrooms. Limited classroom and behavior management strategies were observed, suggesting that less well-behaved and motivated students might be less engaged in the learning environment. Increasing teacher capacity to differentiate instruction was a clear and evident need. A lack of rigor and low-level student outcomes were observed in most classrooms. The need for increased access to technology was articulated by school-based stakeholders and reviewers alike.

The need for a gym was identified as the number one priority for the Governing Board and the greatest need identified by all stakeholders. The facilities for Music

and Art classrooms continued to fall below expected requirements. The Library Media Center, while improved, continued to require significant attention. Additionally, the Foundations for Technology classroom, a Maryland High School graduation requirement, still needed the equipment necessary to teach the course. For fall 2010, CSP was proposing to expand both the middle school population and to add ninth grade (330 students).

A review of the Human Resources practices at CSP determined that the observation and rating cycle was neither completed with fidelity nor in line with the timeline established by the Negotiated Agreements. Additionally, employee leave slips and timesheets did not reflect alignment in all cases. Leave on timesheets was not regularly called into the substitute system, nor were any of the required documents submitted for inclusion in the employee's OPF as of June 30, 2010.

A review of budget and finance practices found, Accounts Payable reflected inaccurate financial statements. Delayed payments were required, and approved by contractors, specifically, bus and landlord, to support the school's capacity to end the year with positive cash balance.

In its annual report, CSP was encouraged to move to the AACPS electronic lottery system for alignment with AACPS schools of choice model and to enhance the transparency of the selection process. CSP was provided technical support regarding the Certification and training necessary for teachers to offer the anticipated Advanced Placement (AP) courses in the high school program. The school was also notified that it must utilize the new student data system, SMS Chancery, in order to comply with state reporting requirements. CSP leadership was also expected to implement the SharePoint Authorizers Oversight and Information System. This year's complete non-compliance prevented effective electronic oversight, thereby reducing appropriate levels of school autonomy and non-intrusive accountability to Central Office.

Lastly, progress towards the expansion to a high school program at CSP had been shepherded by a collaborative High School Steering Committee comprised of Central

Office and CSP leadership. The team utilized a performance benchmarking tool, which established milestones and benchmarks to monitor progress and accomplish action items. The Steering Committee process was designed to support the development and implementation of a sound high school program and facilitate the school's vision to prepare students for competitive post secondary opportunities.

2011–12 Summative Findings

On July 29, 2011, CSP requested an extension of its charter agreement. AACPS designed a transparent but rigorous process that uses comprehensive academic, financial, and operational performance data to make merit-based renewal decisions. The renewal process was based upon a thorough analysis of a comprehensive body of objective evidence. CSP was informed that AACPS would grant renewals to charter schools that had achieved high academic standards, were organizationally and fiscally viable, and had been faithful to the terms of the contract and applicable law. Conversely, AACPS would not grant renewals based on political or community consideration or solely on the promises of future improvement.

On February 1, 2012, CSP submitted its Charter Renewal Application. AACPS charter school review team scored the application based on the Contract Renewal Rubric. Additional information was sought from the CSP leadership team for review on or before the annual site visit. The site visit was held on March 2, 2012, and consisted of classroom observations, stakeholder focus groups and record/ document reviews. Additional documentation was sought following the March 2, 2012 site visit and compared with the findings of previous site visit reports, annual reports and state data, in order that reviewers could effectively and objectively evaluate the school's performance. The summative findings are reflected in the attached *Charter School Renewal Scoring Rubric* (Exhibit B) and captured in the *CSP Renewal Performance Benchmarks 2005–2012* (Attachment 5).

In summary, the overall findings reflect patterns consistent with previous reports. This high performing cohort of students continues to excel on state outcome measures and in local, state and national competitions in math, science and technology. Parents remain supportive of and actively engaged in the educational program offered at this school of choice. The teachers continue to dedicate substantial time in support of the success of attending students. Community and political stakeholders continue to demonstrate their untiring support of the school and its educational mission.

A comprehensive and historic review of the school program reflects trends related to: student schedules, grades, and transcripts that are not aligned, and therefore inaccurate, calling into question the integrity and fidelity of the high school program in relation to student's opportunities to graduate within four years and be eligible for competitive post secondary opportunities. A persistent lack of transparency related to a High School Program of Study, which ensures students meet state graduation requirements and accreditation. A pattern of chronic violations of students rights as they relate to the provision of special education and related service delivery. Persistently ineffective financial controls and business practices in adherence with generally acceptable accounting principles, resulting in chronic concerns related to positive cash flow, and a sound, sustainable long-term financial plan. Disproportionately low percentages of Highly Qualified and certified teachers and lack of consistently applied HR processing practices with relation to payroll leave and records management. Long standing facility deficits as they relate to the lack of a fully developed science labs, media center, gymnasium, food and nutrition services and specialized rooms for cultural arts.

Of greatest concern is the viability of the high school program. The challenges and failures related to grades, transcripts, and scheduling that have been identified at CSP have and will continue to result in students having grades and credit incorrectly reported on their AACPS transcripts. This has and will result in violation of AACPS and Maryland State policies and regulations

regarding credit, credit recovery, grading policies and attendance. It has and will also continue to create inaccuracies for students when they transfer to other schools or obtain transcripts for college application and other purposes. Under the present procedures these discrepancies may not be discovered until a parent or student compares their CSP report card to their official AACPS transcript.

CSP's schedule reflects only 26 potential credits with no options or flexibility for students who fail a class over the course of four years or those wishing to take additional electives. As a result, 26 CSP students attended summer school last year, the highest of any rate of any single middle school in the county. Developing a plan for academic credit recovery for high school students and remediation of students, especially in HSA tested areas, is vital to ensure all students stay on track to graduate with their four year cohort.

The six AACPS comprehensive reviews and one MSDE focused review of special education compliance monitoring, as well as multiple follow-up visits at CSP, show that egregious violations with minimal improvement have been a habitual pattern since the school's inception (Attachment 1), compared to the outcomes of all AACPS schools and in particular the outcomes associated with special education service delivery at Monarch Academy Public Charter School (Attachment 2). CSP continues to be in violation of student rights of children with disabilities to have a free appropriate public education. CSP has been under a Compliance/ Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for its delivery of Special Education and Related Services for six of the seven years of CSP's operation, and is still under a CAP. In its application for renewal CSP stated:

"By the end of the 6th year, the identified areas needing improvement were limited, for the most part, to some general recommendations with little or no additional requirements. Comparison of the first site visit report with the last one demonstrates the dramatic and continued progress of CSP."

This inaccurate analysis reflects CSP's perceived disregard of special education federal requirements and a lack of investment in correcting the well documented violations of student rights.

CSP has shown its willingness to implement recommendations to better document its financial activities. The school has had the financial statements for fiscal years 2006 – 2011 audited by an independent auditing firm, which is crucial to identify any misstatements of financial information and insure that the statements are presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

In fiscal years 2006 through 2012, AACPS site visits and reviews have noted cash flow as a continuing concern. In all but one of those years' year-end financial statements, showed that working capital was negative, indicating there was not enough cash to pay all existing liabilities. Over time, AACPS and/or the independent auditors have noted instances in which management's financial information was not presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles using full accrual accounting. Cash available for operations was negative and CSP had used cash from restricted sources to pay its operating bills. By way of example, just prior to AACPS' site visit on March 2, 2012, CSP borrowed \$100,000 in cash from CLF's Prince George's County charter school, to provide liquidity. This is further evidence of the cash flow strain that the school is currently experiencing.

Fiscal year 2011 results show that operating costs are outpacing per-pupil funding provided by AACPS. CSP should search for ways to reduce operating costs. In addition, CSP should also evaluate its expansion plans and decisions carefully and seek other major grants and donations to cover the expansion costs in lieu of current borrowing plans. The school does not consistently maintain balanced budgets or positive cash flow. While the school's financial obligations are in good standing, the school does not have a sound and sustainable long-term financial plan.

The results for 2012 continue to show negative working capital. Cash from County Construction grants continues to support the operating budget. Since the grant agreements specify that the funds are to be used for construction, use of these monies for operating expenses is a violation of the agreement signed with the County. The cash flow strain will worsen in the near term as more will be borrowed from banks and other resources to complete the construction of the gymnasium. Since the County's per pupil allocation pays for only a little more than the cost of operations, it is not certain that there will be enough operating funds to repay all of these obligations. Cash projections for the next five years show positive cash flow is not anticipated for at least three years. Financial projections show that current shortage in cash flow, coupled with the strains of expansion plans, creates significant stress on financial results and working capital for the next few years.

CSP's recruiting and employee processing practices have repeatedly required correction, and multiple trainings and electronic reminders have been provided. Additionally, CSP has not traditionally met the standards associated with teacher observations and ratings forms, which are not historically completed with fidelity or within the terms of the Negotiated Agreements. These issues have been chronic findings. Further, CSP continues to recruit and select a larger-than-average pool of teachers who are only eligible for conditional certificates. CSP's percentage of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers is significantly above the AACPS average. The Highly Qualified Teacher designation is not a nicety preferred by AACPS, but a federal and state requirement under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). AACPS is required to report its percentages to MSDE annually, and CSP continues to employ disproportionately high numbers of teachers who cannot be designated as Highly Qualified. AACPS Division of Human Resources regularly provides CSP with names of highly qualified candidates to fill any vacancies, but CSP continues to select teachers that cannot be designated as Highly Qualified, which is of particular concern at the high school level, where certification requirements become increasingly specific.

Compliance with approved Educational Specifications (EdSpec), specifically, room compliance has not been met. While the new building is a big improvement over the previous site, growth plans to support the high school program have not been actualized. The school is lacking an area dedicated to both special education, and physical education. The Food Service area, as anticipated, is inadequate for the proposed growth model. Further there are no sinks for on-site food preparation or cleaning of utensils, and dry and refrigerated storage is limited.

There is no evidence that biology students, in either eighth or ninth grade, complete lab work that would prepare students for higher level sciences. Since its opening, CSP has yet to develop a science laboratory with materials for conducting experiments. There is no evidence of chemicals needed to conduct a high school chemistry class nor is there a safe area to store such chemicals. There are a few pieces of glassware stored in a cabinet in the storeroom. A plan needs to be developed to institute high school level laboratories in biology and chemistry, and eventually physics so that students have experience 25 percent of their time in the lab, as expected by the University of Maryland and the Maryland University System.

Additionally, there is a lack of adequate computer labs for a secondary school. The school has one data circuit to the Internet, which is capable of 1.544mbps. This is extremely slow by current standards. By contrast the slowest circuit in an AACPS school is 15mbps. As such, the school is limited in their Internet access and is not capable of streaming video, a common instructional technology. While the school has many SmartBoards, they do not appear to be used in optimal ways. During repeated observations by multiple reviewers, the boards were used almost exclusively by teachers instead of students. Student use of SmartBoards is far more engaging than teacher use. There was no evidence of any other types of computer technology equipment, which would be expected of a high school promoting science, math and technology.

Conclusion

AACPS has implemented a comprehensive and rigorous review of CSP's academic, financial, and operational performance data to make a thorough analysis of a comprehensive body of objective evidence. CSP's performance has been assessed on the following primary factors: academic performance; fiscal performance; governance effectiveness; leadership and instructional quality; compliance with the terms of its charter contract and applicable laws and regulations; and mission fulfillment, as well as parental and community support and significant positive or negative trends in performance, operations and/or governance.

As such, given the chronic and persistent violations to the Charter Agreement, AACPS board policies and the Negotiated Agreement, AACPS cannot abdicate its

responsibility to engage in responsible oversight of a public charter school board, which has consistently demonstrated a lack of capacity to operate the school with the degree of autonomy which they desire, while meeting the public accountability standards for which they are responsible. AACPS findings continue to reflect serious reservations as to CSP's capacity to deliver a four-year high school course of studies that meets all state and county course requirements for graduation, and is taught by highly qualified personnel, within a viable budget, in instructionally suitable facilities