



Massachusetts Department of
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION

Renewal Inspection Report

FOUR RIVERS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
GREENFIELD, MA

November 6-8, 2012

SchoolWorks®
Assess. Plan. Achieve.

Beverly, MA

www.Schoolworks.org

Contents

Introduction	1
A. The Renewal Inspection Process and Site Visit Report	1
B. Overview of this Report	1
Renewal Inspection Team	2
Setting	3
Renewal Inspection Methodology	5
Findings	7
A. Faithfulness to Charter	7
Charter School Performance Criteria: Faithfulness to Charter Topics	7
Progress toward Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures	10
B. Academic Program Success	11
Charter School Performance Criteria: Academic Program Success Topics	11
Progress toward Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures	19
C. Organizational Viability	20
Charter School Performance Criteria: Organizational Viability Topics	20
Progress toward Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures	28
Appendix A: Renewal Inspection Site Visit Schedule	29
Appendix B: Accountability Plan Performance	32

Introduction

A. The Renewal Inspection Process and Site Visit Report

The charter renewal application process begins with the charter school's submission to the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (ESE) of a completed Application for Renewal of a Public School Charter. After the Charter School Office (CSO) has reviewed the application and determined that it is clear and complete, the school is notified of the application's acceptance. The ESE contracts with an independent organization to conduct a detailed review of the school's performance. The renewal inspection organization assigns a team of specialists to conduct a renewal inspection site visit and prepare a renewal inspection report summarizing the team's findings regarding the school's performance relative to its accountability plan and the ESE's *Common School Performance Criteria*. The inspection is conducted following the ESE's *Massachusetts Charter School Renewal Inspection Protocol*, collecting and examining evidence relating to three areas of inquiry:

1. The school's faithfulness to the terms of its charter,
2. The success of the school's academic program, and
3. The viability of the school as an organization.

After the renewal inspection site visit, the team prepares a draft of the renewal inspection report and submits it to the CSO and the school for review. The renewal inspection report does not make any recommendations regarding renewal, nor does the report make any recommendations to the school regarding its operations. After incorporating any factual corrections, the team submits the final report to the CSO and to the school. This report is the result of one such inspection.

B. Overview of this Report

This renewal inspection report contains the following information:

- Professional biographies of the renewal inspection team members;
- A report setting that provides contextual information regarding the school;
- The methodology employed by the renewal inspection team in conducting the renewal inspection; and
- The renewal inspection team's findings and supporting evidence concerning the school's performance relative the Common School Performance Criteria, and a summary of the school's performance on its Accountability Plan as discussed in the *Protocol*.

Appendix A of this report contains the detailed schedule of the renewal inspection site visit.

Appendix B of this report contains a detailed account of the school's performance in terms of its Accountability Plan measures.

Renewal Inspection Team

Spencer Blasdale, M.Ed., Team Lead, is Chief Executive Officer of SchoolWorks. He provides leadership and decision-making for the company, including the development and execution of the company's strategic plan. Before joining SchoolWorks, he was Executive Director of the Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School in Boston, Massachusetts. He led the growth of the school from 100 sixth and seventh grade students to more than 475 fifth through twelfth grade students over a ten-year period. The school has been recognized as one of the top-performing charter schools in Massachusetts and has 90 percent of its alumni enrolled in four-year colleges and universities. Spencer also served as Board Chair of the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association from 2004 to 2008. He has spent the past 20 years in the field of education, beginning with a teaching internship at The Park School in Brookline, Massachusetts and working as a teacher, administrator and service partner to district schools in Chicago and Boston. Spencer holds a B.A. in history from Princeton University and an M. Ed. from Harvard University.

Karen Drezner, M.Ed., Team Member, is a consultant for SchoolWorks. She is currently Director of Leadership Development for Achievement First in Brooklyn, New York, planning and implementing a year-long Leadership Fellows Program for Achievement First's strongest teachers and, with school leaders, observing teachers, using an evidence-based protocol and a structured, comprehensive rubric. She was Founder and Executive Director of The Bronx Charter School for Children – a high-performing New York State Education Department-authorized K-5 charter school serving students and their families in the Mott Haven community. She was also an elementary school teacher, a Vice Principal and Director of Operations at Harbor Science and Arts Charter School and an Associate Director of the Childhood Asthma Initiative for The Children's Health Fund. She has participated in various New York regional conferences focusing on education as well as on the impact of asthma on homeless children. Karen holds an M.Ed. in Elementary Education from Boston College and a B.A. in Psychology with concentration in Education and Art History from Clark University. She was also in the Executive Level Program of Columbia Business School Institute for Not-for-Profit Management.

Ilene S. Silver, M.Ed., Team Member, is a consultant for SchoolWorks. She retired as the Principal of the Elmwood Elementary School, Hopkinton, Massachusetts, having led the school, with an average enrollment of 590 students, from January 1998 to June 2012. Prior to her principalship, she was the assistant to the elementary principals in Hopkinton, the assistant to the Director of Elementary Education in Holliston, and a classroom teacher in Holliston, Sharon and Haverhill, Massachusetts. Ilene holds a B.S. in elementary education from Syracuse University and an M.Ed. from Framingham State University.

Setting

Founded in 2003, Four Rivers Charter Public School (Four Rivers) serves students in grades 7-12. The school is located on an historic farm in Greenfield, Massachusetts. Four Rivers is located in Franklin County, one of the most rural counties in the state. Students come from six sending districts and are drawn from a population that is generally moderate-to-low income, with many students who will be the first in their families to attend college. Four Rivers is affiliated with Expeditionary Learning Schools – a nonprofit school reform model that links active, project-based academic learning, service and character education. There are 72 students in the middle school and 140 students in the high school.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SUBGROUP INFORMATION (for students enrolled as of November 6, 2012)		
Race/Ethnicity	# of students	% of entire student body
African-American	3	1.5%
Asian	4	2.0%
Hispanic	7	3.25 %
Native American	0	0.0%
White	191	90.0%
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Multi-race, non-Hispanic	7	3.25 %
Special education	35	16.5 %
Limited English proficient	1	.5 %
Low income	49	23.0%

The following table describes enrollment at each grade level at the time of the site visit. The school reported a wait list of 76 students at the end of the 2011-12 school year. The current waitlist stands at 37 students.

Four Rivers Public Charter School Enrollment as of November 6, 2012							
Grade	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
# of Stud	36	36	36	34	36	34	212

Mission and Governance

The school's mission reads: "Four Rivers Charter Public School is dedicated to educating young people for lives of learning and service. The school offers a rigorous college preparatory program aligned with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and an emphasis on character development for moral and social responsibility. Three central themes -- nature, technology and community -- guide teaching and learning at the school, engaging students and teachers in a fundamental question of our times: How do we find the healthy, sustainable interrelationship of the natural world, technology in its many forms, and the human community? The school works closely with parents and seeks both to serve and to learn from the many resources of Franklin County."

At the time of the site visit, the Board of Trustees, composed of 11 individuals, was led by a chair, vice-chair, treasurer and secretary. The Board also has three active committees – the finance and facilities committee, the committee on trusteeship and personnel policies, and the accountability and program planning committee. According to Board by-laws, the Board must have a minimum of 10 members and a maximum of 20 members. Since the beginning of the charter term, 13 members have departed from and 13 members have joined the Board.

Renewal Inspection Methodology

The renewal inspection visit team (RSV team) spent three days – November 6-8, 2012 – at Four Rivers Charter Public School. During the visit, the RSV team interviewed the head of school/principal and the director of operations. The RSV team conducted focus groups with the following stakeholders:

- Board of Trustees: The RSV team met with five of the current 11 members who were in attendance. Tenure on the Board ranges from eleven months to five years.
- Administrative Leadership Team (called the Farmhouse Team): The RSV team met with four members of the Farmhouse team: the assistant principal, dean of students, director of academic support and guidance counselor/college placement director. The head of school/principal is typically a member of this team, but chose not to be present at this RSV focus group meeting just in case his presence would inhibit comment.
- Teachers: The RSV team met with three groups of teachers. These groups each had four participants.
- Students: The RSV team met with two groups of six students.
- Parents: The RSV team met with six parents with students currently enrolled in the program. Some parents were new to the school; others had children in the school for over five years.

The RSV team conducted 22 classroom observations over the three-day visit. Classrooms across all levels and content areas were visited. Data from observations were recorded using the MA DESE *Classroom Observation Evidence Worksheet*; the data were compiled and reviewed in the aggregate. Observations lasted a minimum of 20 minutes and a maximum of 45 minutes.

Prior to and during the visit, the RSV team reviewed the following documents:

- 2012 Application for Renewal
- 2011 Annual Report
- 2010 Year Seven Site Visit Report
- Strategic Improvement Plans for 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011
- Common Instructional Practices
- Admin Roles and Responsibilities
- Data Binder, with Federal Program Review, MCAS Item Analysis, EL Reviews, Admin Survey, Fall 2011 Writing Assessment Data, and Teen Health Survey
- Curriculum Binder, with curriculum maps for each subject at each grade level
- Trustee Handbook, with Board Action Plan
- Two Binders of Currents Newsletters 2003-2012
- Head of School Evaluations, July 2012 and August 2011
- Staff Handbook, 2012-13
- Samples of Student Portfolio Binders
- TS Data Collection Binder
- District Accommodation Plan
- Academic Support Decision-Making Protocol

- Climate Survey Results – Staff 2012
- Accountability Plan Performance
- Accountability Plan Data Collection, June 2012
- Tracking Chart for Writing (12th English)
- Tracking Chart for Chemistry of Life (10th Biology)
- Tracking Charter for Progress in Geometry
- Sample Assessment Map (8th Spanish)
- Learning Target Reflection (8th Math)
- Division 3 Accommodation Summary Sheet 12-13
- Common Core Math Learning Targets (grades 6-8)
- Common Core ELA Learning Targets (6-8)
- Assessment Map Template
- Assessment for Learning Overview
- Fall and Spring Club Descriptions
- Social Justice Day Workshop List
- After School Opportunities Fall 2012 and Winter 2012-13
- Service Opportunities List
- Crew Handbook Overview
- Crew Planning Calendar, 10th Grade
- Fiscal Policies and Procedures
- Final School Audit 2012
- Final Foundation Audit 2012
- Vermont Yankee Expedition Outline
- Learning Expedition Checklist
- Learning Expedition Calendar
- Work Life Committee Notes 2011-12
- Work Life Committee Agreements 2011-12
- Student Leadership Committee Notes 2011-12
- Leadership Team Notes 2011-12
- Division 1 Team Meeting Notes 2011-12
- Board of Trustees Profile
- Senior Expedition Guide
- Portfolio Overview
- Passage Guide 2012 (8th Grade)
- Passage Presentation 2012 (10th Grade)
- Weekly Yearlong Schedules
- Fall Intensives 2012 Descriptions
- Core Practices Checklist – revisit Assessment for Learning

Appendix A of this report contains a detailed schedule for the renewal inspection site visit.

This renewal inspection has been conducted pursuant to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education *Charter School Renewal Inspection Protocol*.

Findings

This section presents the renewal inspection team's findings regarding the school's performance relative to the three areas of charter school accountability: faithfulness to charter, academic success, and organizational viability.

A. Faithfulness to Charter

Charter School Performance Criteria: Faithfulness to Charter Topics

1. The school's mission and educational philosophy are clearly evident in the daily operations of the school and described consistently by stakeholders on all levels.

The core tenets of the Four Rivers mission and educational philosophy guide the daily teaching and learning of the school; stakeholders described the mission with clarity and consistency. Participants in the administrative leadership (Farmhouse) team, as well as teacher and parent focus groups, consistently described the mission as educating or preparing students for lives of learning and service, and referenced a shared focus on college preparation. School leaders described the senior seminar as a mission-driven capstone; it provides students with individual college counseling and requires them to design their own personal learning expedition. Students reported that their goal was to become well-rounded members of society, balancing their individuality and their role within a community.

Service learning is emphasized and these experiences differ across divisions. Juniors and seniors (Division 3) are expected to complete a minimum of 20 service hours each year; younger students, in Divisions 1 and 2, have opportunities in their grade levels or crew (advisory) groups. Students reported cleaning up the Green River, helping to build a community garden and teaching first grade students at another school how they constructed kites in science. Leaders described opportunities both within (for younger students) and outside the school community for older students, such as recycling efforts, planning the school's Social Justice Day and voter drives.

The school's education philosophy places value on high quality work and active learning. Standards for high quality work are reflected in several documents related to core practices. These include grading policies, in which rating levels and passing requirements are defined, as well as Habits of Work and Learning (HOWLS) learning targets and rubrics (e.g., for organization and preparation). The RSV team observed teachers showing model work to students and providing opportunities to revise and re-do assignments. For example, a teacher shared exemplary, acceptable and less-than-acceptable examples of a written product.

Active learning was observed by the RSV team in classrooms and was evident in student work projects and written expectations related to learning expeditions and the workshop model's active pedagogy. The head of school/principal emphasized the school's real-world experiences, sharing an example of 9th grade students visiting a farm, taking photos and interviewing the farmer to learn about the distribution of resources. He added that students know they are working toward a specific goal and that they produce artifacts of that process. The learning expedition checklist reviewed reflected aspects of the experiences for students,

such as guiding questions, skill building, connection to standard-based content and skills, community connection, differentiation and final product and culminating event.

Teachers described a host of efforts to educate the whole student and focus on character development, which includes developing relationships in advisory groups, three-day off-site orientations that involve service work, reflection and goal-setting and character virtues-related work. Some teachers described opportunities to support character development through academic content; others spoke more generally about reaching the whole child. Leadership noted the focus on the whole student and the relationships that adults build with students in advisory, through service work and in informal interactions. One specific example of the school's character focus was a visual display that included photos of students who received weekly Polaris awards for demonstrating one of the virtues.

Aspects of the school's central themes of nature, technology and community are clearly evident in the expeditions that are planned by teachers. However, the exploration of the mission's fundamental question about the sustainable interrelationship of the natural world, technology in its many forms and the human community is not as well-defined. Teachers described being encouraged to draw on the three themes during the planning of expeditions and the drafting of curriculum maps. They gave examples of connections made, such as 10th grade students reading Thoreau and talking about nature and technology, a class collecting data about a community, and students studying viruses that may involve engaging an expert in the health field. Despite these examples, the school has not developed a clearly-defined plan to ensure that all students engage with the essential question on at least an annual basis.

2. The school's leadership structure has been stable; roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

School leadership is established and stable. The head of school/principal described successfully consolidating and defining roles as he moved into his current position over the course of his five-year tenure at Four Rivers. He noted that the strengths of the director of operations (who works on finance, financial planning, school operations and with the board), allow him to fully assume the instructional leadership responsibilities. Teachers and parents also reported that the Farmhouse team – provides leadership and models teamwork. This leadership team includes the head of school/principal, the assistant principal, dean of students, director of academic support and college counselor.

The long-term retention of leaders provides a solid foundation for the school. Two members of the Farmhouse team – the assistant principal and the dean of students – have been at the school since it opened in 2002 and developed from founding Assistant Director and teacher to their present positions. The guidance counselor has been at Four Rivers for eight years, starting as a special education teacher and soccer coach; the director of academic support has recently begun her third year.

Leadership roles and responsibilities are clearly documented and communicated. The head of school/principal explained that clarifying roles and responsibilities has been a recent focus as the school matured. Review of documented administrative roles and responsibilities and

summaries of teams and how they function confirmed these efforts to clarify positions and processes. Members of the Farmhouse team reported that the team meets on a weekly basis; they have developed a tool to continually sift tasks and responsibilities into the appropriate job function at each meeting. Members of the Farmhouse team expressed great appreciation for the trust that has developed among them.

3. Four Rivers continues to demonstrate a deep commitment to Expeditionary Learning as its pedagogical model.

All stakeholders reported that Expeditionary Learning (EL) principles form the core pedagogy of the school. The school has followed the EL model since its inception in 2002. EL is a network of 165 elementary, middle, and high schools throughout the country. The EL website and promotional materials describe how the organization provides school leaders and teachers with professional development, curriculum planning resources, and new school structures to boost student engagement, character, and achievement. The model is built upon active, collaborative, interdisciplinary learning, and students and teachers reported that the common instructional model involves active lessons in which students are often encouraged to do original research and fieldwork, assess their own progress toward mastering skills and content, and develop HOWLS. In a focus group, Board members stated that they start every meeting with a reading of an EL core principle; minutes from the past two school years confirmed this. For example, in May 2012, the Chairman called the meeting to order and read Expeditionary Learning Principle #5, “Success and Failure.”

The school incorporates EL structures into its curriculum development and instructional model. Teachers reported that each teacher creates a curriculum map, which follows EL principles of designing learning targets and experiences that allow students to reach these targets. The RSV team reviewed examples of curriculum maps for each teacher, as well as sets of guiding documents found in the staff handbook. The 2012-13 EL calendar indicated that students would participate in at least three expeditions at each grade level. For example, students in the 11th grade recently traveled to Otter River State Park to visit a farm and complete service work. The school’s website chronicles a number of past expeditions, as well as investigations and projects in the curriculum.

The school continues to partner with EL and a consultant supports the work of teachers and leaders. The school has a contract with EL that involves a consultant spending 8 days over the course of the year at the school working with teachers and leaders. Teachers and leaders reported that his work has been primarily focused on helping teachers to craft unit plans for expeditions. The EL consultant also provides an annual implementation review to the school, which includes average ratings of teachers’ self-assessments across a number of power practices and a narrative that includes some analysis and priorities. The school’s assistant principal is also cited by teachers as a resource who helps to develop expeditions.

Progress toward Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures**1. Four Rivers Charter Public School has met seven out of its thirteen measures included in the faithfulness to charter section of its Accountability Plan.**

The Four Rivers Charter Public School Accountability Plan includes five objectives and thirteen measures related to faithfulness to the charter. The school has met seven and not met six of these measures. For two of the measures not met, the school had a structure in place but did not adequately address the school's essential question. For example, culminating projects and portfolios are prevalent but do not always explicitly address the school's essential question. The school did not meet two college measures because it has not had 100% of students applying to college each year and because less than 80% of alumni were enrolled in college 15 months after graduation in the years preceding 2011. More information about the school's success in meeting the objectives and measures contained in its Accountability Plan can be found in Appendix B of this report.

B. Academic Program Success

Charter School Performance Criteria: Academic Program Success Topics

- 1. The school provides teachers with resources and a collection of documented core practices designed to guide long-term instructional planning and support alignment with the central tenets of Expeditionary Learning (EL). Teachers assume ownership over the construction of learning units and daily lessons.**

The school has adequate resources and easily accessed documents to guide instructional planning by teachers. For every subject at every grade level, teachers have created a three-to-four-page curriculum map that includes a summary, standards, major texts and resources, learning targets, major learning experiences and culminating products. The RSV team reviewed curriculum maps for all subjects and grades, and found that there was consistency in the presentation of learning targets, major learning experiences and culminating products. Recently drafted program statements in each subject area were developed, according to the head of school/principal and teachers, as an effort to vertically align content across grades and courses and determine broad learning targets. Each teacher then has the responsibility to create learning expeditions within this framework. As noted in the renewal application and confirmed by teachers, texts and resources are gathered and developed by teachers. Examples of resources for the middle school include Connected Math, Math Topics from Key Curriculum Press, Science Explorer (Prentice Hall) and History Alive. In addition, last year, the 9th-10th grade mathematics teacher piloted the ALEKS online supplementary program and the eleventh grade Algebra 2 class also uses ALEKS. Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces is a web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system.

Well-documented structures and guidance aligned to the central tenets of Expeditionary Learning are readily available to, and referenced by, teachers. The staff handbook, electronically accessible to teachers through the school's Google Docs system, includes items such as: grading practices and policies to support consistency in assessment for learning; information on the workshop model approach as a framework for active pedagogy; samples lessons, EL and school-created outlines, tools and research-based readings to guide differentiated instruction; and checklists, planning documents and overviews for learning expeditions

Teachers reported that in addition to collaborating with their peers, they seek support from the EL consultant and the assistant principal, particularly when planning learning expeditions.

2. While teachers and school leaders indicated that the work of aligning the school's instructional plans with Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the Common Core standards is ongoing, the process and current status is not well-documented or clearly articulated.

In focus groups, the head of school/principal and teachers reported that Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and Common Core standards are used to create learning standards at the school. Teachers described an annual process of developing short- and long-term learning targets from these standards in order to identify the skills and content they want students to learn, and then creating activities for students. While teachers were able to consistently describe a similar process for using standards, there is no documentation of an alignment process used by all. Teachers reported that they were in the process of aligning the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and Common Core standards on an individual basis; they expect to do more work with it in their division teams and during the summer.

Although teachers and leaders referenced Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and Common Core standards, the link between them and schoolwide standards was not documented consistently on curriculum maps. A few maps included this information, but most did not. The head of school/principal explained that Expeditionary Learning has been reviewing the Common Core standards and is in the process of crafting learning target language. He expressed confidence that much alignment already exists at Four Rivers, but indicated that the EL conference in January will provide guidance to schools around Common Core standards.

3. The implementation of instruction observed was generally consistent with the EL guiding documents and stakeholder descriptions of practice provided.

The central principles of Expeditionary Learning embraced by the school include active pedagogy and engaged learning, clear learning targets, assessment for learning and differentiation. These principles of Expeditionary Learning appear to be embraced by teachers and learners at the school.

In 16 of the observed classrooms (n=22), instruction was clearly consistent with the school's description of practice. This was most significantly manifested in the area of active pedagogy and in student engagement in meaningful work. Students at Four Rivers were routinely engaged in purposeful work that demanded higher-order thinking. In 19 of the classrooms observed, students were engaged and participating in learning; instruction fostered higher-order thinking skills in 16 of observed lessons. In one class, for example, students were required to explain various cell functions in writing to their peers in small groups, and also asked to individually share an analogy they created to the entire class. The teacher pushed students to clearly articulate the reasons for choosing particular analogies and challenged inconsistencies or confusing rationale. In another class, a teacher gave students the choice of writing a story or song lyrics that reflected their use of the element of plot.

Learning targets were visible and addressed by the teachers in almost every classroom observed. Teachers in 17 observed lessons (n=22) had learning targets posted on the whiteboard; many teachers referenced them verbally during the lesson and/or on distributed assignment sheets/rubrics. Some examples were: “I can explain the issues that led to the American Revolution;” “I can fluently convert among tables, graphs, equations, words/story/rules;” and “I can establish criteria for an effective research paper.”

Differentiation was evident schoolwide, most typically in the ways teachers offered choices around points of entry and asked students to demonstrate their learning. The RSV team observed a mix of whole class, small group, pair and individual opportunities for learning, with most classes shifting between a few of these during lessons and maintaining a high level of accountable talk throughout. Although most observed instruction addressed primarily visual and auditory modalities, a wider range was considered in the course of a unit. Students were often provided with choices for how they studied or how they presented their learning. For example, students were provided choices of a culminating project in a 9th grade social studies class. Eighth grade students constructed different types of kites with unique messages and designs as the final product of a cross-disciplinary expedition connecting Spanish, humanities and science content. In terms of varying points of entry, teachers were observed implementing Exploration Stations in science and assigning group research projects.

Evidence of daily assessment for learning was present, although limited. Evidence of assessment for learning was most frequently found in written instructional documents such as unit overviews, assessment maps, traditional and project-based assessments and rubrics reviewed by the RSV team, indicating that efforts to evaluate student learning are pre-planned. However, teachers checked for understanding or provided targeted feedback in 50 percent of observed lessons. Positive examples included an entrance ticket to assess understanding of the previous lesson and use of the thumb tool for student self-assessment. However, this type of embedded assessment was not used in half of observed classes.

4. The school has an orderly and respectful environment grounded in a strong community and trusting relationships. Clear expectations for behavior and active adult teaching and modeling support rigorous learning.

The school atmosphere is orderly and respectful; it is a strong community focused on learning. The RSV team viewed common spaces such as the cafeteria and library, and witnessed a number of hallway transitions. Students and teachers interacted frequently in a friendly, informal manner; students moved about the building with purpose. The atmosphere of shared spaces was often lively. Classrooms were generally calm; students rarely presented challenging or off-task behaviors and typically followed instructions given by teachers. Eighty-six percent of lessons observed were characterized by clear routines and respectful tone and behaviors. Advisory periods, known as crew, appeared to be less structured or purposeful, but interactions remained polite and warm.

Stakeholders described an orderly and respectful environment. In a focus group, students expressed appreciation for the rules and norms of the school; they stated that every teacher values their individuality and balances that with a shared focus on community. They

described clubs (e.g., student leadership, drama, garden, journaling), after-school activities (e.g., nature, art, music, sports) and intensives (e.g., rock-climbing) as opportunities to learn together. Teachers reported having many opportunities to develop relationships with students; in particular, teachers valued the Monday staff discussions focused on students, which helped them to gather a range of perspectives on individual students and strategize to support learning and functioning at school. In a focus group, parents confirmed the high value placed on relationships, reporting that the school supported their students in many different ways.

The most significant and comprehensive way that the Four Rivers staff creates the conditions for rigorous learning is by establishing structures for students to learn and interact that mirror the ones they work in as adults. The school attributes its relentless focus on high-quality work to its commitment to teaching, upholding and assessing HOWLs. References to these expectations can be found throughout the school, on progress reports and on the summary of qualifications for honors and high honors. Aspects of HOWLs are directly taught by crew advisors and integrated into rubrics for culminating projects. Another way that adults and students promote high quality work is through engaging in a process of personal goal setting, and work toward those goals over time in small peer groups – crew for students, rotating peer coaching teams for teachers. On the 2012 school climate survey, 89 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed to an item about teachers having strong voice; this is demonstrated in their participation in teams on division and leadership levels. Students have similar opportunities to contribute to idea generation and decision making. The student leadership team meeting minutes closely resembled the work/life committee minutes. Participating in events like Social Justice Day gave students opportunities to develop and facilitate all workshops.

5. Teachers receive feedback on their instruction from the head of school/principal and are evaluated based on a range of data sources.

The head of school/principal provides instructional support to individual teachers through cycles of mini-observations and immediate feedback. The head of school/principal uses Kim Marshall's framework for continuously analyzing learning (as opposed to periodic evaluation). The head of school/principal has used Marshall's tools and methods for frequent, informal classroom visits followed by candid feedback. He reported conducting approximately 12-to-14 rounds with each teacher over the course of the year, and setting a goal for himself for at least 75 percent of the feedback to be face-to-face (in addition to emailing notes to teachers). Teachers across focus groups confirmed that he visits their classrooms weekly and stated that he focuses on engagement. Teachers also noted that he looks for learning targets and aspects of teaching and learning related to their beginning-of-year goals and that the feedback he offers feels nonthreatening.

Teachers develop goals and, based on mini-observations and occasionally other data sources, are evaluated annually. The Staff Evaluation Policies document included in the staff handbook lists goal setting, mini- and formal observations, instructional planning documents and student survey results as aspects of teachers' performance assessment, as well as notices

of concern or improvement plans that may exist. The RSV team was provided with sample teacher performance reviews that included a page that documents the annual goals teachers establish for themselves each year, a page of evidence collected during mini-observations, and pre-observations and evidence captured from one formal observation.

Teachers all set goals although it is unclear that improvement is consistently measured. Examples of goals that teachers shared in focus groups included: “Learn more about executive functioning;” and “Getting really explicit about how I teach analysis – content, knowledge, significance and incorporate that all into writing assessments.” These goals are focused on central components of instruction and teachers articulated how they work with the head of school/principal to continually improve. At the same time, the goals lack measurement other than mini-observation summary to determine success/completion. Results from the 2012 school climate survey, completed by all teachers, indicated that 70.5 percent of respondents agreed that goal setting, mini observations and the performance review were helpful to their professional growth this year. The survey also had two questions about the evaluation system; almost all respondents (94.5 percent) agreed that it holds them accountable; 70.5 percent agreed that it helps them improve their teaching. Although this teacher feedback is positive, the effectiveness of these efforts in improving instructional practice is not otherwise measured or well-documented.

6. Professional development is differentiated to meet the needs of teachers.

School leaders reported that, given the complexity of the Expeditionary Learning approach and the range of teacher experience at the school (1-10 years), differentiation of professional learning is necessary. The head of school/principal reported that the faculty consists of both new teachers and veterans, and that their knowledge and skill levels – particularly related to Expeditionary Learning – vary widely. He further stated that planning for their professional development is further challenged by the depth and breadth of knowledge required to become an effective EL teacher. EL has 39 elements, from which the school has prioritized eight core practices:

- A. Assessment for Learning
- B. Crew
- C. Differentiated Instruction
- D. HOWLS
- E. Learning Expeditions
- F. Quality and Craftsmanship
- G. School-Wide Learning Targets
- H. The Workshop Model

The head of school/principal, the Farmhouse team and teachers discussed professional development at Four Rivers as being, for the most part, related to EL. The school has a long-term relationship with its EL school designer, who began co-teaching with and directly training teachers since the founding of the school, and continues to be present at the school on a monthly basis, supporting the work of teams as they plan projects and expeditions.

Teachers reported that the function of this consultant, and how it has matured over time, was influenced by teacher input.

Schoolwide professional development structures are well established and collaboration and peer support systems are valued. To deepen the practice of Expeditionary Learning and other aspects of teaching, the school has established an annual summer institute. Teachers reported that at the summer institute, prior to the start of each school year, they design their expedition plans for the year, participate in trainings to address specific topics such as critical thinking, or extend their expertise by focusing more closely on a core practice.

The school also has a weekly vehicle for professional development. Students are released at 1:30 p.m. every Wednesday; the staff works and meets in various ways between 2:30 and 5:00 p.m., including division teams, full faculty and – on a monthly basis – peer coaching teams. Leadership reported that this time is used, as appropriate, for curriculum development and professional development trainings. All teachers participate in peer coaching based on a cycle each term. At the time of the site visit four groups were formulated based on self-assessments, and the cycle is planned for four-to-five weeks with weekly 90 minute meetings. Once the groups decide on a common improvement goal, teachers may share student work artifacts, conduct or experience peer observations and feedback, or be videotaped to examine their practice.

Results from the 2012 school climate survey indicated that staff members feel that the time on Wednesday afternoons is generally used effectively. Seventy-seven percent of the staff agreed that it was a productive time for planning, while 64.7 percent believed it was productive for professional learning.

In addition, teachers reported other types of support at the school. Teachers go to colleagues in their division, in special education, and in other divisions for resources, strategies and suggestions. Teachers new to the school receive mentoring. The head of school/principal also stated that the dean of students supports teachers with behavior and discipline, at times completing observations and offering feedback. Also, the assistant principal provides planning guidance to teachers constructing expeditions or focusing on the arts.

Overall, the approach to, and process for, providing professional development is comprehensive and relevant. Teachers and leaders appreciate a very collegial, team-oriented environment. However, no tracking systems or objective measures of effectiveness beyond self-evaluation are used at the school. Therefore, the degree to which these efforts improve instructional practice, and subsequently influence student learning and achievement, is unclear.

7. Stakeholders are aware of performance gaps on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS), particularly in 7th and 8th grade mathematics. The school is currently questioning whether to make modifications to instruction or curriculum in the 7th and 8th grades based on MCAS results.

Stakeholders are aware of challenges and strengths of student MCAS performance. Representatives from the Board of Trustees spoke to the RSV team in detail about the MCAS

results. They reported that they review the scores and have particular awareness of the middle school mathematics results. A trustee who serves on the accountability and program planning committee described looking over data and then presenting it to the board in different ways. For example, board meeting minutes reflected that the full board has reviewed mathematics results for the past two annual retreats, which occur in April. In these sessions, the board specifically questioned students' mathematics scores and how the school would respond to 7th grade mathematics performance.

At the time of the site visit, the board, school leader and faculty reported that they were not sure if they would change the mathematics curriculum or instruction based on the MCAS performance of 2012. In previous years, the school had modified its course structure to improve mathematics results, creating a "mathletics" class to shore up students' skills, for example. This year, the board, leadership and staff looked at how their 10th grade students performed as 7th grade students on the mathematics portion of the MCAS; they found that by 10th grade, students were proficient (86 percent proficient or advanced in 2012 with a 75.5 student growth percentile [SGP]). While each stakeholder group acknowledged that they wanted their 7th grade students to perform better on the mathematics portion of the MCAS, each group expressed a desire to strive for improved performance without sacrificing what the school represents, knowing these students are likely to demonstrate improvements over time and earn strong results by high school.

The head of school/principal also reported the dialogue with the board described above, noting that this area of average performance and limited evidence of growth had contributed to their identification as a Level 2 school. Although he noted that he announced to the staff that their shared goal is to become a Level 1 school, he understands that stakeholders at all levels are committed to deepening EL practices and are concerned about effectively balancing these two school priorities. He shared with the RSV team that EL is "...dedicated to showing success on traditional measures."

Close study of broader trends across grades and years, as well as detailed item and subgroup analysis, has been performed for MCAS assessments. The renewal application presented overall composite performance index scores, highlights and disaggregated data tables for each grade. In addition, a data binder available at the school held a document entitled, *MCAS Analysis and Action, 2012-13 Item Analysis*. Review of the binder indicated that the analysis identifies questions and standards on which students did not demonstrate mastery, as well as action steps.

Teachers reported that they use this information to adjust the pacing of their curriculum – for example, spending more time on an area such as probability. At the same time, teachers reported that it takes significant time for students to adjust to the way learning happens at Four Rivers. Often, they added, this means building skills and stamina for homework and revising for high quality products. They expressed a desire to acclimate students to the Four Rivers community and focus on the EL approach to learning, working on skills within that framework.

8. Teachers have significant autonomy in the choice and creation of learning assessments, evidenced by a wide variety of formal and informal tools. The school is in the early stages of establishing consistent expectations for developing rigorous and appropriate assessments and providing guidance around using the results to advance instruction.

Teachers have significant autonomy in the choice and creation of learning assessments, evidenced by a wide variety of formal and informal tools. During classroom observations, the RSV team witnessed teachers sharing various types of summative and formative assessments with students. These included rubrics for culminating projects and short quizzes to assess understanding of the previous day's learning target.

The head of school/principal shared the guiding documents to support assessment for learning, which were included in the staff handbook. He reinforced the student and teacher reports by describing teacher and peer feedback and units being grounded in rubrics. He acknowledged that although there has been some work in subject areas to define broader outcomes, there is more work to be done in the development of assessments and the use of results.

The school is in the early stages of establishing consistent expectations for developing rigorous and appropriate assessments and providing guidance around using the results to advance instruction. The data binder included a set of pie charts that represented ratings assigned to fall writing prompts in 2011 and 2012. These ratings are based on the 6+1 traits of writing, and represent the only common assessment administered at the school. Similar to the approach to the MCAS data, these data were analyzed and presented well – but how and when this information was used by teachers or leaders was not documented. The head of school/principal mentioned the intent to establish writers' profiles.

The RSV team also reviewed sample assessment maps – a new process designed to encourage planning for assessment. The head of school/principal indicated that assessment maps vary in design and content and are not yet a universal practice at the school. There is a template / exemplar but teachers are not yet required to use this exact form. One sample, presented as an exemplar, included standards, learning targets and corresponding formative and summative assessments. These included exit tickets, lab reports, a performance assessment and a traditional unit test.

Teachers and students described a range of assessments used at the school, including formative assessments, (e.g., homework assignments) and final assessments that may take the form of tests, projects, products or performance assessments, such as Socratic seminars or speeches. Teachers reported that students are given many opportunities to demonstrate knowledge; they provide rubrics to students at the outset so students understand their expectations. Students stated that they appreciated that they were given options for some projects and were able to describe the use of rubrics in each of their classes.

Progress toward Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures

1. Four Rivers Charter Public School has met 11 out of its 15 measures included in the academic program success section of its Accountability Plan.

The Four Rivers Accountability Plan includes four objectives and 15 (initially 16) measures related to academic program success. The school has met 11 and has not met four of these measures. One measure, based on the social studies MCAS, is not applicable because the state has discontinued administering the assessment.

More information about the school's success in meeting the objectives and measures contained in its Accountability Plan can be found in Appendix B of this report.

C. Organizational Viability

Charter School Performance Criteria: Organizational Viability Topics

- 1. The school is financially viable as a result of conservative fiscal planning and oversight. This careful planning and consequent financial savings will enable the school to entirely cover the costs of a facility expansion project that will include the design and construction of an additional two classrooms.**

The RSV team reviewed independent auditor reports on Four Rivers financial statements covering the fiscal years ending June 30, 2010; June 30, 2011; and June 30, 2012. According to these statements, the school and its component unit – the Four Rivers Educational Foundation, Inc. – has achieved a surplus in each of the past three fiscal years and had combined unrestricted net assets of \$1,153,434 at the end of 2012. At the time of the site visit, it was determined that the school had 4.8 months of cash on hand for the current school year. (This ratio is determined by the formula: cash and cash equivalents / ((Expenses-depreciation)/12)).

The school has planned its budgets conservatively and managed its finances effectively. During the previous three years of the current charter term, the school has consistently operated on a balanced budget, with revenues exceeding expenditures. The head of school/principal and the director of operations described how they have conservatively budgeted in order to achieve a surplus. For example, when planning for the upcoming fiscal year, the school will discount the projected per-pupil revenue projection by three percent and assume a slightly lower enrollment (by two or three students) than anticipated. As a result, there was a surplus of \$164,697 in fiscal year 2011 and \$82,289 in fiscal year 2012. The school maintains a line of credit with a local bank; leaders reported that it had not been used in the recent charter term.

The director of operations reported that he has developed several tools to more accurately predict expenses. For example, the director of operations, head of school and finance and facilities committee of the board begin planning by looking at a five-year projection. This projection includes several variables and assumptions that are calculated based on five- or three-year historic averages. The director of operations also takes into account staff compensation, which was approximately 70 percent of expenses in fiscal years 2011 and 2012, and reported monitoring the salary schedules of the six surrounding communities to ensure that the school can maintain its commitment to meeting the average salary scale of these neighboring school systems.

There is also strong evidence of careful ongoing oversight of the school's revenues and expenses. Each month, the facilities and finance committee of the board receives a packet with a detailed income and expenses explanation for the month, as well as a year-to-date analysis. The RSV team reviewed sample financial statements prepared by the school for the 2011-12 school year and found that these statements were clearly presented and annotated with footnotes to highlight for the board when line items needed attention – for example, when a one-time expense for a repair occurred or when a savings had been achieved. The

director of operations also provided several examples of ongoing attention to decreasing expenses, such as installing CO2 monitors in the classrooms to more accurately and efficiently manage ventilation rates.

The Four Rivers Educational Foundation, Inc. owns the school's facilities and is currently looking to add two classrooms to the campus. The school has financed the purchase and construction of its facilities through a USDA fixed-rate loan, but it has saved money to fully fund the additional classrooms. At the time of the visit, an architect had been engaged through the DCAM process; the school was investigating several options for where to add the two classrooms. In a focus group, board members reported that the staff had been surveyed and had worked with the head of school to prioritize needs; also, the additional classroom space would alleviate some of the challenges of scheduling.

2. The school has an effective system of financial oversight and fiscal controls; however, its Fiscal Policies and Procedures Guide has not been recently updated.

In 2010, 2011 and 2012, the independent auditor reported no issues of compliance or internal control. The head of school/principal and director of operations reported that there had been no management letters during the current charter term.

The Fiscal Policies and Procedures Guide has not been recently updated. The head of school/principal and director of operations reported that the principal has sole check-signing authority and signs all checks. The RSV team reviewed the school's Fiscal Policies and Procedures Guide, dated June 16, 2003. Control item 205 states, "To properly segregate duties within Four Rivers Charter Public School, the President, the Treasurer of the Board and the Executive Director are the only individuals with signatory authority and are responsible for authorizing all cash transactions. Individual checks greater than \$5,000 will require dual signatures prior to check issuance." While the RSV team did not audit financial processes and procedures, it was reported that other controls were in place, such as the fact that the office manager holds petty cash and accounts for student club payments and other such transactions before transferring this to the director of operations for review and bank deposit.

The process for purchasing was understood by stakeholders. Teachers and administrators described a similar series of steps for requesting expenditures. They described a system that begins with an email to the head of school/principal and director of operations. The head of school/principal reviews each request and approves or denies the request based on his judgment of whether it is mission-aligned. School administrators described a common process for receiving and paying for materials and supplies. This process includes the director of operations' role in matching invoices to purchase orders and reviewing for accuracy.

3. The Four Rivers Board of Trustees has fulfilled its governance obligations through careful planning and oversight. It has governed the school through annual plans and careful oversight. The board has provided effective feedback to the school leader and has analyzed its own performance.

The RSV team reviewed board meeting notes from June 2010 through July 2012 and interviewed five of the current board members, including the chair, secretary and treasurer. Board members provided examples of effective governance practices, such as providing oversight of accountability measures, management of, and feedback to, the school leader, and regular attention to academic and fiscal performance data.

At the time of the site visit, the Board of Trustees included 11 members, all of whom are completing staggered three-year terms. The school's bylaws, last updated in the fall of 2011, specify a board of at least 10 but no more than 20 members and include a term limit of three successive terms (nine years) before cycling off the board for at least a year. In a focus group, board members reported that it recently elected a staff member and an alumnus of the school to serve as trustees with voting rights. The board has a board profile that describes characteristics of the current board, as well as desired characteristics, so they can find and vet new candidates with the appropriate skills.

The board has three active committees – the finance and facilities committee, the committee on trusteeship and personnel policies, and the accountability and program planning committee – which meet monthly. The full board also meets on a monthly basis; during the 2011-12 school year, the board achieved a quorum at each meeting.

The board has an annual plan for its work and a regular structure that it follows each month. The board's action plan for the year lists the key tasks for each committee as well as for the head of school/principal and full board. The board members interviewed provided a copy of this plan and show how, for example, the accountability and program planning committee has a deadline to present MCAS data on October 15 for discussion and a deadline of providing next year's Student Handbook revisions to the board on April 15.

Each monthly full board meeting includes four common agenda items. The first section of each meeting includes a review of the previous minutes, as well as a member reading one of the Expeditionary Learning principles. The second agenda item is a chairman's report in which the chair comments on the board's action plan or on upcoming items. The third item is a principal's report, in which the head of school/principal provides an update on enrollment, academic data and school cultural elements. The data that accompany the principal's report show ongoing charts of disciplinary incidents and responses and enrollment, as well as event-based updates (e.g., a sample of his comments to teachers during observations). The fourth item includes reports from each of the three committees.

In the focus group with the board, it was evident that members were familiar with the day-to-day workings of the school and were very clear that their role was to engage in oversight, not management. Board members spoke of upcoming visiting days in which they were

encouraged to visit campus and interact with students and teachers. The board members described these days as educational for them so that they could effectively advocate for and govern the school. In addition to these days at the school, the board described that their annual retreat in April is a time for deeper investigation of the school. Minutes from the past two annual retreats show that the board focused on MCAS data and mathematics teaching in 2011 and Expeditionary Learning in 2012.

The board has created five-year and annual plans. The school's previous strategic plan was written in 2008; recently, the board made a decision to establish a new set of five-year goals. The areas of priority for the board in the next five years include raising MCAS performance, advancing teaching and learning, facilities improvement and board diversity. As a complement to these overarching priorities, the head of school/principal developed a School Improvement Plan (SIP) with school staff that is voted on by the board. Samples of annual SIPs were submitted in the school's renewal application. In the 2011-12 school year, for example, the school was working on "...continu[ing] to ensure effective support for instruction" and, specifically, a "...successful implementation of mini-observation process and use of the Kim Marshall rubrics for teaching."

The annual goals provide a starting point for the head of school/principal's annual goals and evaluations. For example, in 2011-12, the head of school/principal's goals included successful implementation of the school improvement plan, as well as other operational items such as maintaining full enrollment. The monthly principal's report provided the board with an enrollment snapshot, as well as two updates on implementing the mini-observation process for teachers. The RSV team reviewed two years of head of school/principal reviews and found each to contain a similar array of tools: there was a self-assessment of progress against annual goals, as well as a set of survey results from stakeholders (teachers, parents, students). The full board weighed in on his performance; the committee on trustees and personnel policies summed up the evaluation and themes from the data in an overall review.

4. The school has reached its maximum enrollment and strives to maintain a cohort of 36 students per grade level.

School enrollment has increased from 193 to 205 to 208 students over the past three years. The school's enrollment cap is currently 212 students. The board monitors enrollment on a monthly basis; maintaining a stable enrollment has been an explicit goal of the head of school/principal. The school's leaders reported that the school accepts students through the 12th grade. In addition, the school has had super seniors in each of the past three years – that is, students who stay beyond their current year to fulfill graduation requirements. At the time of the site visit, there were 209 students enrolled and 37 students on the waitlist.

The school is close to its enrollment cap and has submitted a Charter Amendment Request to increase the school's enrollment cap to 220, allowing for the possibility of 36 students in each grade, plus up to four super seniors. The current school facilities are able to accommodate this increase; the school intends to add two classrooms in the near future to allow for effective programming. Current enrollment and the proposed maximum enrollment are described in the following table.

Current		
Grade	Enrollment	Maximum
7	36	36
8	36	36
9	36	36
10	34	36
11	36	36
12	<u>33</u>	<u>40</u>
sum:	211	220

- 5. The school leader, with the Farmhouse team, has established clear processes for staff members to communicate and address concerns, as well as protocols for decision-making.**

Commonly understood structures exist for communicating with, seeking input from, and raising issues to different stakeholders at the school. Leaders and teachers described functioning teams and commonly understood processes. The Farmhouse team, which meets weekly, includes the head of school/principal, assistant principal, academic support director, and dean of students, with the director of operations and registrar. The leadership team, which meets bi-weekly, consists of the first four instructional leaders from the Farmhouse team and a teacher from each division who has been elected as the teacher leader by their peers. The work life committee involves the head of school/principal, as well as an elected teacher, teacher's assistant, and non-teaching staff member, and meets on a monthly basis. Division team meetings occur bi-weekly and subject area teams meet approximately three times per year.

The purpose, reporting schedules and team member responsibilities are articulated in a series of documents in the staff handbook. A sample of meeting agendas reviewed by the RSV team indicated routines for updates, discussion and communication among teams. For instance, late April and early May division meeting notes included kudos and concerns, updates and announcements, lists of items to bring forward to the leadership team or work life committee. Leadership team meeting notes included kudos and concerns, a calendar update, and ideas and actions that asked for division input.

Distinct mechanisms exist for making decisions. Stakeholders could clearly articulate how and at what level different decisions were made. The staff handbook includes a decision-making policy overview that presents four quadrants of decision-making at Four Rivers; final determinations may be made solely by the administration, by the administration with input, collaboratively, or through a process of delegation. In focus groups, teachers referenced the above documents and provided examples of decisions made on different levels. They noted that some decisions may be made more informally and the process may look different across divisions but, typically, adjustments are made based on discussions, or a series of conversations, among teachers and, then, with leaders.

6. The school has a thorough annual planning cycle, gathering input from multiple sources and stakeholders, resulting in an annual School Improvement Plan that guides the work of school leadership.

School leaders actively and frequently gather input from various sources and stakeholders throughout the year. The head of school/principal reported that this annual process begins in January, when he and the assistant principal travel to the EL leadership retreat and spend significant time brainstorming, planning and discussing needs for the coming year. The Farmhouse team reported that they develop a list of issues, based on suggestions from staff, the school climate surveys from students, parents and staff. This list is fed back through the faculty twice, for input and adjustments; the head of school/principal then categorizes and combines items to produce the School Improvement Plan.

This process was confirmed by teachers in focus groups, who referenced its early stages as a compilation of ideas from all stakeholders. The articulation of the school improvement process by multiple stakeholders, as well as minutes from various meetings, provided evidence that school leaders encourage and expect continuous reflection around teaching and learning, and that group and team discussions have influenced program changes and developments. The school has made significant changes in the mathematics curriculum, according to teachers, including the implementation and subsequent tweaking of ALEKS in the high school, the shift away from Mathletics in the middle school and the focus on in-class differentiation and the piloting of an advanced mathematics class to better engage students.

The annual School Improvement Plans guide the work of leadership in a continuous manner. The head of school/principal presents the School Improvement Plan to the Board of Trustees in August each year and provides snapshots of progress at the January and April meetings. This was well-documented in board minutes, referenced on the 2012-13 Board Action plan, and mentioned by trustees who attended the focus group.

Leaders reported that they create a summer task list at the end of each school year that reflects the larger initiatives from the School Improvement Plan that are within their individual domains. The dean of students shared his work to continually improve crew, noting that currently, the eight-minute morning check-in has more structure this year, due to his summer planning. He reported creating tracking structures for this year and working toward creating curriculum maps for crew in the future.

7. Families are highly satisfied and have substantial opportunities for involvement in their children's learning and within the school community.

Families are highly satisfied with the school. Four Rivers conducts an annual school climate survey each spring. Parent responses were consistently high across a number of items throughout the years of the charter term. Most recently, for example, in the 2012 survey in which 31 percent of parents responded, 91 percent of parents were satisfied with faculty support to students, 92 percent were satisfied with faculty communication, and 87 percent were satisfied with the level of academic challenge to students. The response rate for the survey was 56 percent.

In a focus group, parents expressed appreciation about how their children are developing as learners. Parents also reported that teachers develop close relationships with students and are accessible through weekly or daily emails, at activities and events, or during drop-off and pick-up times.

The school provides families with a range of opportunities for involvement. Four Rivers engages families on multiple levels; student-led conferences occur twice a year and students also make Presentations of Learning, which parents are welcomed to attend. There is an active Family Council that holds meetings on a monthly basis and provides a comprehensive list of volunteer and involvement opportunities, with purpose descriptions for each, on their website page. Longer term commitments include: class parent, parent community building team, parent workshops, parent socials, communications, arts enrichment team, garden crew, with one-time events like the new family dinner, alumni brunch and graduation welcome shorter-term support. In addition, two board members are also parents of current or former students.

8. The school has created and maintains a safe environment for students by instilling a strong sense of community and implementing a developmentally appropriate, balanced approach to discipline.

The school's community is safe, with the goals of developing self-respect and demonstrating compassion for others woven into the daily fabric of the school. The RSV team witnessed a number of hallway transitions and non-instructional activities, such as crew and meals in the cafeteria. During these times, there appeared to be a relaxed, warm informality to peer and student/staff interactions. In 86 percent of classrooms observed, the RSV team saw clear routines and respectful tones and behaviors; in the remaining classrooms, it was evident that clear routines had not yet been established, although students interacted with each other and with the teacher in respectful tones.

Some teachers reported developing close relationships with their students whom they get to know over two years. They felt that the small school atmosphere allowed them to support the development of character and intervene when needed. In focus groups, teachers spoke about the structures at the school that support social and emotional safety. They frequently review student goals and write and rewrite student success plans with student support team members and have weekly student review meetings in divisions. There are schoolwide structures to foster a strong school culture, such as the focus on the character virtue of compassion and awards given to students who exhibit this virtue, routine crew (advisory) meetings and two community meetings each week. Students also recognized that their experiences in crew and relationships with staff members contributed to their sense of security and comfort. They felt encouraged to talk to teachers about issues related and unrelated to school.

Parents and students described the school as a place where everyone is accepted. Parents stated that because the school environment is judgment-free and students are taught to work together, they naturally demonstrate these characteristics outside of school. Students also experience the school as accepting, providing examples like a coming-out day and

workshops for Social Justice Day, created by and for students, that will focus on topics such as body image, bullying, religious acceptance and diversity.

The school's approach to discipline integrates developmentally appropriate consequences and opportunities for reflection and learning. The 2012 school climate survey results indicated a high confidence level around discipline at the school; 100 percent of staff agreed/strongly agreed that policies clearly describe appropriate behavior, and 89 percent believe behavior expectations are clear.

The school works to maintain a balance of proactive and reactive efforts. The renewal application noted that the dean of students is charged with promoting a safe community and responding to concerns. He was observed sitting just inside the entrance of the high school each morning the RSV team was at the school, addressing students who arrived late. Review of a sample discipline report indicated that the school has a detailed incident tracking system. It included one student's list of referral that captured information about the reporter, violation, parent contact and intervention, incident date, time and location and level of offense.

Parents expressed support for the school's approach to discipline. They described teachers as having high expectations, while they simultaneously allow them to be kids. Parents shared examples of their own children or others who were involved in situations that required the dean's involvement. They reported being immediately contacted and stated that the school administered consequences that held the students accountable and implemented a process of resolution that engaged all parties.

9. The school facility suits the needs of the school; buildings are well maintained and safe.

The school's facilities include three buildings on an acre property. The administrative office is an old farmhouse that was built in the eighteenth century and includes a common area that is used by students and faculty. The middle school building and the high school building are designed to resemble barn-like structures; buildings and grounds are well maintained.

The RSV team observed that the physical plant is secure although not locked at all entrances. There are signs on the entrance for the middle and high school buildings that ask visitors to check in at the front office, but doors are unlocked. Students and guests can freely enter any of the three buildings. Team members reviewed occupancy and fire permits, as well as the school's emergency and crisis procedure protocols.

The exterior and interior of the school buildings are very well maintained, clean and bright; the hallways reflect student activities and celebrate authentic work products. Classrooms are adequate for class sizes of 18 students and are well supplied. The two floors of each school building are handicapped accessible through use of a large elevator.

10. Although evidence of formal dissemination is currently limited, the school has made efforts on various levels to engage and share practices with other schools.

The school has developed relationships with local school leaders, as well as schools within the Expeditionary Learning Network; it has hosted visitors to the school. The head of school/principal participates in a group for area principals that meets on a bi-monthly basis. Within this cohort experience, he reported, he has informal opportunities to share strong practices from Four Rivers. He is aware of one school that has started an advisory program. He has extended an invitation to the leader to come to Four Rivers to observe crew and has hosted another to observe the implementation of the ALEKS supplementary mathematics program. Four Rivers has also established relationships with other EL schools in the same regional network (e.g., Codman Academy, Christa McCauliffe and Conservatory Lab).

The school has formally shared its practices at EL conferences. Both the head of school/principal and teachers participating in focus groups described opportunities they have had to present their practices at EL regional retreats and national conferences. Teachers explained that at least three teachers attend the EL national conference each year and that these are typically newer teachers. Other teachers are encouraged to attend and present at the conference; teachers and leadership reported that there is a presentation made approximately every other year.

Progress toward Accountability Plan Objectives and Measures

1. Four Rivers Charter Public School has met 11 out of its 13 measures included in the organizational viability section of its Accountability Plan.

The Four Rivers Accountability Plan includes four objectives and 13 measures related to organizational viability. The school has met 11 and has not met two of these measures. The second measure in Objective 12 was determined to be met based on strong evidence that the Board of Trustees is conducting appropriate oversight and evaluation of the school leader. However, the specific process of determining if and how goals were met was not clearly documented or described by the Board of Trustees.

More information about the school's success in meeting the objectives and measures contained in its Accountability Plan can be found in Appendix B of this report.

Appendix A: Renewal Inspection Site Visit Schedule

Appendix A: Renewal Inspection Site Visit Schedule

Day 1: Tuesday, November 6, 2012

7:15	Team Meeting		
7:30			
8:00	Head of School Interview and Tour		
8:30			
9:00	Administrator Interview		
9:30			
10:00	Classroom Visit		
10:30	Calibrate Classroom Visit(s)		
11:00	Classroom Visit	Classroom Visit	Classroom Visit
11:30	Classroom Visit	Classroom Visit	Classroom Visit
12:00	Lunch		
12:30			
1:00	Operations Focus Group	Teacher Focus Group	
1:30			
2:00	Classroom Visit	Classroom Visit	Classroom Visit
2:30	Classroom Visit	Classroom Visit	Classroom Visit
3:00	Teacher Focus Group		Classroom Visit
3:30			
4:00	Team Deliberation		
4:30			
5:00			
5:30			

Day 2: Wednesday, November 7, 2012

7:15	Team Meeting		
7:30	Leadership Check-In		
8:00	Board Focus Group		Class Visit
8:30			Class Visit
9:00	Class Visit	Class Visit	Class Visit
9:30			Class Visit
10:00	Class Visit	Class Visit	Class Visit
10:30	Student Focus Groups		Document Review
11:00			Document Review
11:30	Lunch		
12:00	Lunch		
12:30	Document Review	Student Focus Group	
1:00	Class Visit		
1:30	Teacher Focus Group		Class Visit
2:00			Class Visit
2:30	Class Visit	Class Visit	Class Visit
3:00	Team Deliberation		
3:30			
4:00			
4:30			
5:00			
5:30			
6:00	Departure		

Day 3: Thursday, November 8, 2012

7:00	Team Meeting		
7:30	Leadership Check-In		
8:00	Teacher Focus Groups		
8:30			
9:00	Class Visit	Accountability Plan Review	
9:30	Class Visit		
10:00	Class Visit	Class Visit	Class Visit
10:30	Document Review	Document Review	Document Review
11:00	Document Review	Class Visit	Class Visit
11:30	Accountability Plan Review	Teacher Focus Group	
12:00	Accountability Plan Review		
12:30	Lunch		
1:00			
1:30	Team Deliberation		
2:00			
2:30			
3:00			
3:30			
4:00			
4:30			
5:00			
5:30			
6:00			

Appendix B. Accountability Plan Performance

I. Faithful to Charter:

Is the School Faithful to the Terms of its Charter?

<u>OBJECTIVE 1: Themes: Nature, Technology, Community</u>		
Four Rivers Charter Public School will use the themes of nature, technology, and community to engage and advance student learning.		
Measure	Performance	Notes/Questions
<p>Measure: All students will complete individual or group projects that address the essential question in the school’s mission: <i>How do we find the healthy, sustainable interrelationship of the natural world, technology in its many forms, and the human community?</i> 90% of these projects will be of <i>Meeting</i> quality, as judged by the evaluations of experts, visitors to the school, and/or faculty members who do not teach the students whose projects are being evaluated.</p>	Not Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data presented in the renewal application indicated the following percentages of students completed individual or group projects: 08/9 97 %, 09/10 96 %, 10/11 97 %, 11/12 88 % • For the projects that were completed, the head of school/principal reported that they do not consistently address the essential question in the school’s mission.
<p>Measure: All students, as part of their annual portfolio, will reflect on their engagement with the school themes and the essential question in the mission. 90% of the students will meet this criterion in the assessment of their portfolio.</p>	Not Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data presented in the renewal application indicated the following percentages of students completed a reflection on engagement with school themes: 9/10 83 %, 09/10 88 %, 10/11 70 %, 11/12 74 %. • The head of school/principal indicated that all students have portfolios; however the expectations, structures and content vary between Divisions. Consequently, the criterion of this measure is not consistently assessed. Samples of portfolios reviewed provided confirmation.

<u>OBJECTIVE 2: Character & Community</u>		
Four Rivers Charter Public School will engage students in character growth and service to the school and the community.		
Measure	Performance	Notes/Questions
<p>Measure: 90% of students will engage in effective goal setting for personal and academic growth, as documented in advisory records, student-led conferences and portfolio reflections.</p>	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data presented in the renewal application indicated the following percentages of students engaged in effective goal setting: 09/10 91 %, 09/10 92 %, 10/11 99 %, 11/12 99 % ▪ Individual goal setting is documented in portfolios, advisory records, student-led conferences. ▪ Crew (advisory) Handbook includes samples forms for setting SMART goals and tracking progress on those goals, ▪ Crew Standards note that students set and monitor progress on goals.
<p>Measure: An annual survey of parents and students will document that at least 75% of respondents believe the school helps students to grow personally and develop strength of character.</p>	Not Met	<p>Data presented in the renewal application, and team reviewed specific survey results. While over 90% of parents agreed with this statement, slightly less than 75% of students did.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 08/09: 91 % parents, N/A student data • 09/10: 91 % parents, 67 % students • 10/11: 99 % parents, 71 % students • 11/12: 91 % parents, 72 % students
<p>Measure: 90% of students will meet their requirements for service to the school and the community, as documented in advisory records and portfolio reflections</p>	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data presented in the renewal application indicated the following percentages of students meet this requirement: 08/09 91 % 09/10 99 %, 10/11 83 %, 11/12 96 %. • 7th/8th graders engage in service projects, but documentation is inconsistent • 9th/10th graders do service through Crew (advisory) • 11th/12th graders are required to completed 20 hours a year of individual community service.

<u>OBJECTIVE 3: College and Post-Secondary Planning</u>		
Four Rivers Charter Public School will support students in applying to and entering college or preparing for other post-secondary opportunities for learning or service.		
Measure	Performance	Notes/Questions
Measure: All 12 th grade students will develop postsecondary plan that includes career and education goals.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data presented in the renewal application indicated the following percentages of students developed postsecondary plans: 09/10 100 %, 09/10 100 %, 10/11 100 %, 11/12 100 % Plans are documented, and available for review within graduation portfolios.
Measure: The school will guide all 12 th grade students in applying to at least one college.	Not Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data presented in the renewal application indicated the following percentages of students applied to at least one college: 09/10 86 %, 09/10 88 %, 10/11 88 %, 11/12 89 %
Measure: At least 80% of graduating seniors will matriculate to a college or other post-secondary educational setting of their choice within 15 months after graduation from Four Rivers.	Not Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewal application presents data for all graduates who complete the alumni survey: 9/10 93 %, 09/10 88 %, 10/11 88 %, Head of school/principal acknowledged inconsistent tracking. Survey results document: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Dec 2009: What are you currently doing? 65 % (55 % 4yr, 10 % 2yr) o Dec 2010: What are you currently doing? 63.1 % (52.6 % 4yr, 10.5 % 2yr) o Dec 2011: What did you do after graduating? 85 % college/school
Measure: In a survey of graduates enrolled in college, at least 80% of those responding will report that they felt well prepared by their education at Four Rivers.	Met*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The renewal application indicated the following, based on the results of a survey that is distributed to all alumni: 09/10 100 %, 09/10 95 %, 10/11 90 %, 11/12 85 % A review of the survey results indicated that several questions were included that related to preparation for college. In response to the most general item “FRCPS prepared me well for college,” 80 % agreed/strongly agreed in 09/10, and 88 % agreed/strongly agreed in 10/11. <p><i>* The alumni survey is distributed annually to all graduates, so respondents represent a range of years out of FRCPS.</i></p>

<u>OBJECTIVE 4: Expeditionary Learning</u>		
Four Rivers Charter Public School will implement Expeditionary Learning Core Practices to further its mission.		
Measure	Performance	Notes/Questions
<p>Measure: The school will continue to deepen its implementation of Expeditionary Learning Core Practices, as evidenced on the annual implementation review scoring by Expeditionary Learning consultants.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application included a summary table of ratings for 2004-2012 for learning expeditions, active pedagogy, culture and character, leadership/school development and structures (categories were revised for 2012). The overall trend captures the school’s progress from developing to implementing. • EL Core Practices Assessment Reports reviewed at the visit corroborated these ratings and included a breakdown of sub-categories, and analysis and teachers participating in focus groups provided evidence of the school’s development with EL.
<p>Measure: For Core Practices identified by the school as high priority in its annual professional development work plan, the school will meet 90% of its designated measures of success</p>	<p>Met*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated the following: 08/09 (Learning Expeditions) partly met, 09/10 (Differentiation of Instruction) met, 10/11 (Assessment of Learning) met, 11/12 (One Learning Expedition by Grade) met • The head of school/principal and teachers described self-selected peer groups that are designed to “spread and ensure core practices are strong.” • Peer groups (and other planning and professional development activities) occur on Wednesday afternoons, and on the 2012 Climate Survey, 87.5 % of teachers agreed/strongly agreed that Wednesday afternoons are productive for professional learning, and 64.7 % agreed/strongly agreed this time is productive for planning. • 94.1 % of teachers agreed/strongly agreed that they can implement Learning Expeditions (which was the 11/12 high priority). <p><i>* The measures of success are unclear, and primarily based on self-assessment.</i></p>

<u>OBJECTIVE 5: Dissemination</u>		
Four Rivers Charter Public School will identify and disseminate best practices of its faculty and staff, including those representative of exemplary Expeditionary Learning Core Practices.		
Measure	Performance	Notes/Questions
Measure: The school will identify and disseminate practices and products expressive of high quality Expeditionary Learning Core Practices and other exemplary Four Rivers practices to other schools and communities annually.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated that this measure was met every year. • The head of school/principal reported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FRCPS teachers typically present at EL regional retreats and national conferences annually. ○ FRCPS sharing with other EL schools within their network • His own participation in a group for area principals. • Teachers in focus groups described teachers sharing practices at MA and EL conferences.
Measure: The school will, within its second term, offer models for replication and best practices to public schools in Franklin County.	Not Met	The head of school/principal reported he shares practices with the area principal group, and that other schools/leaders have visited FRCPS to observe the implementation of ALEKS. He also reported offering support to schools that are starting advisory programs.

II. Academic Program Success

B. Academic Success – Accountability Plan Measures

OBJECTIVE 6: <i>English Language Arts</i>		
Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to read with strong comprehension, analysis and interpretation, and write with clarity and skill for different purposes and audiences.		
Measure	Performance	Notes/Questions
Measure: MCAS: 75% of students who have attended Four Rivers Charter Public School (FRCPS) for at least two years will attain Proficiency on the English Language Arts MCAS in the 10 th grade, and at least 90% will pass in 10 th grade.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students attained proficiency: 07/08 81 %, 09/10 100 %, 09/10 97 %, 10/11 97 %, 11/12 100%. The renewal application indicated that all students passed, all years.
Measure: MCAS: 65% of students will attain Proficiency on the ELA MCAS in the 8 th grade, and at least 90% will pass.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students attained proficiency: 9/10 95 %, 09/10 85 %, 10/11 80 %, 11/12 80 %, The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students passed: 09/10 100 %, 09/10 96 %, 10/11 100 %, 11/12 100 % passed
Measure: MCAS: Students in grade 8 and 10 will achieve results on the 8 th and 10 th grade ELA MCAS at or above the average of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn. (Note: average scores of the sending schools will be calculated as weighted mean.)	Met	<p>The renewal application indicates the percentage points above the average that FRCPS students' results than the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10th grade: 07/08 15, 09/10 26, 21, 10/11 31, 11/12 8 above 8th grade: 08/09 32, 09/10 9, 10/11 17, 11/12 6 above
Measure: Adequate Yearly Progress: The school will meet its annual targets in English Language Arts in aggregate and in sub groups.	Not Met	The renewal application indicates that the school met its annual targets in 8/09, 09/10 and 10/11. It did not meet its annual targets in 11/12.

<p>Measure: Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in English at the end of the year.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students passed the standards in English: 07/08 92 %, 09/10 91 %, 09/10 87 %, 10/11 91 %, 11/12 90 % • Progress reports document the level to which individual students meet the standard, with narrative descriptions of supporting evidence. • Accountability Plan data collection (June 2012) reviewed captures individual teacher calculations of percentages of students meeting the standards.
--	------------	---

<p><u>OBJECTIVE 7: Math</u> Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to apply mathematical knowledge and skills to solve problems.</p>		
<p>Measure</p>	<p>Performance</p>	<p>Notes/Questions</p>
<p>Measure: MCAS: 65% of students who have attended FRCPS for at least two years will attain proficiency on the Math MCAS in the 10th grade, and at least 90% will pass in 10th grade</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students attained proficiency: 07/08 81 %, 09/10 82 %, 09/10 88 %, 10/11 86 %, 11/12 97 % ▪ The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students passed: 07/08 96 %, 09/10 93 %, 09/10 94 %, 10/11 100 %, 11/12 100 %
<p>Measure: MCAS: 60% of students will attain proficiency on the Math MCAS in the 8th grade, and at least 90% will pass.</p>	<p>Not Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students attained proficiency: 9/10 51 %, 09/10 47 %, 10/11 43 %, 11/12 54 %, ▪ The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students passed: 09/10 76 %, 09/10 75 %, 10/11 80 %, 11/12 91 %
<p>Measure: MCAS: Students in grades 8 and 10 will achieve results on the 8th and 10th grade Math MCAS at or above the average scores of the Franklin County schools from which these were drawn.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<p>The renewal application indicates the percentage points above the average that FRCPS students' results than the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10th grade: 07/08 15, 08/09 12, 09/10 17, 10/11 20, 11/12 14 above ▪ 8th grade: 07/08 14, 08/09 8, 09/10 6, 10/11 8, 11/12 13 above

<p>Measure: Adequate Yearly Progress: The school will meet its annual targets in Math in aggregate and in sub groups.</p>	<p>Not Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The renewal application indicates that the school met its annual targets in 8/09 and 11/12. It did not meet its annual targets in 09/10 or 10/11.
<p>Measure: Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in Math at the end of the year.</p>	<p>Not Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students passed the standards in Math: 07/08 83 %, 09/10 93 %, 09/10 85 %, 10/11 75 %, 11/12 92 % Progress reports document the level to which individual students meet the standard, with narrative descriptions of supporting evidence. Accountability Plan data collection (June 2012) excel file reviewed captures individual teacher calculations of percentages of students meeting the standards.

OBJECTIVE 8: Science

Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to apply scientific knowledge and methods to solve problems and conduct experiments and research.

Measure	Performance	Notes/Questions
<p>Measure: MCAS: Students in grades 8 and 10 will achieve results on the 8 and 10th grade Science MCAS at or above the average scores of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<p>The renewal application indicates the percentage points above the average that FRCPS students' results than the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10th grade: 07/08 14, 08/09 23, 09/10 23, 10/11 38, 11/12 33 8th grade: 07/08 16, 08/09 31, 09/10 10, 10/11 19, 11/12 3
<p>Measure: Research: 95% of students will successfully complete a Science research project related to the school themes annually.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The renewal application indicates the percentage of students who successfully completed a science research project: 07/08 92 %, 09/10 98 %, 09/10 93 %, 10/11 99 %, 11/12 100 %

<p>Measure: Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in Science at the end of the year.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students passed the standards in social studies/history: 07/08 88 %, 09/10 93%, 09/10 90 %, 10/11 92 %, 11/12 91 % • Progress reports document the level to which individual students meet the standard, with narrative descriptions of supporting evidence. • Accountability Plan data collection (June 2012) excel file reviewed captures individual teacher calculations of percentages of students meeting the standards.
<p><u>OBJECTIVE 9: Social Studies/History</u> Students at Four Rivers Charter Public School will be able to apply historical insights and research skills to better understand United States and world history.</p>		
<p>Measure</p>	<p>Performance</p>	<p>Notes/Questions</p>
<p>Measure: MCAS: Students who have attended FRCPS for at least two years will achieve results on the 10th or 11th grade Social Studies/History MCAS at or above the average scores of the Franklin County schools from which these students were drawn.</p>	<p>N/A*</p>	<p>* <i>This assessment was discontinued by the state.</i></p>
<p>Measure: Research: 95% of students will successfully complete a Social Studies/History research project related to the school themes annually.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated the percentage of students who successfully completed a social studies/history research project: 07/08 88 %, 09/10 97 %, 09/10 95 %, 10/11 98 %, 11/12 100 %

<p>Measure: Progress Reports: 90% of all students will pass all standards in Social Studies/History at the end of the year.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated the following percentages of students passed the standards in social studies/history: 07/08 90 %, 09/10 92 %, 09/10 82 %, 10/11 93 %, 11/12 91 % • Progress reports document the level to which individual students meet the standard, with narrative descriptions of supporting evidence. • Accountability Plan data collection (June 2012) excel file reviewed captures individual teacher calculations of percentages of students meeting the standards.
--	------------	---

III. Viability

B. Is the School a Viable Organization?

<u>OBJECTIVE 10: Enrollment</u>		
Four Rivers Charter Public School will maintain full or nearly full enrollment.		
Measure:	Performance	Notes/Questions
Measure: The school will maintain enrollment at or above 97% of its enrollment cap each year.	Not Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The renewal application indicated the following enrollment numbers and percentages: 07/08 192/100 %, 09/10 195/92 %, 09/10 190/90 %, 10/11 205/97 %, 11/12 208/98 % ▪ Enrollment at the time of the visit is presented at the beginning of the report.
Measure: 90% of the students eligible and able to return to Four Rivers Charter Public School will reenroll for the following year.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The renewal application indicated the follow percentage of eligible students who re-enrolled: 07/08 92 %, 09/10 92.5 %, 09/10 83 %, 10/11 92 %, 11/12 92 %
Measure: Applications each year will exceed the number of places available by at least 25 %	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The renewal application indicated the percentage of applications each year that exceed the number of places available: 07/08 155 %, 09/10 150 %, 09/10 270 %, 10/11 250 %, 11/12 268 %
<u>OBJECTIVE 11: Faculty</u>		
Four Rivers Charter Public School will retain highly qualified, committed and effective full-time teachers.		
Measure:	Performance	Note/Questions
Measure: The school will retain annually 75% of the full-time teachers who have received good or outstanding evaluations and whose circumstances allow them to continue teaching a Four Rivers Charter Public School.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated the percentage of teachers retained annually who received good/outstanding evaluations and whose circumstances allow them to remain at FRCPS: 07/08 95 %, 09/10 83 %, 09/10 94 %, 10/11 90 %, 11/12 86 %

<p>Measure: In an annual survey, at least 75% of the parents responding will report satisfaction with the effectiveness of the faculty in areas of academic challenge, support, and communication.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated the percentage of parents satisfied with the faculty in the following areas: • Level of academic challenge to students: 07/08 92 %, 09/10 95 %, 09/10 84 %, 10/11 86 %, 11/12 87 % • Level of support to students: 07/08 93 %, 09/10 90 %, 09/10 89 %, 10/11 94 %, 11/12 91 % • Level of communication: 07/08 87 %, 09/10 75 %, 09/10 82 %, 10/11 75 %, 11/12 92 %
<p>OBJECTIVE 12: Board The Board of Trustees, as the governing body of Four Rivers Charter Public School, will fulfill its responsibilities to set policies, monitor progress, and plan effectively for the needs of the school.</p>		
<p>Measure:</p>	<p>Performance</p>	<p>Notes/Questions:</p>
<p>Measure: The Board will hold at least 11 monthly meetings each year and maintain membership consistent with the by-laws.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board agendas and minutes were reviewed – monthly meetings were held as scheduled, and quorums were achieved at all meetings. • Trustee handbook contents were reviewed
<p>Measure: In an annual evaluation of the school leader conducted by the designated committee of the Board, at least 80% of the approved annual goals for the school leader will be met.</p>	<p>Met*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2011-12, the Principal/Head of School’s goals included successful implementation of the school improvement plan as well as other operational items such as maintaining full enrollment. • The full board weighed in on performance and the committee on trustees and personnel policies summed up the evaluation and themes from the data in an overall review. <p><i>*Annual evaluation includes a reflection of goals. Process of determining if and how goals were met was not clearly documented or described by the BOT.</i></p>

<p>Measure: The Board will monitor progress in meeting the objectives and measures in the school’s Accountability Plan through semi-annual reports from the school leader and will as needed, call for and track an action plan to improve performance in deficient areas.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants in the BOT focus group reported that the head of school/principal shares the annual School Improvement Plans and provides updates on progress throughout the year. • Annual retreats provide opportunities to explore challenging areas.
<p>Measure: The Board will develop, implement, and assess a Board Action Plan annually.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Action Plan was described during Board focus group, and a copy was reviewed by the RSV team. This document serves as a road map for each committee, the head of school/principal, and the full board, over the course of the year ahead.

<p><u>OBJECTIVE 13: Finance</u> Four Rivers Charter Public School will be a fiscally sound and solvent organization.</p>		
<p>Measure:</p>	<p>Performance</p>	<p>Notes/Questions:</p>
<p>Measure: Annual expenditures, excluding depreciation, will not exceed annual revenues.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 and 2011 financial statements, as well as annual audits for the past three years, were reviewed.
<p>Measure: The school will attain a cash reserve equivalent to three months’ operating expenses by the end of its second charter term.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated that this measure was met on an annual basis for the past four years. • The school has 4.8 months of cash on hand for the current school year.
<p>Measure: The school will meet the annual fundraising goals established by the Board of Trustees in the annual approved operating budget.</p>	<p>Not Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The renewal application indicated the annual fundraising goals were not achieved for 07/08 or 08/09, but were achieved for the past three years. This was confirmed by reports from the head of school/principal and the Business Manager.
<p>Measure: The annual independent audit for Four Rivers Charter Public School will report no significant deficiencies.</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual audits were reviewed, and confirmed to have no significant deficiencies.