I. CONVENE and ACTION
   A. Call to Order
   B. Pledge of Allegiance
   C. Quorum Validation
   D. Adoption of the Agenda

II. AND THE GOOD NEWS IS...
   A. Glencliff High School Mariachi Band

III. AWARDS AND RECOGNITION
   A. Community Achieves: Site Managers, CIS Coordinators, and FRC Directors
   B. LEED Silver Certification – Pennington Elementary School

GOVERNANCE ISSUES- OUR ORGANIZATION
A. Actions
   1. Consent
      a. Recommended Approval of Request #8 for Small Scope Projects at Various Schools (Joelton Middle School Bleacher Access) – Bomar Construction Company
      b. Recommended Approval of Request #8 for Purchase of Playground Equipment and Installation at Ruby Major Elementary School Pre-K Playground – Playworld Preferred
      c. Recommended Approval of Request #9 for Purchase of Playground Equipment and Installation at Cole Elementary School Pre-K Playground – Playworld Preferred
      d. Recommended Approval of Request #10 for Purchase of Playground Equipment and Installation at Norman Binkley Elementary School Pre-K Playground – Playworld Preferred
      e. Recommended Approval of Request #11 for Purchase of Playground Equipment and Installation at Julia Green Elementary School Playground – Playworld Preferred
      f. Awarding of Purchases and Contracts
         1. AVID Center
         2. Blackboard Inc.
         3. CDW-G
         4. Donna Culver dba Culver Productions
         5. Hatch, Inc.
         6. Personal Computer Systems Inc.
         7. Possip, Inc.
         8. Schoology, Inc.
         9. Unico Technology
   2. Charter School Review Team Recommendations
Metropolitan Board of Public Education
Agenda
September 24, 2019

IV. DIRECTOR’S REPORT
   A. MNPS Energy Program Update

V. WRITTEN INFORMATION TO THE BOARD

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

VII. ADJOURNMENT
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

a. RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF REQUEST #8 FOR SMALL SCOPE PROJECTS AT VARIOUS SCHOOLS (JOELTON MIDDLE SCHOOL BLEACHER ACCESS) – BOMAR CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

We are requesting approval to issue a purchase order for Bleacher Access at Joelton Middle School in the amount of $30,125.89.

It is recommended that this request be approved.

Legality approved by Metro Department of Law.

FUNDING: 45119.80419119

DATE: September 24, 2019

b. RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF REQUEST #8 FOR PURCHASE OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATION AT RUBY MAJOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRE-K PLAYGROUND – PLAYWORLD PREFERRED

We are requesting approval to issue a purchase order for Playground Equipment and Installation at Ruby Major Elementary School Pre-K Playground in the amount of $59,052.40.

It is recommended that this change order be approved.

Legality approved by Metro Department of Law.

FUNDING: 45119.80422119

DATE: September 24, 2019

c. RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF REQUEST #9 FOR PURCHASE OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATION AT COLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRE-K PLAYGROUND – PLAYWORLD PREFERRED

We are requesting approval to issue a purchase order for Playground Equipment and Installation at Cole Elementary School Pre-K Playground in the amount of $57,525.20.

It is recommended that this change order be approved.

Legality approved by Metro Department of Law.

FUNDING: 45119.80422119

DATE: September 24, 2019
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

d. RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF REQUEST #10 FOR PURCHASE OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATION AT NORMAN BINKLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRE-K PLAYGROUND – PLAYWORLD PREFERRED

We are requesting approval to issue a purchase order for Playground Equipment and Installation at Norman Binkley Elementary School Pre-K Playground in the amount of $47,526.20.

It is recommended that this change order be approved.

Legality approved by Metro Department of Law.

FUNDING: 45119.80422119

DATE: September 24, 2019

e. RECOMMENDED APPROVAL OF REQUEST #11 FOR PURCHASE OF PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATION AT JULIA GREEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – PLAYWORLD PREFERRED

We are requesting approval to issue a purchase order for Playground Equipment and Installation to accommodate a specific student at Julia Green Elementary School in the amount of $34,403.55.

It is recommended that this change order be approved.

Legality approved by Metro Department of Law.

FUNDING: 45119.80419119

DATE: September 24, 2019
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

   f. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(1) VENDOR: AVID Center

SERVICE/Goods (SOW): Amendment #2 increases the current contract value by $63,731 for a new not-to-exceed amount of $180,968 and sets the rates for the 2019-20 school year. The contract is for AVID’s College Readiness System.

SOURCING METHOD: Amendment to a Previously Board-Approved Contract

TERM: September 25, 2019 through June 30, 2022

FOR WHom: MNPS students

COMPENSATION: Additional funding of $63,731

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed $180,968.

OVERSIGHT: Advanced Academics

EVALUATION: Based on the quality of service provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-432686-04A2

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

f. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(2) VENDOR: Blackboard Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): For the provision of the Blackboard Mass Notification solution that delivers emergency or rapid broadcast messages, as well as routing calling and broadcast messages, to students, staff, and families as deemed necessary by the district and individual schools.

SOURCING METHOD: RFP 19-10

TERM: September 25, 2019 through June 30, 2024

FOR WHOM: All MNPS

COMPENSATION: Contractor shall be paid an annual amount of $94,600.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed $473,000.

OVERSIGHT: Communications

EVALUATION: Quality of services provided and adherence to the scope of work requirements as detailed in RFP 19-10.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-783180-03

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

f. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(3) VENDOR: CDW-G

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Contract is for Nintex workflow and Forms applications to build business processes for all MNPS employees to work more efficiently. Using Nintex, MNPS can manage, automate, and optimize processes. Nintex is in place to build business processes and applications that will be used by all departments and schools in the district.

SOURCING METHOD: Metro RFP 641894

TERM: September 25, 2019 through September 24, 2020

FOR WHOM: All MNPS

COMPENSATION: Total compensation under this purchase will not exceed $52,120.20.

OVERSIGHT: Technology & Information Services

EVALUATION: Quality and timeliness of services provided

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 355070

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

f. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(4) VENDOR: Donna Culver dba Culver Productions

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Contractor will work both independently and in collaboration with MNPS employees, including those from the Office of Innovation and the Communications staff, to identify and implement strategic marketing opportunities aligned with the current branding and goals of the Office of School Choice and Metro Nashville Public Schools.

SOURCING METHOD: RFP 19-67

TERM: October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2024

FOR WHOM: Magnet Schools

COMPENSATION: Contractor shall be paid in accordance with Attachment C pricing.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed $350,000.

OVERSIGHT: Magnet Schools and Communications

EVALUATION: Quality and timeliness of services provided, and adherence to the scope of services and constraints on the Contractor, as defined in Attachment A.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-317472-00

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) Grant
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

f. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(5) VENDOR: Hatch, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): For the provision of “WePlaySmart multi-touch tables” for 159 MNPS Pre-K classrooms across the district.

SOURCING METHOD: BuyBoard Cooperative

TERM: Immediate Purchase

FOR WHOM: 159 MNPS Pre-K Classrooms (see attached list for more details)

COMPENSATION: Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed $1,342,751.34.

OVERSIGHT: Federal Programs and Pre-K

EVALUATION: Quality and timeliness of goods and services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: BuyBoard 573-18

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Federal Preschool Expansion Grant
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

   f. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

   (6) VENDOR: Personal Computer Systems Inc.

   SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): For the purchase and installation of fourteen (14) Promethean Nickel Series Active Panels.

   SOURCING METHOD: NCPA Cooperative

   TERM     Immediate Purchase

   FOR WHOM:     McKissack Middle School

   COMPENSATION: Total compensation under this contract will not exceed $ 64,111.

   OVERSIGHT: Learning Technology

   EVALUATION: Quality and timeliness of services provided.

   MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: NCPA 01-54

   SOURCE OF FUNDS: Federal Funds - SLIG
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

f. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(7) VENDOR: Possip, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Contractor to provide an effective digital parent two-way communications platform. The goal of this initiative is to ensure two-way parent feedback in a meaningful, but simple, communication platform that ensures parents have a voice and a place to provide concrete feedback about their school. In addition, Contractor will provide data platforms that aggregate parent feedback into user friendly reports that principals can use to respond to parental concerns and improve their school.

SOURCING METHOD: RFP 19-64

TERM: October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2023

FOR WHOM: Twenty-three (23) Priority Schools and other schools, as needed

COMPENSATION: Contractor shall be paid in accordance with Attachment C of the contract.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed $160,000.

OVERSIGHT: Office of Innovation

EVALUATION: Adherence to the scope of work and the quality of the services provided, and achieving the “Anticipated Outcomes” and “Outcome Measurements” as described in Attachment A.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-351219-01

SOURCE OF FUNDS: District Priority School Improvement Grant
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

f. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(8) VENDOR: Schoology, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): For the provision of Contractor's online assessment platform, titled Assessment Management Platform (AMP), which will be used by district and school staff to administer and score district or school-created benchmark or common formative assessments and to analyze and report student results.

SOURCING METHOD: RFP 19-25

TERM: October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2024

FOR WHOM: All MNPS

COMPENSATION: Contractor shall be paid in accordance with Attachment C of the contract.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed $1,200,000.

OVERSIGHT: Research, Assessment & Evaluation

EVALUATION: Based on the quality of services provided and adherence to the requirements of the scope of work, as detailed in RFP 19-25.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-260594-02

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget
GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

f. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(9) VENDOR: Unico Technology

SERVICE/GOODS (SOW): Aggregation Switch for Data Security Appliance

SOURCING METHOD: National IPA Cooperative

TERM: October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020

FOR WHOM: These devices will support students, employees, vendors, and families of MNPS through daily network monitoring and troubleshooting of over 300 servers, storage systems, and computer programs in the MNPS data centers. This addition will improve security and speed the resolution of application issues for those services hosted by MNPS as well as externally hosted data services consumed by MNPS.

COMPENSATION: Total compensation under this purchase will not exceed $58,000.

OVERSIGHT Technology & Information Services

EVALUATION: Performance and support of the product through proven reductions in resolution times for application issues, and improved data security through systems configuration and monitoring.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: TCPN R150402

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Capital Funds

CONTRACT OWNER: National IPA
Charter School Original Application Recommendation Report

Submitted By: ReThink Forward

Evaluation Team

Office of Charter Schools
Dennis Queen, Executive Officer, Office of Charter Schools, MNPS
Dr. John Thomas, Coordinator, Office of Charter Schools, MNPS
Dr. Mary Laurens Minich, Director, Office of Charter Schools, MNPS

Review Team
Katy Enterline, Director of Talent Management, HR, MNPS
Michelle Doane, Consultant
Rick Caldwell, SPED Coach, MNPS
Dan Killian, Project Coordinator Exceptional Education, MNPS
Dr. Joie Austria, Director, Office of English Learners, MNPS
Katy Pattullo, Director of MTSS, Office of Instructional Support, MNPS
Tyrunya Goodwin, District Lead Math Coach, Office of Instructional Support, MNPS
Dr. Megan Cusson-Lark, Executive Director, Office of School Counseling, MNPS
Lisa Ladd, Director of Operations, Valor Collegiate Prep
Brian Hull, Director, Resource Strategy, MNPS
Charter School Amended Application Recommendation Report

Submitted By: ReThink Forward

Evaluation Team

Office of Charter Schools
Dennis Queen, Executive Officer, Office of Charter Schools, MNPS
Dr. John Thomas, Coordinator, Office of Charter Schools, MNPS
Dr. Mary Laurens Minich, Director, Office of Charter Schools, MNPS
Brittany Lee, Accountant III, Financial Reporting & Budgeting, MNPS

Review Team
Katy Enterline, Director of Talent Management, HR, MNPS
Michelle Doane, Consultant
Rick Caldwell, SPED Coach, MNPS
Dan Killian, Project Coordinator Exceptional Education, MNPS
Dr. James Starron, EL Coach, Office of English Learners, MNPS
Katy Pattullo, Director of MTSS, Office of Instructional Support, MNPS
Tyrunya Goodwin, District Lead Math Coach, Office of Instructional Support, MNPS
Dr. Megan Cusson-Lark, Executive Director, Office of School Counseling, MNPS
Lisa Ladd, Director of Operations, Valor Collegiate Prep
Brian Hull, Director, Resource Strategy, MNPS
Introduction

Charter schools are public schools operated by independent, non-profit governing bodies that are granted greater autonomy in the areas of curriculum, calendar, staffing, methodology, and pedagogy in return for greater accountability in achieving high quality academic results with their students. In Tennessee, public charter school students are measured against the same academic standards as students in other public schools and are required to use the same state-approved assessments as all other public schools. Charter schools are required to serve all eligible students, with the education of at-risk students being of utmost importance.

Based on a study by the Thomas Fordham Institute and Basis Policy Research, charter schools that exhibit low performance in their first year of operation are less than 1% likely to improve after five (5) years. Therefore, it is the authorizer’s responsibility to create and apply a rigorous, fair, and thorough authorization process in order to ensure only those charter schools who can offer and sustain high quality educational options for all students are recommended and approved to open. Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools is interested in charter applicants who demonstrate the capacity to educate the most at-risk students in highly diverse and personalized settings.

Charter schools in Nashville are required to provide appropriate curriculum, aligned professional standards, engaging models of parental and partnership programs, and strategic planning to leverage and grow resources for the school. Schools are held accountable for academic results, responsible school leadership, sound fiscal and operational management and adherence to the laws and rules that govern education in the state of Tennessee.
Evaluation Process

The Office of Charter Schools worked closely with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to create an evaluation process that embodies best practices from authorizers throughout the country and has gained both statewide and national recognition as rigorous, thorough, fair and impartial.

A core team specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school reviews each application. In addition, individuals with specific expertise in special education, English Language learners, business and finance, curriculum, facilities and transportation also review each application to provide the needed expertise in those areas. Finally, the review teams also may include community stakeholders and others who have experience and expertise in specialized areas.

The Office of Charter Schools exercises additional oversight of the process.

Evaluation Process
This recommendation report from the Office of Charter Schools is the culmination the three stages of review:

- **Proposal Evaluation** – The evaluation team conducted independent and group assessment of the merits of each proposal against the published evaluation criteria.
- **Capacity Interview** – The evaluation team conducted an interview with the applicant group to provide applicants an opportunity to address questions from the written proposal and to evaluate the applicants’ capacity to implement their proposed program effectively and with fidelity.
- **Consensus Conclusion** – The evaluation team came to a consensus regarding whether to recommend the proposal for approval or denial to the MNPS Board of Education.

Rating Characteristics
**Meets Standard** – The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and alignment within all areas of the proposal – academic, operational, and financial. It shows thorough preparation; presents a clear and realistic picture of how the school expects to operate at a high level; and inspires confidence in the applicant’s ability to carry out their plan effectively.

**Partially Meets Standard** – The response meets the criteria in some respects but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.

**Does Not Meet Standard** – The response has substantial gaps in a number of areas and the review team has no confidence the applicant can deliver a high-quality educational option to the students in Davidson County.
Evaluation Contents
This evaluation report includes the following:

- **Proposal Overview** – Basic summary of the proposed school as presented in the application
- **Recommendation** – an overall judgment, based on extensive analysis of all evidence presented by the applicants, regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval
- **Evaluation**: Analysis of the proposal is based on four primary areas of plan development:
  - **Executive Summary** – Provides a comprehensive review of all three major areas of the application with emphasis on the reasons for the recommendation from the review team.
  - **Academic Plan** – Describes the applicant’s model in regard to curriculum and instruction, assessment, working with at-risk and special populations, goals, discipline and logistics (school calendar, daily schedule, etc.).
  - **Operations Plan** – Outlines operational support for the academic program, including staffing and human resources, recruitment and marketing, professional development for teachers, community involvement, and governing board structure and membership.
  - **Financial/Business Plan** – Provides budgeting and financial plans to ensure both initial and on-going fiscal compliance, including budget assumptions, transportation, fundraising, payroll and insurance functions.

Opening a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan. It is not an endeavor for which strength in one area can compensate for weakness in another. Therefore, to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must **meet or exceed the standard in all three major areas** of the capacity review.
Proposal Overview

Operator/Applicant – Rethink Forward, Inc.

School Name – Nashville Collegiate Prep

Mission and Vision:

Mission: Nashville Collegiate Prep’s (NCP) mission is to provide a personalized, engaged, supported, and challenging environment that will strengthen students academically, socially, and emotionally. Students will leave NCP with the skills and mindset necessary to not only face reality but create improvements for the next generation.

Vision: NCP’s vision is to inspire and equip a generation of self-directed critical thinkers to influence the world around them. Our mission provides the roadmap to ensuring all students are equipped as critical thinkers and primed to lead efforts they are passionate about in the world.

Proposed Location – Finding a location close to TNU (Trevecca Nazarene University) was a priority during our search for a school site. Being in close proximity to TNU will ease the process of collaboration and allow us to maximize our partnership by providing NCP students and their families easy access to the services that will be provided by the university. This would include the zip codes of 37206, 37208, 37210, 37215.

Enrollment Projections (as presented by applicant in the written proposal)

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Executive Summary

Original Recommendation from the Review Team:

☐ Authorize

X ☐ Do Not Authorize

Original Summary Analysis – The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) Office of Charter Schools has established itself over the past several years as an authorizer of national prominence, with an application process that is fair, transparent, and aligned with national standards. As a result, our charter sector is one of the strongest in the nation, and we always welcome new and innovative applications that serve our students and families well.

The lens through which our review team evaluates an application is one that looks for innovative instruction that produces high quality academic outcomes for all students, school operations that support those academic outcomes and sustainable fiscal practices that ensure strong financial stability.

A summary of the qualities we have identified as present in a high-quality application is as follows:

- **Academic Program Design and Capacity**
  - Detailed curriculum and instructional strategies that align with the mission, target population, and state standards
  - Thorough current research that supports the curriculum and instructional strategies
  - Articulation of a sound rationale for the application
  - Detailed plans for meeting all student needs, including accelerated learners, remediation, special education, and English Language Learners
  - Demonstrated internal alignment including scheduling and calendar
  - Sound plans for family and community engagement
  - Description of a school culture that reflects alignment to the school’s mission and goals.

- **Operational Plan and Capacity**
  - Sound and reasonable plan for staffing that is likely to attract and retain top talent
  - Thorough and reasonable plan for start-up operations
  - Compelling detail on the school’s plan for performance management
  - Organizational chart aligned with the leadership and staffing structure
  - Viable employment practices
  - Articulation of clear roles and appropriate responsibilities for governance and management
  - Founding Board members with diverse skills needed to govern effectively
  - Potential facilities and outline of the costs within the financial document
  - Solid transportation plan that is reasonable and equitable to attract a diverse group of students
  - Plan for compliance with all federal and state requirements
• Financial Plan and Capacity
  ➢ Realistic projections with clear assumptions from start-up through full enrollment
  ➢ Spending priorities that align with the school’s mission, support the academic program, support the management structure, professional development needs and growth plan
  ➢ Cash flow projections that align to the MNPS Performance Frameworks and align with the overall budget
  ➢ Sound financial controls to ensure appropriate use of public funds and long-term viability
  ➢ Demonstrated financial planning and management capacity
  ➢ Reasonable and transparent fundraising goals with disclosure of funders
  ➢ Disclosure of all anticipated loans, gifts, and grants, including letters from funders confirming their investment should the school become approved.

After a thorough review of the Nashville Collegiate Prep’s (NCP) written application by the review team and along with the Office of Charter Schools, a recommendation of denial for this application is presented to the board. The reasons for this denial are based upon the school’s partial meeting of standards in academics and operations and failure to meet standards in the financial section.

ReThink Forward is a Florida based non-profit organization that currently does not oversee any schools. The team also determined that ReThink Forward is heavily reliant on a charter management organization (CMO), Noble Education Initiative (NEI), for all its curriculum, instructional practice, professional development, operations, and financial advice. NEI was formed in 2017 and their experience has only been in school turnaround since that time.

The application lacked specificity of the population of students targeted within identified zip codes. All identified zip codes, with exception of 37215, have traditional elementary and middle schools with enrollment below capacity and charter schools with short or no wait lists. The traditional elementary and middle schools located within 37215 have been historically high performing. There are currently no charter schools located within 37215. While ReThink Forward does indicate they would focus on the recruitment of private school students, the description of their marketing strategy and associated recruitment tools is unclear.

Plans for serving special populations were unclearly defined other than services would be provided in an inclusive setting. The application lacked a clear description of the continuum for SPED services. The RTII description was unclear on how the state-required skills-based interventions would be administered.

The governing board consists of four members. Two members are locally based while two members are based in Florida. The two members in Florida have K-12 experience while the two locally based members have higher education and law expertise. At this time, it appears that ReThink Forward does not have board members with specific human resources, facilities, or operations experience.
The financial model showed inconsistencies that caused the review team concern. One such example was the revenue for year 0. While in the interview process, ReThink Forward and NEI indicated NEI would cover the cost of year 0 and be reimbursed during year 1, there was no formal written agreement between the two entities in the application. Additionally, the applicant left out significant portions of the budget that are required under state and federal law, primarily the Medicare tax, benefits, and TCRS retirement employer contributions. Lack of these calculations caused additional issues with the finances as presented by the applicant. ReThink Forward indicated they would provide transportation and based calculations on two 55 passenger buses; however, the BEP funding calculations showed a lack of understanding of the distribution for charter schools choosing to provide transportation.

In conclusion, ReThink Forward did not present a clear, comprehensive, and effective plan for successful instruction for students within MNPS. The review team found errors, inaccurate details, and lack of understanding in the operation and financial sections. The review team has concerns regarding the reliance ReThink Forward has placed on NEI, the proposed CMO. Not only does NEI hold the MOU for the partnership with TNU, it also proposes to front the initial funding for the school. This led the review team to lack confidence that ReThink Forward would be able to oversee the opening of a new school while also holding NEI accountable.

The Office of Charter Schools respectfully recommends that the MNPS Board of Education deny this application.
Section Summaries

Original evaluation
Only applicants who score “Meets Standard” in all three major areas on the evaluation rubric are recommended for authorization.

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</tr>
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</table>
Executive Summary

Amended Recommendation from the Review Team:

☐ Authorize

X☐ Do Not Authorize

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  - Demonstrated internal alignment including scheduling and calendar
  - Sound plans for family and community engagement
  - Description of a school culture that reflects alignment to the school’s mission and goals.

- Operational Plan and Capacity
  - Sound and reasonable plan for staffing that is likely to attract and retain top talent
  - Thorough and reasonable plan for start-up operations
  - Compelling detail on the school’s plan for performance management
  - Organizational chart aligned with the leadership and staffing structure
  - Viable employment practices
  - Articulation of clear roles and appropriate responsibilities for governance and management
  - Founding Board members with diverse skills needed to govern effectively
  - Potential facilities and outline of the costs within the financial document
  - Solid transportation plan that is reasonable and equitable to attract a diverse group of students
  - Plan for compliance with all federal and state requirements
• Financial Plan and Capacity
  ➢ Realistic projections with clear assumptions from start-up through full enrollment
  ➢ Spending priorities that align with the school’s mission, support the academic program, support the management structure, professional development needs and growth plan
  ➢ Cash flow projections that align to the MNPS Performance Frameworks and align with the overall budget
  ➢ Sound financial controls to ensure appropriate use of public funds and long-term viability
  ➢ Demonstrated financial planning and management capacity
  ➢ Reasonable and transparent fundraising goals with disclosure of funders
  ➢ Disclosure of all anticipated loans, gifts, and grants, including letters from funders confirming their investment should the school become approved.

After a thorough review of the Nashville Collegiate Prep’s (NCP) written amended application by the review team and along with the Office of Charter Schools, a recommendation of denial for this application is presented to the board. The reasons for this denial are based upon the school’s failure to adequately address concerns, and to only partially meet standards in academics, operations, and financial sections.

ReThink Forward is a Florida based non-profit organization that currently does not oversee any other schools. The team still determined that ReThink Forward is heavily reliant on a charter management organization (CMO), Noble Education Initiative (NEI), for all its curriculum, instructional practice, professional development, operations, and financial advice and support. NEI is a nonprofit entity that was formed in 2017, and their experience has only been in school turnaround since that time.

While ReThink Forward did identify the eight (8) core beliefs and six (6) core values that drive the vision of the school and provides and in-depth details on how the school will prepare students to embody the vision, it was still unclear how this connects and supports the mission and what skills and mindset is needed to “face reality”.

The amended application still lacked specificity around the population of students targeted within identified zip codes. All identified zip codes, with exception of 37215, have traditional elementary and middle schools with enrollment below capacity and charter schools with short or no wait lists. The traditional elementary and middle schools located within 37215 have been historically high performing. There are currently no charter schools located within 37215. While ReThink Forward does indicate they would focus on the recruitment of private school students, the description of their marketing strategy and associated recruitment tools remains unclear.

Plans for serving special populations remains loosely defined other than services would be provided. The amended application lacked a clear description of the continuum for SPED and EL services. The RTII description in the amended application included a description of math intervention that will happen during math block and Tier 3 interventions can happen during literacy or math blocks as needed but provides no further detail.
The governing board consists of four members. Two members are locally based while two members are based in Florida. The two members in Florida have K-12 experience while the two locally based members have higher education and/or law expertise. The amended application did indicate that Dr. Boone (board chair) has financial expertise as the TNU president and Ms. Dinda has expertise in start-up, facilities, and HR; however, still does not sufficiently address community experience specific to the start-up of a new charter school. It does mention that Mr. Lee has experience in “forging relationship” so he can lead community partnership, but the description is vague and does not demonstrate expertise in community engagement and/or partnership.

The financial section in the amended application was considerably improved; however, the review team still felt various areas of the budget were unclear. ReThink Forward did include a letter from Tascaso Equity Partners lending company that specializes in loans for charter schools, for an open line of credit in the amount of $325,000. NEI indicated they would not receive funds for operating the school in the areas of academics, operations, and finance in year one (1). The review team still had concerns regarding the transportation plan.

In conclusion, the review team felt the amended application for ReThink Forward did not present a clear, comprehensive, and effective plan for successful instruction for students within MNPS and felt there were unanswered questions remaining in the operation and financial sections. Concerns remained for the review team regarding the reliance – operationally, academically, and financially - ReThink Forward has placed on NEI, the proposed CMO.

The Office of Charter Schools respectfully recommends that the MNPS Board of Education deny this amended application.
### Section Summaries

**Amended evaluation**

Only applicants who score “Meets Standard” in all three major areas on the evaluation rubric are recommended for authorization.

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<th>□ Does Not Meet Standard</th>
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Original Academic Plan Detail

Rating: Partially Meet Standard

Summary as Presented in Proposal: ReThink Forward submitted an application for a Pre-K – 8 school in southeast Nashville. They propose to partner with a CMO, Noble Education Initiative (NEI). NEI proposes to partner with Trevecca Nazarene University (TNU). At capacity, the school would have 844 students. NCP’s vision is to inspire and equip a generation of self-directed critical thinkers to influence the world around them. The mission provides the roadmap to ensuring all students are equipped as critical thinkers and primed to lead efforts they are passionate about in the world.

Review Team Analysis: The application partially meets standard for the academic plan. Overall, there was a lack of detail in this section. While the applicant responded to most prompts with high level explanations, there was not enough evidence or research to support the presented academic plan. The presented plan did not provide a clear picture of logistics for successful implementation of the academic plan. In each section, there were a number of weaknesses identified, leading to a lack of confidence that this group has a strong, comprehensive academic plan in place.

The mission and vision for NCP described preparing children to influence the world around them but lacked description of what this would look like in practice. The review team found the mission statement to be broad and generic (to provide a personalized, engaged, supported, and challenging environment that will strengthen students academically, socially, and emotionally). The vision did not clearly describe what the school will look like when it is achieving its mission (to inspire and equip a generation of self-directed critical thinkers to influence the world around them). As the language around the need for the school was vague, the review team found no compelling argument for its establishment.

NCP’s enrollment projection did not appear realistic to the review team. In the area that ReThink Forward proposed to provide services, traditional schools’ current enrollment is low and existing charter schools do not have wait lists. This is the case in all zip codes provided except 37215. Currently in this zip code there are no charter schools and traditional schools are both high performing and at capacity. During the capacity interview, Rethink Forward presented the intention to focus recruitment efforts on students who currently attend or may attend private schools. It is important to note that the application did not indicate a robust marketing process for drawing this particular demographic back to public education.

ReThink Forward did identify the intended curriculum to be used; however, the review team found little to no compelling evidence that the proposed academic plan was appropriate and effective for the anticipated student population, nor that it will close achievement gaps. The applicant did identify several instructional methods/strategies (direct instruction; flexible, small group instruction; cooperative learning; strategic formative assessment; learning stations); however, it was unclear what the proposed strategies would look like in the classroom or how they work together in a cohesive model. An example of this was the mention of using blended learning primarily in K-2 using a station rotation model. They included a photo of children...
sitting around a laptop but did not explain what the students are doing or how, specifically, blended learning will be implemented. In grades 3-8, they indicated the device to student ratio is 1:1 and students will use technology as a “way to get to a place of higher order thinking and creating.” The description of blended learning did not provide a strong picture of impact on academic gains. ReThink Forward went on to state that differentiated instruction would be used by adjusting content, process, product, and/or environment (e.g., cooperative learning, digital resources, verbal support, student goal setting, student choice). While they named multiple strategies, it was unclear how these strategies would work together in the classroom and how teachers would be trained.

The review team was unable to determine how ReThink Forward will deliver skills-based interventions as required through state mandated RTII. Intervention service minutes did not meet state guidelines and lacked clarity in the middle school. The SPED and EL service models were not clearly defined other than inclusion, and there is not strong evidence of a continuum of service for SPED. The review team had questions regarding ReThink Forward’s understanding of the state requirement of teacher-pupil ratio that must be met to provide the needed services to eligible EL students. Little information was provided regarding plans for the universal screening process and progress monitoring of interventions or for the role of the named curricular resources.

While the application indicated a partnership with TNU, it is important note NEI holds the MOU with TNU. It is stated in the application, “In partnership with TNU and other community partners, we will seek services that respond to each family’s needs and appropriately coach them in key areas that will help them in best supporting their student’s, and their family’s success.” The review team was unable to ascertain who the partners are and the specific support they are expected to provide. TNU’s role in provision of the described family support was also ambiguous.

Since NEI’s inception in 2017, they have had experience with school turnaround; however, they did not provide evidence of achieving positive academic outcomes for students using their continuous improvement model with a fresh start/new start enrolling K-5 in year 1.
Amended Academic Plan Detail

Rating: Partially Meet Standard

Summary as Presented in Proposal: ReThink Forward resubmitted an application for a Pre-K – 8 school in southeast Nashville. They propose to partner with a CMO, Noble Education Initiative (NEI). NEI proposes to partner with Trevecca Nazarene University (TNU). At capacity, the school would have 844 students. NCP’s vision is to inspire and equip a generation of self-directed critical thinkers to influence the world around them. The mission provides the roadmap to ensuring all students are equipped as critical thinkers and primed to lead efforts they are passionate about in the world.

Review Team Analysis: The amended application partially meets standard for the academic plan. Overall, there remained a lack of detail in this section. There was not enough evidence or research to support the presented academic plan. The presented amended plan did not provide a clear picture of logistics for successful implementation. In each section, there were a number of weaknesses identified, leading to a lack of confidence that this group has a strong, comprehensive academic plan in place.

The vision identifies eight (8) core beliefs and six (6) core values and explains how they will prepare students to embody the vision; however, questions remained around the skills and mindset needed to “face reality” and what does this mean.

NCP’s enrollment projection was unchanged and still appears unrealistic to the review team. In the area that ReThink Forward proposed to provide services, traditional schools’ current enrollment is low. During the capacity interview, ReThink Forward presented the intention to focus recruitment efforts on students who currently attend or may attend private school. The amended application did not indicate a robust marketing campaign for students who attend private school.

ReThink Forward provided additional information around how instructional methods/strategies will work together and what they will look like in action; however, they only address some methods/strategies and it remains unclear how all identified methods/strategies will work cohesively together. It was also unclear how teachers will be trained to implement these additional methods/strategies. They did explain how the station rotation model in K-2 will work; however, rationale and research evidence of success for the proposed model is not provided. ReThink Forward indicated they would use the Continuous Improvement Model (CIM). The cycle occurs monthly at a school level and daily at the classroom level, but there is no detail on what the CIM model is really like when implemented. Who is leading process? What is the protocol? How will feedback be given, and adjustment made?

The SPED and EL service models still remains undefined other than inclusion, and there is not strong evidence of a continuum of service for SPED. The review team’s questions remain regarding ReThink Forward’s understanding of the state requirement of teacher-pupil ratio that must be met to provide the needed services to eligible EL students. Little information was provided regarding plans for the universal screening process and progress monitoring of
interventions or for the role of the named curricular resources. While ReThink Forward indicated that RTII for math would happen during math block and that RTII tier three (3) intervention for math and literacy would happen during their blocks. No other further detail was provided.

After reviewing the amended application, the review team found their concerns regarding NEI holding the MOU with TNU was not address; therefore, the concern is still relevant. Furthermore, the amended application did not address the additional partnerships outside of TNU and what they would look like. This section remains vague at best. TNU’s role in provision of the described family support remained ambiguous.

Since NEI’s inception in 2017 as a nonprofit entity, they have had experience with school turnaround; however, they did not provide evidence of achieving positive academic outcomes for students using their continuous improvement model with a fresh start/new start enrolling K-5 in year 1.
Original Operations Plan Detail

Rating: Partially Meets Standard

Summary as Presented in Proposal: The application listed a four-member governing board and indicated an ongoing process to actively search for qualified candidates. Two board members are based locally while the other two are based in Florida. The applicant proposed to locate within an area serving students in the following zip codes: 37206, 37208, 37210, and 37215. A transportation plan was provided. By-laws indicated governing board members will serve one year.

Review Team Analysis: The Operations Plan partially meets standard because each section lacks detail to provide a clear picture of the school’s proposed operations plan and the founding team’s capacity to execute it. Facilities plans are unclear other than potential land locations and narratives describing potential space.

The governing board consists of four members, two locally based and two based in Florida. It is important to note that the two members in Florida have K-12 experience while the two local members have higher education and law experience. While the board was very knowledgeable and able to answer most of the questions that were presented in the capacity interview on the subject of governance, the review team still has concerns since it did not appear that the board had members with financial, facilities, operations, human resources, or community engagement experience specific to the start-up of a new charter school in a competitive market.

The application outlined the creation of an Advisory School Council whose purpose is to help guide the school, NEI and the ReThink Forward Board. There was little to no indication of the make-up of the Advisory School Council other than the one individual that would interact with the entities listed above. It was unclear if this council member would be part of a larger PTA or NCP’s equivalent organization.

ReThink Forward’s application did include an MOU with NEI. This MOU would provide a pathway for NEI to manage all aspects in the area of academics, operations, and finances. While a chartering board may hire a CMO, it is essential that an evaluation process is included to hold them accountable. There did not appear to be a plan to evaluate the school leader, the CMO, or the governing board itself. The application provided general board goals that were more task oriented. While the application also indicated there would be an annual report, a detailed description of what the process would look like was not offered.

The start-up plan lacked specificity around the funding source for year 0, the teacher hiring process, and the board’s participation in the process. The review team found the facilities timeline to be unrealistically tight given the current building and development climate in Nashville. While it was indicated in the interview that NEI would provide funding for the initial year, a formal written agreement indicating such is not evident in the application. ReThink Forward realistically anticipated challenges in the areas of initial community engagement, build out of the facility, and recruitment of both students and qualified teaching candidates. They
seemed heavily reliant on TNU and other partnerships that have not yet been identified to help meet the deadlines.

The applicant mentioned securing a suitable facility within 60 days of approval. The review committee found this unrealistic in the current real estate market. Additionally, no description is given of facility requirements such as space, number of rooms, and build-out costs. The application includes reliance on an unnamed partner to build out a facility. ReThink Forward would then rent the building from said unnamed partner. This left the review team with questions regarding realistic building timelines and the ability for completion within the timeframe needed to open the school.

There were conflicting staffing charts presented in the application that do not appear to include special education or EL staff. The review team could not discern whether the staffing model would meet the needs of the school as written. Additionally, there was no staffing mentioned for Pre-K students, although the enrollment chart indicates there would be 32 Pre-K students in year one (1) if approved. Though Pre-K would not be funded through local and state education dollars, as the application included pre-K, the reviewers expected to find more information regarding its place within the school model.

ReThink Forward indicated they will use PLCs structured by departments, grade levels, or teams to provide professional development based on students need. The review team was unable to discern the criteria to form the PLCs and how impact on student achievement would be measured.

ReThink Forward indicated they will provide transportation; however, the cost assumptions were low, and they proposed to provide only two 55 passenger busses. Minimal details surrounding the oversight of the transportation plan were evident. They indicated the business manager would serve as the transportation supervisor.

In the operation plan, it was stated that a wireless infrastructure would be needed to ensure all devises are supported. The link between this important infrastructure and the budget lacked significant detail. Also, it is important to note ReThink Forward did not indicate a waiver from the state’s required student teacher ratio. The purposed model exceeds the limits of current state requirements.
Amended Operations Plan Detail

Rating: Partially Meets Standard

Summary as Presented in Proposal: The amended application listed a four-member governing board and indicated an ongoing process to actively search for qualified candidates. Two board members are based locally while the other two are based in Florida. The applicant proposed to locate within an area serving students in the following zip codes: 37206, 37208, 37210, and 37215. A transportation plan was provided. By-laws indicated governing board members will serve one year.

Review Team Analysis: The Operations Plan partially meets standard because each section lacks detail to provide a clear picture of the school’s proposed operations plan and the founding team’s capacity to execute it. Facilities plans are unclear other than potential land locations and narratives describing potential space.

The governing board consists of four members, two locally based and two based in Florida. It is important to note that the two members in Florida have K-12 experience while the two local members have higher education and/or law experience. The amended application did provide more detail outlining Ms. Dinda, board treasure for ReThink Forwards, experience in Florida as the principal at a school in Miami. They indicated under her leadership; she moved the school form a grade of B to an A and show gain in ELA. It was unclear to the team why this in-depth information was provided since Ms. Dinda will be serving in a board oversite capacity and not the day to day operation. Also, it was indicated Dr. Boone, president of TNU, has financial experience since he is leading a university. The team still expressed concern since there are so differences in the types of funding sources between higher education and elementary education. Also, the amended application indicated Mr. Lee had experience in “forging relationship”. He would be leading the community partnership. The team felt the description was very vague and lacked a description of expertise needed to create such partnerships. This left the team with reservation of the boards experience specifically when it comes to the start-up of a new charter school in a competitive market.

The amended application provided clarification as to the description of the Advisory School Council. ReThink Forward indicated the council would consist of parents, partners, and political reps. The council act as a community liaison with ReThink Forward and gather feedback and input from parents and community partners to increase community involvement. The council would also act as a local community rep for NCP. This cause the team to question why the council would be a conduit between the community and ReThink and why would they serve as the local community rep? It was still unclear how many members would be on the council, the expectations of each member, or what the reporting structure would look like.

ReThink Forward’s application did include an MOU with NEI. This MOU would provide a pathway for NEI to manage all aspects in the area of academics, operations, and finances. While a chartering board may hire a CMO, it is essential that an evaluation process is included to hold them accountable. The amended application outlined information to be included in the annual report and indicated ReThink Forward plans to provide oversite for NEI and the Superintendent
via monthly and annual reports; however, it was not clear what information is assessed or what the expectations would be.

The amended application indicated that ReThink Forward has secured two possible sites, former Boys and Girls Club and a 5.88-acre site. It was still unclear to the review team the timeline or the cost for the buildout.

The amended application still left unanswered questions regarding ReThink Forward’s understanding of the state requirements of providing services to EL students. While it was indicated that all teachers would be dually certified, it was unclear how teacher would be used to provide the required services while maintain the student teacher ratio.

ReThink Forward indicated in the amended application they will use PLCs structured by departments, grade levels, or teams to provide professional development based on students need. The review team still could not discern the criteria to form the PLCs and how impact on student achievement would be measured.

The amended application indicated the transportation expenses assumptions were established using actual budgetary cost of students at other schools managed by NEI. At the time of amended application, NEI did not manage a school in Tennessee. It was unclear to the review team how the assumptions were made and how reliable they are.
Rating: Does Not Meet Standards

Summary as Presented in Proposal: The proposed budget assumed $9,400 per-pupil for students who do not use transportation and $10,400 for students who qualify for transportation. They are anticipating 505 students in K-6 with an additional 26 Pre-K students for a total of 531 students in year 1. The assumptions did not include any grants in year 1 but indicated participation in all Federal Title funds. There are plans to pursue a variety of grant opportunities after the first year of operation. Average teacher salaries were assumed at $43,500. ReThink Forward will contract with NEI for management services.

Original Review Team Analysis: The financial plan does not meet standards. The applicant left out important state-mandated requirements, and the review team is not confident that the financial plan will support and sustain the schools. In addition, the review team expressed concern regarding the following:

- District enrollment has been flat making the purposed projections unrealistic.
- No detail is provided in the Assumptions column making it impossible to fully evaluate the application.
- No costs for insurance are included in the year 0 expenses assumptions for the four employees.
- No detail is provided on how the $257,620 in fundraising revenue to support Year 0 will be obtained.
- Plans provided for contingencies are lacking.
- Staffing assumptions do not comply with Tennessee education law. The application projects a 23 K-6 classes, plus four Pre-K classes, but only budgets 16 teachers.
- Average teacher pay is projected at $43,500, and this is below the pay of a first-year teacher with no advanced degree in MNPS.
- The TCRS Hybrid rate is incorrect. It is budgeted at 2%, but the actual amount is higher.
- Assumptions about classified retirement are incorrect and insufficient. Classified employees are not part of TCRS. These employees are part of Metro Government's retirement program, and employer contributions are budgeted at 2% but the actual is higher.
- Budget for health insurance is insufficient. The application includes $2,802 per employee, per year. The review committee found this to be underestimated, as the actual cost to MNPS is $10,000 per employee. Of note, MNPS receives a discounted rate due to the number of employees within the district.
- Revenue for food service seems too high. The application states that 61% of students will qualify for free and reduced lunch and that all of the other 39% will choose to purchase lunch at full price.
• Before and after care revenue is inaccurate. Revenue of $560,736 is included, at $8/day (similar to MNPS) with 27.5% participation; however, when calculating the following information provided from the application; 505 students x 27.5% = 139 students x $8 x 180 school days = $200,160, this leaves the school $360,000 short annually.
• The application assumes 12 BEP payments per year, there are only ten. The school will not have any revenue to operate in the month of July as the school is opening and getting off the ground.
• The budget assumes $695,810 in Fundraising & Philanthropy with no explanation or detail.
• Expenses for staff recruiting seem unrealistic at $1,000/year.
• Elective teachers are included in the application but not in the budget.

In conclusion, the review team had difficulty connecting the budget to specific sections of the application since conflicting and/or inaccurate information was provided. While the applicant revealed the importance for attracting private school students to fill seats, during the capacity interview, it was unclear how much of the marketing budget would focus on this task.
Amended

Financial/Business Plan Detail

Rating: Partially Meets Standard

Summary as Presented in Proposal: ReThink Forward made several of the recommended adjustments to the budget section of the amended application. They assumed $10,400 per-pupil for all students since they will be providing transportation. They are anticipating 505 students in K-6 with an additional 26 Pre-K students for a total of 531 students in year 1. They did increase teachers’ salaries from $43,500 to $46,000 in the amended application.

Original Review Team Analysis: The financial plan partially meets standard. While the amended application included several adjustments, these adjustments caused more questions to develop for the review team.

ReThink Forward added a letter from Tascosa Equity Partners for an approved $325,000 line of credit. In the budget narrative, it was indicated that ReThink Forward would use approximately $300,000 of the $325,000 for year zero (0). When looking at year one (1) budget on the financial service line, it was indicated no payment would be made toward the amount used on the line of credit; however, on the budget spreadsheet for years two (2) through five (5) the financial service line indicated an amount of $182,250. The assumption notes indicated this line item includes repayment of startup line of credit/NEI management fee. It was unclear to the review team the amount going toward repayment of the open line of credit used in year zero (0) and the amount paid toward NEI management fee. It is also important to note; the original application indicated a fundraising amount of $695,000 while the amended application removed the full amount of fundraising.

It appears the required number of teachers to provide the required English Language (EL) services has not been budget. The amended application indicated that 34% of the purposed 505 student body would require EL services. The state student teacher ratio is 35 to 1. This was also apparent in the contingency budget where funding for teachers provided less teachers then was required.

The amended budget lowered the number of Special Education teachers from 5 to 2. It was indicated 12% of the student body, 61 students, would be receiving some type of services. The review team was concerned with the case load of each teacher. There did not appear to be a contingency plan if they received a higher percentage of students receiving special education services.

While the amended application assumed $3,000 per PreK students, it was unclear the funding source or the type (state or DCS) of PreK was proposed. It is also important to note that several line items under supplies and material indicated these included items for PreK. The review team was concerned this included the use of BEP funding. It is important to note that BEP funding does not include PreK students.
The review team found a discrepancy in the student assumption tab for student lunches. They indicate 39% of the students will pay full price for school lunch; however, in the revenue section they assume 49% of the students will pay full price.

The original budget assumed $695,810 in Fundraising & Philanthropy with no explanation or detail. The amended application removed this amount totally and in place added a line of credit in the amount of $325,000. This cause the review team to be concerned about the community support for the school.

Teacher pay was increased from $43,500 to $46,000. While this is moving in the right direction, it still maybe hard to recruit teachers at this salary amount. The budget also indicated the budget for marketing would begin in January. It was unclear if this is for students or teachers. Charter school in the community start recruiting students in July and teachers in October or November for the next school year.
Charter School Application Recommendation Report

Submitted By: Rocketship Public Schools

Evaluation Team

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Dr. Mary Laurens Minich, Director, Office of Charter Schools, MNPS

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Gerry Alteri, Principal, Harris Hillman, MNPS
Charter School Amended Application Recommendation Report

Submitted By: Rocketship Public Schools

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Introduction

Charter schools are public schools operated by independent, non-profit governing bodies that are granted greater autonomy in the areas of curriculum, calendar, staffing, methodology, and pedagogy in return for greater accountability in achieving high quality academic results with their students. In Tennessee, public charter school students are measured against the same academic standards as students in other public schools and are required to use the same state-approved assessments as all other public schools. Charter schools are required to serve all eligible students, with the education of at-risk students being of utmost importance.

Based on a study by the Thomas Fordham Institute and Basis Policy Research, charter schools that exhibit low performance in their first year of operation are less than 1% likely to improve after five (5) years. Therefore, it is the authorizer’s responsibility to create and apply a rigorous, fair, and thorough authorization process in order to ensure only those charter schools who can offer and sustain high quality educational options for all students are recommended and approved to open. Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools is interested in charter applicants who demonstrate the capacity to educate the most at-risk students in highly diverse and personalized settings.

Charter schools in Nashville are required to provide appropriate curriculum, aligned professional standards, engaging models of parental and partnership programs, and strategic planning to leverage and grow resources for the school. Schools are held accountable for academic results, responsible school leadership, sound fiscal and operational management and adherence to the laws and rules that govern education in the state of Tennessee.
Evaluation Process

The Office of Charter Schools worked closely with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to create an evaluation process that embodies best practices from authorizers throughout the country and has gained both statewide and national recognition as rigorous, thorough, fair and impartial.

A core team specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school reviews each application. In addition, individuals with specific expertise in special education, English Language learners, business and finance, curriculum, facilities and transportation also review each application to provide the needed expertise in those areas. Finally, the review teams also may include community stakeholders and others who have experience and expertise in specialized areas.

The Office of Charter Schools exercises additional oversight of the process.

Evaluation Process

This recommendation report from the Office of Charter Schools is the culmination the three stages of review:

- **Proposal Evaluation** – The evaluation team conducted independent and group assessment of the merits of each proposal against the published evaluation criteria.
- **Capacity Interview** – The evaluation team conducted an interview with the applicant group to provide applicants an opportunity to address questions from the written proposal and to evaluate the applicants’ capacity to implement their proposed program effectively and with fidelity.
- **Consensus Conclusion** – The evaluation team came to a consensus regarding whether to recommend the proposal for approval or denial to the MNPS Board of Education.

Rating Characteristics

**Meets the Standard** – The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and alignment within all areas of the proposal – academic, operational, and financial. It shows thorough preparation; presents a clear and realistic picture of how the school expects to operate at a high level; and inspires confidence in the applicant’s ability to carry out their plan effectively.

**Partially Meets Standard** – The response meets the criteria in some respects but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.

**Does Not Meet Standard** – The response has substantial gaps in a number of areas and the review team has no confidence the applicant can deliver a high-quality educational option to the students in Davidson County.
Evaluation Contents
This evaluation report includes the following:

- **Proposal Overview** – Basic summary of the proposed school as presented in the application
- **Recommendation** – an overall judgment, based on extensive analysis of all evidence presented by the applicants, regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval
- **Evaluation**: Analysis of the proposal is based on four primary areas of plan development:
  - Executive Summary – Provides a comprehensive review of all three major areas of the application with emphasis on the reasons for the recommendation from the review team.
  - Academic Plan – Describes the applicant’s model in regard to curriculum and instruction, assessment, working with at-risk and special populations, goals, discipline and logistics (school calendar, daily schedule, etc.).
  - Operations Plan – Outlines operational support for the academic program, including staffing and human resources, recruitment and marketing, professional development for teachers, community involvement, and governing board structure and membership.
  - Financial/Business Plan – Provides budgeting and financial plans to ensure both initial and on-going fiscal compliance, including budget assumptions, transportation, fundraising, payroll and insurance functions.
  - Past Performance – Summary of replicating school’s performance record and network financial capacity.

Replicating a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan. It is not an endeavor for which strength in one area can compensate for weakness in another. Therefore, to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must meet or exceed the standard in all three major areas of the capacity review.
Proposal Overview

Operator/Applicant – Rocketship Public Schools

School Name – Rocketship Nashville #3 Elementary School (NSH3)

Mission and Vision:

Mission: Rocketship Nashville #3 Elementary School’s (NSH3) mission is to catalyze transformative change in the low-income communities through a scalable and sustainable public-school model that propels student achievement, develops exceptional educators, and partners with parents who enable high-quality public schools to thrive in their community.

Vision: Rocketship Nashville #3 Elementary School (NSH3) vision is to eliminate the achievement gap in our lifetime.

Proposed Location – Rocketship Nashville #3 Elementary School’s (NSH3) is proposing to provide services to the Antioch and Cane Ridges clusters located in the South Nashville area.

Enrollment Projections (as presented by applicant in the written proposal)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Grade Level</th>
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<th>Year 2 2022</th>
<th>Year 3 2023</th>
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Executive Summary

Original Recommendation from the Review Team:

☐ Authorize

X ☐ Do Not Authorize

Original Summary Analysis – The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Office of Charter Schools has established itself over the past several years as an authorizer of national prominence, with an application process that is fair, transparent, and aligned with national standards. As a result, our charter sector is one of the strongest in the nation, and we always welcome new and innovative applications that serve our students and families well.

The lens through which our review team evaluates a replication application is one that looks for innovative instruction that produces high quality academic outcomes for all students, school operations that support those academic outcomes and sustainable fiscal practices that ensure strong financial stability.

A summary of the qualities we have identified as present in a high-quality application is as follows:

- **Academic Program Design and Capacity**
  - Detailed curriculum and instructional strategies that align with the mission, target population, and state standards
  - Thorough current research that supports the curriculum and instructional strategies
  - Articulation of a sound rationale for the application
  - Detailed plans for meeting all student needs, including accelerated learners, remediation, special education, and English Language Learners
  - Demonstrated internal alignment including scheduling and calendar
  - Sound plans for family and community engagement
  - Description of a school culture that reflects alignment to the school’s mission and goals.

- **Operational Plan and Capacity**
  - Sound and reasonable plan for staffing that is likely to attract and retain top talent
  - Thorough and reasonable plan for start-up operations
  - Compelling detail on the school’s plan for performance management
  - Organizational chart aligned with the leadership and staffing structure
  - Viable employment practices
  - Articulation of clear roles and appropriate responsibilities for governance and management
  - Founding Board members with diverse skills needed to govern effectively
  - Potential facilities and outline of the costs within the financial document
Solid transportation plan that is reasonable and equitable to attract a diverse group of students
Plan for compliance with all federal and state requirements

Financial Plan and Capacity
- Realistic projections with clear assumptions from start-up through full enrollment
- Spending priorities that align with the school’s mission, support the academic program, support the management structure, professional development needs and growth plan
- Cash flow projections that align to the MNPS Performance Frameworks and align with the overall budget
- Sound financial controls to ensure appropriate use of public funds and long-term viability
- Demonstrated financial planning and management capacity
- Reasonable and transparent fundraising goals with disclosure of funders
- Disclosure of all anticipated loans, gifts, and grants, including letters from funders confirming their investment should the school become approved.

Past Performance
- Compelling evidence of successful student outcomes for each school in the network.
- Consistently high-performing schools and provides a detailed narrative outlining primary causation of high-quality, high-performing status, along with description of challenges met and overcome.
- Evidence that the operator’s schools are high performing and successful by meeting state standards and national standards
- Consistently is in good standing wherever they have located schools, and there have been no revocations, litigation that has resulted in negative outcomes, non-renewals, or financial, organizational, or academic deficiencies.
- No findings and is prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting and auditing principles as is outlined in Tennessee law.

After a thorough review of Rocketship Nashville #3 Elementary School’s (NSH3) written replication application and their participation in the capacity interview conducted by the review team and the Office of Charter Schools, a recommendation of denial for this application is present to the board. The reason for this denial is the result of past academic performance within the Rocketship network in located in Nashville, Tennessee.

Currently, Rocketship Public Schools operate two (2) schools located in Nashville Tennessee;
- Rocketship Nashville Northeast Elementary (RNNE) opened in 2014 and is located at 2526 Dickerson Pike, Nashville, TN.
- Rocketship United Academy (RUA) opened in 2015 and is located at 320 Plus Park Blvd, Nashville, TN.

While the review team had to consider both schools’ academic, operational, and financial performances, the review team found the replication application relies heavily on the performance at RUA.
Section Summaries

Original evaluation
Only applicants who score “Meets Standard” in all three major areas on the evaluation rubric are recommended for authorization.

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<tr>
<th>Section</th>
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<td>Past Performance</td>
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Executive Summary

Amended Recommendation from the Review Team:

X □ Authorize
□ Do Not Authorize

Original Summary Analysis – The Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Office of Charter Schools has established itself over the past several years as an authorizer of national prominence, with an application process that is fair, transparent, and aligned with national standards. As a result, our charter sector is one of the strongest in the nation, and we always welcome new and innovative applications that serve our students and families well.

The lens through which our review team evaluates a replication application is one that looks for innovative instruction that produces high quality academic outcomes for all students, school operations that support those academic outcomes and sustainable fiscal practices that ensure strong financial stability.

A summary of the qualities we have identified as present in a high-quality application is as follows:

• Academic Program Design and Capacity
  ➢ Detailed curriculum and instructional strategies that align with the mission, target population, and state standards
  ➢ Thorough current research that supports the curriculum and instructional strategies
  ➢ Articulation of a sound rationale for the application
  ➢ Detailed plans for meeting all student needs, including accelerated learners, remediation, special education, and English Language Learners
  ➢ Demonstrated internal alignment including scheduling and calendar
  ➢ Sound plans for family and community engagement
  ➢ Description of a school culture that reflects alignment to the school’s mission and goals.

• Operational Plan and Capacity
  ➢ Sound and reasonable plan for staffing that is likely to attract and retain top talent
  ➢ Thorough and reasonable plan for start-up operations
  ➢ Compelling detail on the school’s plan for performance management
  ➢ Organizational chart aligned with the leadership and staffing structure
  ➢ Viable employment practices
  ➢ Articulation of clear roles and appropriate responsibilities for governance and management
  ➢ Founding Board members with diverse skills needed to govern effectively
  ➢ Potential facilities and outline of the costs within the financial document
➢ Solid transportation plan that is reasonable and equitable to attract a diverse group of students
➢ Plan for compliance with all federal and state requirements

• Financial Plan and Capacity
  ➢ Realistic projections with clear assumptions from start-up through full enrollment
  ➢ Spending priorities that align with the school’s mission, support the academic program, support the management structure, professional development needs and growth plan
  ➢ Cash flow projections that align to the MNPS Performance Frameworks and align with the overall budget
  ➢ Sound financial controls to ensure appropriate use of public funds and long-term viability
  ➢ Demonstrated financial planning and management capacity
  ➢ Reasonable and transparent fundraising goals with disclosure of funders
  ➢ Disclosure of all anticipated loans, gifts, and grants, including letters from funders confirming their investment should the school become approved.

• Past Performance
  ➢ Compelling evidence of successful student outcomes for each school in the network.
  ➢ Consistently high-performing schools and provides a detailed narrative outlining primary causation of high-quality, high-performing status, along with description of challenges met and overcome.
  ➢ Evidence that the operator’s schools are high performing and successful by meeting state standards and national standards
  ➢ Consistently is in good standing wherever they have located schools, and there have been no revocations, litigation that has resulted in negative outcomes, non-renewals, or financial, organizational, or academic deficiencies.
  ➢ No findings and is prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting and auditing principles as is outlined in Tennessee law.

After a thorough review of Rocketship Nashville #3 Elementary School’s (NSH3) written amended replication application the review team and the Office of Charter Schools, would like to submit a recommendation of approval for this application presented to the MNPS Board of Education. The reason for this approval is the result of academic plan, operations plan, financial plan, and past academic performance within the Rocketship network located in Nashville, Tennessee meeting or exceeding expectations based on the state rubric.

Currently, Rocketship Public Schools operate two (2) schools located in Nashville Tennessee;

• Rocketship Nashville Northeast Elementary (RNNE) opened in 2014 and is located at 2526 Dickerson Pike, Nashville, TN.
• Rocketship United Academy (RUA) opened in 2015 and is located at 320 Plus Park Blvd, Nashville, TN.
**Amended Evaluation**

Only applicants who score “Meets Standard” in all three major areas on the evaluation rubric are recommended for authorization.

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<td>Past Performance</td>
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<tr>
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</table>
Academic Plan Detail

Rating: Meet Standard

Summary as Presented in Proposal: Rocketship Public Schools submitted a replication application for grades K-4 to open a school in the southeast section of Nashville. At capacity, the school would have 560 students. NSH3’s mission is to catalyze transformative change in the low-income communities through a scalable and sustainable public-school model that propels student achievement, develops exceptional educators, and partners with parents who enable high-quality public schools to thrive in their community.

Review Team Analysis: The replication application meets standard for the academic plan. While the review team had several questions develop while reading the application, these questions were answered during the capacity interview either through the participation in the scenario exercise or direct response to questions asked by the review team.

The proposed charter’s mission statement is that every student has the right to dream, to discover, and to develop their unique potential. The school also indicates that their goal is to catalyze transformative change in low-income communities through a scalable and sustainable public-school model that propels student achievement, develops exceptional educators, and partners with parents who enable high-quality public schools to thrive in their community. The Rocketship Regional Team was able to provide a coherent description of what the school would look like as it is meeting the goals and mission of the school. Lastly, the mission and vision had goals that were aligned and identified as the focus in meeting the school’s success.

A description of the community where the school intends to draw students included the Antioch and Cane Ridge Clusters. Also, it detailed the demographics of the students within the zone including the percentages of economically disadvantaged, English Learners, and students with disabilities. While participating the capacity interview, the Rocketship Regional Team provided more in-depth detail and rationale for selecting the proposed community.

The academic focus is aligned with the school’s mission and vision. They plan to target students who are or may be at risk of achieving below grade level. Substantial data was provided regarding the subgroup achievement of Economically Disadvantaged, Black, Hispanic and Native American, and English Learners of current students of Rocketship United, which has similar demographics of the proposed charter. The Rocketship Regional Team provided evidence of a framework for a rigorous research based academic plan that reflects the needs of the targeted student population and is aligned with the school’s stated mission and vision. Additionally, a robust and quality curriculum overview, supported by research, with a plan for implementation that included all grades was included. The team provided evidence that the curriculum design is aligned with the Tennessee State Standards. Additionally, the proposed academic plan appeared to be appropriate and effective for growing all students while at the same time closing achievement gaps. Lastly, there was a description of effective methods for providing differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students.
Rocketship’s Growth and Community Team consists of part-time staff to respond to enrollment inquiries from families, support interested families through ongoing school tours, and conduct in-home enrollment sessions for parents who are unable to visit the campus. Months prior to opening, the founding principal and the founding leadership team engage in a series of community meetings with families to discuss the vision of the new school. Rocketship has partnered with various Head Start locations in South Nashville for Kindergarten enrollment. This was reinforced during the capacity interview.

The education program is based on a rotational model that focuses on Humanities, STEM, and Learning Lab. Additionally, the school will partner with area universities to develop resident teachers from Nashville. They will send existing RPS staff to the new school. Implementation of the GLAD program for EL is a strong component. The Rocketship Regional Team provided a clear description of the existing academic plan. There was no evidence that the key features of the existing academic plan will significantly differ from the operator’s existing schools.

The goal for NSH3 is for each student to meet or exceed the average achievement for schools in the same geographic area on the state mandated achievement assessments and TVAAS and demonstrate at least 1.5 years of growth towards grade level proficiency in Reading and Math on the NWEA assessment. During the capacity interview the Rocketship Regional Team expanded details regarding how the organization will measure its academic progress – individual students, student cohorts, all grade levels within a school and across the network of schools. Multiple assessments such as NWEA, exit tickets, Step, Fountas and Pinnell, etc. were indicated to measure the success of students.
Operations Plan Detail

Rating: Meets Standard

Summary as Presented in Proposal: Since its initial inception in 2014, Rocketship Public Schools has created a Tennessee Regional Leadership Team which consists of a Director of Schools, Manager of Achievement, and Director of Operations. This shift will allow Rocketship Public Schools to build capacity through regional support while maintaining a focus on high-quality school growth.

Review Team Analysis: Rocketship Public Schools indicated their five-year network growth plan would include two (2) schools in 2020-2021, (3) schools in 2021-2022, and by 2024-2025 having four (4) schools. In addition, a local regional team was established consisting of a full time Director of Schools, Manager of Achievement, and a Regional Director of Operations. They have plans to include an Associate Director of Integrated Special Education, and Associate Director of Family and Community Engagement, as well as a talent recruiter to launch a new school. They provided a clear and detailed description during the discussion at the capacity interview of the results of past replication effort, challenges, and lessons learned, and how the organization has addressed any challenges.

Rocketship outlined the proposed leadership team for RNES3. The school director identified in the application has previous experience as a teacher, principal, director of schools, and chief achievement officer with Rocketship Public Schools. The purposes Chief Financial Officer has four (4) years of experience as a board member and secretary treasurer for Envision schools in California, which currently manages four (4) schools in the network. The Chief Programs Officer was previously responsible for the educational model design for the Rocketship network in 2013-2014. The proposed Chief Growth and Community Engagement Officer identified has previous experience with a foundation that focuses on innovative educational options for underserved students.

Currently the Rocketship schools in Tennessee have a single network level governing board that governs both RNNE and RUA. The governing board will be responsible for overseeing the operations and fiscal affairs of the proposed school. The Board of Directors would be comprised of members with expertise in various operational areas that include governance, academics, and financial management. The Rocketship Regional Team provided detail surrounding current size and composition of the governing board, with a rationale of how the current/proposed governance structure and composition will ensure the desired outcomes of a network of highly effective schools if the proposed school is approved. This discussion also included a clear, detailed description of the governance structure at the network level and how it relates to the individual school.

Rocketship Public Schools indicated that members of the school team would receive ongoing professional development centered on key levers, that include data driven instruction, coaching and observation school culture, staff culture and school leader team management. Additionally, recruitment for teachers includes local college career fairs, Teach for America, referral programs for current teachers, use of social media and webinars. Assistant Principals have multiple
training opportunities that include professional development as well as shadowing of executive principals to help prepare them for the transition.
Original

Financial/Business Plan Detail

Rating: Meet Standards

Summary as Presented in Proposal: Rocketship Public Schools indicated that Rocketship’s national network will provide financial support to schools in the startup year as enrollment increases and the school starts to achieve financial stability.

Original Review Team Analysis: Rocketship Public Schools provided sufficient documentation regarding budget assumptions and reasonable numbers that reflect evidence of financial procedures and policies in place for accounting, payroll, etc. There was evidence of a complete, realistic, and viable start-up operating budget for the network and the anticipated school. The panel indicated and provided documentation that reasonable, well-supported revenue and cost assumptions, including grant/fundraising assumptions were secured vs. anticipated. There was a sound contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are lower than estimated. Lastly, all cost revenues and all major expenditures were accounted for and were realistic. It is important to note that since their inception, both current sites have had no audit findings each year of operation.
Rating: Partially Meet Standards

Summary as Presented in Proposal: While the application provides a compelling story for RUA, for the most part, it leaves out the key information concerning RNNE. The review team had to look at all available information provided for the entire network and make a decision accordingly.

Original Review Team Analysis: While the past performance for Rocketship Public Schools in the categories of operations and financial did met the standard, the past performance in the academic section did not.

While RNNE demonstrated average growth in RLA on TNReady assessments for the 2018 school year, the percent of students scoring On Track/Mastered for the past two years has been below district averages. RNNE demonstrated strong student growth in mathematics for the 2018 school year; however, the percent of students scoring On-Track/Mastered was just over half that of the district average (RNNE – 11.9%, MNPS – 21.9%). This caused concern, especially as the district holds a current status of “In Need of Improvement”.

The review team is optimistic regarding RNNE’s ability to assist students in growing to meet grade level goals. At this time, however, there is not sufficient evidence to indicate sustained student achievement using the measures required by this application.
Amended

Past Performance Detail

Rating: Meet Standards

Summary as Presented in Proposal: The amended application included updated information for RNNE and RUA. RNNE was identified as a reward school for School Year 19 and RUA was identified as a reward school for School Year 18.

Original Review Team Analysis:
Though the original application listed this section as “Partially Meets Standard” the review team modified their rating for the following reasons:

- RNNE achieved Level 5 TVAAS in numeracy for both 2018 and 2019.
- RNNE achieved Level 3 TVAAS in literacy in both 2018 and 2019.
- RUA achieved Level 5 TVAAS in literacy in 2018, with a Level 3 in 2019.
- RNNE showed high levels of student growth in mathematics as compared to area elementary schools. Additionally, RNNE outperformed both district and most area school achievement averages in Math in 2019.
- RNNE scored just below district average achievement in ELA in 2019.
- RUA outperformed district and area school achievement averages in both ELA and Math in 2019.

The data for 2019 provided evidence of sustained student growth and achievement for both schools, especially for RNNE.

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Energy Program Update

Casey Megow
Assistant Director
Facility Planning & Construction

Bruce Rasnick
Energy Manager
Facility & Grounds Maintenance
Energy Program History

- Energy Efficient Building Program
  - 18 LEED Silver buildings
  - 2 LEED Gold schools, first public schools in Tennessee
- Energy Program started in 2016
  - Limited energy enhancements through capital upgrades
  - Standard schedules and set-points implemented
  - Data gathering to identify additional opportunities
- Energy Consulting Services
  - RFP issued in January 2019
  - Board Budget & Finance Committee Meeting March 2019
  - Board approved contract April 23, 2019 with SitelogIQ
  - Energy conservation program enhanced
Energy Program Goal

Projected $10 Million in avoided utility cost over 5 years

16% reduction of energy consumption from 2018-19

The more we can avoid cost, the more we can spend on educating our students
Energy Cost Trends (cost in millions)

2019-20 Utility Budget - $21,462,600*

*Electricity & Natural Gas only

Actual cost of energy
Projected cost with fully implemented energy program
Projected cost without energy program

Avoided Cost

- 2015-16: $19.4
- 2016-17: $21.0
- 2018-19: $21.2
- 2019-20: $21.8
- 2020-21: $22.4
- 2021-22: $23.0
- 2022-23: $23.7
- 2023-24: $24.3

*Electricity & Natural Gas only
Energy Consumption Trends (kBtu/SF)

Actual consumption of electricity and natural gas
Projected consumption with fully implemented energy program
Baseline consumption without energy program

53.5  55.3  58.9  55.9  55.9  55.9  55.9  55.9  55.9

How Do We Get There?

- Program Updates
- Continual Operational Improvement
- Staff and Student Education
- Communication and Outreach
- Rewards and Incentives

Maintain staff and student comfort
What Actions Do We Take?

- Update controls schedules
- Revise shutdown schedules
- Improve event handling
- Establishing Energy Teams
- Update dashboards and reports
- Execute communication plans
- Enhance Program structure
- Rollout education program
- Evaluate setpoints / setbacks
- Measure and track success
- Focus on plug loads
- Provide Budgeting support
- Support Capital improvements
- Analyze utility bills
- Evaluate new opportunities
- Support local E-Teams
- Benchmark peers
- Strategize future plans
- Maintain comfort
- Observe sites
- Support positive behaviors
- Reward and recognize
What are the next steps?

• Provide visible on-going support of the program
• Develop school board policy
• Review and update energy program procedures
• Continue energy conservation program with board updates and approvals
Thank You

**Casey Megow**
Assistant Director
Facility Planning & Construction

**Bruce Rasnick**
Energy Manager
Facility & Grounds Maintenance
Agenda

- Program overview
- MNPS Energy Trend
- Energy Program Targets
- How do we get there?
- What actions do we take?
- What are the next steps?