



## FY 2018 Authorizer Annual Report

### Authorizer Information

**Name of Authorizing Organization:** University of St. Thomas

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**Name and Title of Primary Authorizer Contact:** Molly McGraw Healy, Director

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#### Authorizer Summary:

The University of St. Thomas (UST) Charter Authorizing Program is housed within the University's School of Education. Since it was founded in 2001, the UST portfolio has grown to 12 schools. In addition to having a staff dedicated to the Charter Authorizing Program, UST also utilizes a Charter Accountability Board whose members provide valuable insight and specialized knowledge, related to academic, financial, and organizational/governance oversight based on their areas of expertise. This level of expertise goes far beyond what could normally be offered by a smaller authorizing program.

The vision of the UST Charter Authorizing Program is to authorize excellent charter schools in order to increase quality educational opportunities for all children in the Twin Cities metro area. The University of St. Thomas strives to be a national model for quality authorizing and schools' authorizer of choice based on our competence, transparency, and respect for school autonomy.

The mission of the UST Authorizing Program is to advance the common good by using quality authorizing practices to oversee and promote the health of a portfolio of charter schools that demonstrably assist students in reaching their full academic and human potential.

### Authorizer Processes

#### New Charter School Applications in FY 2018 (B.1)

**Did your organization review any new charter school applications in FY 2018?**

No

**If no, please provide an explanation:**

After consideration of our office capacity, mission, and the needs of our current portfolio, as well as the larger charter landscape we determined that it was in the best interest of the schools we currently serve to refrain from holding a new school application process in SY2018.

**If yes, complete the table below for each application:**

Name of Charter School Applicant	Authorizer Approval or Disapproval	Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Approval or Disapproval	If Disapproved, Reason(s) for Disapproval	Application Withdrawn by Applicant
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**New Charter School Openings in FY 2018 (B.2)**

**Did your organization engage in ready-to-open activities in FY 2018?**

No

**If no, please provide an explanation:**

In SY2018, UST had no new school applicants.

**If yes, complete the table below for each charter school scheduled to open:**

Name of Charter School Projected to Begin Serving Students in FY 2018	Projected Opening Date	Did this School Open as Planned?	If No, Provide Reason(s) and Revised Projected Opening Date
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Charter School Expansion Applications in FY 2018 (B.2)**

**Did your organization review any site and/or grade expansion applications in FY 2018?**

Yes

**If no, please provide an explanation:**

N/A

If yes, complete the table below for each application:

Name of Charter School	Proposed Additional Grades to be Served and/or Location of New Site	Authorizer Approval or Disapproval	MDE Approval or Disapproval	If Disapproved, Reason(s) for Disapproval	Application Withdrawn by Applicant
Community of Peace Academy	Site expansion: Magnolia and Jessamine Ave (St. Paul)  Or  Magnolia and Arkwright (St. Paul)	N/A	N/A	n/a	Yes
Twin Cities German Immersion School	Site expansion: Central Lutheran School – 775 Lexington Parkway (St. Paul)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes
Hiawatha Academies	Site expansion: 3500 East 28 <sup>th</sup> Street, Minneapolis, MN	Approved	Approved	N/A	N/A

### Official Early Learning Program Recognition Requests in FY 2018 (B.2)

Did your organization review any requests for official early learning program recognition in FY 2018?

Yes

If no, please provide an explanation:

N/A

If yes, complete the table below for each request:

Name of Charter School	Early Learning Program Seeking Recognition	Authorizer Approval or Disapproval	MDE Approval or Disapproval	If Disapproved, Reason(s) for Disapproval	Application Withdrawn by Applicant
Hiawatha Academies	Pre K (Early Learning) Program	Disapproval	N/A	After careful review based on the early learning application rubric and follow-up with the school, UST determined that additional detail was necessary to meet expansion application standards. The expansion concept in this case was complicated as the school seeks to implement a mixed-delivery subcontracting model which differs from the type of program the application process anticipates.	N/A

**Charter School Change in Authorizer Requests in FY 2018 (B.2)**

Did your organization review change in authorizer requests in FY 2018?

No

**If no, please provide an explanation:**

UST did not receive any change in authorizer requests in FY2018. Note that the Twin Cities German Immersion School's change in authorizer review process took place during FY2017 and thus it was listed in UST's FY2017 Annual Report; however, the school officially joined the UST portfolio on July 1, 2017 (FY2018).

**If yes, complete the table below for each request:**

Name of Charter School	Authorizer Charter School Requested to Transfer From	Authorizer Approval or Disapproval	MDE Approval or Disapproval	If Disapproved, Reason(s) for Disapproval	Application Withdrawn by Applicant
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Charter Contract Renewals in FY 2018 (B.9)****Did your organization engage in charter renewal activities in FY 2018?**

Yes

**If no, please provide an explanation:**

N/A

**If yes, complete the table below for each school:**

Name of Charter School	Was Contract Renewed?	If Yes, Term of Contract Renewal	If No, Reason(s) for Nonrenewal
Academia Cesar Chavez Charter School	Yes	7/1/2018-6/30/2021	N/A
Community of Peace Academy	Yes	7/1/2018-6/30/2023	N/A
Global Academy	Yes	7/1/2018-6/30/2023	N/A
HOPE Community Academy	Yes	7/1/2018-6/30/2021	N/A

Name of Charter School	Was Contract Renewed?	If Yes, Term of Contract Renewal	If No, Reason(s) for Nonrenewal
Spero Academy	Yes	7/1/2018-6/30/2023	N/A
Twin Cities German Immersion School	Yes	7/1/2018-6/30/2023	N/A

## Additional Authorizer Activities

### Authorizing Leadership and Staff Skill Development (A.5)

**Describe how your organization built the knowledge and skill base of its authorizing leadership and staff through professional development over the past year.**

The University of St. Thomas (UST) Authorizing Program is committed to building the knowledge and skill base of its authorizing team, which includes staff as well as the Charter Accountability Board (CAB). To this end, program leadership and staff participate in high quality, relevant, professional development throughout the course of the year that aligns with UST's authorizing vision, mission, goals, and operations.

#### Staff Development

UST's staff development plan is comprised of two parts: individual and staff-wide learning opportunities. Each year, UST team members set goals as a part of their review process. These goals are revisited throughout the course of the year in order to determine successes and areas for growth. An individual learning plan, which includes at least one learning experience annually, is created for each team member based on areas of growth identified. Individualized professional development opportunities may take the form of skill development courses, workshop or conference attendance, targeted readings, etc.

Program staff also strive to stay abreast of the latest in education and charter legislation, research, authorizing best practices, and hot button issues by annually attend statewide and national conferences as well as networking opportunities. Both the Director and Assistant Director of Charter school authorizing attended the FY2018 NACSA conference, and the Assistant Director was selected to be a NACSA leader where she was able to network and learn from experts in the authorizing field. The Director completed a review of the South Carolina Public Charter School district, allowing for a close review of another authorizer's practices. Additionally, UST staff was also actively engaged in the Minnesota Association of Charter School Authorizing with the Assistant Director acting as a member of the executive committee and chair of the strategic planning committee. In June 2018 UST staff hosted the first Authorizer conference for Higher Education Institutions, and Program Coordinator, Aaliyah Hodge, attended and presented at the National Charter School Conference.

In addition to ongoing individual professional development, UST created a comprehensive onboarding plan in FY2017 to ensure that new authorizing team members have access resources required to gain a comprehensive understanding of the charter landscape in Minnesota, the history of the UST authorizing program, and training

in finance, governance, and the office's accountability and oversight frameworks. This process was utilized by both UST and other local authorizers in FY2018 as part their onboarding processes, and covers both legal and historical context of authorizing in Minnesota.

### Board Development

A key component of UST's authorizing program is the utilization of a Charter Accountability Board (CAB) which provides recommendations on interim accountability and high stakes decisions. To ensure that we are building the knowledge and skill base of CAB members we employ a three-pronged development strategy.

First, as some CAB members have limited experience with the concept of authorizing prior to joining the board, UST authorizing program staff provide a robust orientation which includes providing key reading materials such as the NACSA principles and standards, UST's Authorizing Program Manual, conflict of interest policy, CAB bylaws, and more. Reading materials are supplemented with a presentation and on-on-one meeting with the program director to digest the content, answer questions, and familiarize members with the schools in UST's portfolio. All CAB members maintain a binder containing the documents listed above, as well as current portfolio school information.

The second component of our CAB development strategy includes embedding trainings on authorizing best practices into monthly meetings a minimum of twice per year. In FY2018 these trainings were focused on the turnaround and restart process as well as processing the results of our NACSA review.

Finally, the third component of our development strategy includes ensuring that CAB members are able to understand, digest, and respond to, current events impacting the charter and authorizing sector. Our monthly meeting agendas include a 'happenings' section where local and national news stories, research, and policy developments are shared and discussed in context.

## **Authorizer Self-Evaluation (A.9)**

**Describe how your organization self-evaluated its internal ability (capacity, infrastructure, and practices) to oversee the portfolio of charter schools over the past year.**

Self-evaluation and continuous improvement are central to achieving our vision and mission. To this end, the University of St. Thomas (UST) Authorizing Program engages in the following annually:

- **Board Survey.** In June of each year, Charter Accountability Board (CAB) members conduct a board self-evaluation. The self-evaluation is intended to gather information on how the board and overall program functions as well as identify focus areas and board recruitment needs for the upcoming year.
- **Staff Evaluations.** Program staff complete a staff evaluation in the spring of each year. The evaluation includes self-reflection as well as supervisor feedback. Goals for the upcoming year are set and areas for growth and professional development identified.
- **Policy, Procedure, and Operations Review.** On an annual basis, the authorizing team assesses the capacity, effectiveness, and efficiency of program policies and practices. Areas for improvements as well as gaps are identified. Processes and procedures are revised as needed and new processes and procedures adopted, as needed.

Where areas for improvement are identified, the UST Authorizing Program implements a continuous improvement plan that includes the following components:

- Identify desired outcome(s);
- Identify key strategies and products needed to achieve outcome(s);
- Set target dates for completion and intermediary milestones;
- Identify the primary person(s) responsible for each strategy;
- Monitor progress regularly at staff and CAB meetings; and
- Review final outcome and determine whether issue has been satisfied or the cycle begins again.

Moving forward we will also send out a yearly survey to our school directors and board chairs, we will use the feedback from the survey to improve our authorizing practices.

It is also important to note that in FY2018, NACSA reviewed UST authorizing practices and assisted in revising and updating the UST Charter Contract Template as well as the evaluation framework. The NACSA's authorizer evaluation process was an opportunity for both UST staff and the Charter Accountability Board to reflect and gain perspective on our authorizing practices. The evaluation also provided a formative analysis of our primary strengths, priorities for improvement, and recommended action steps. The review was composed of a thorough assessment of our authorizing materials; a survey and focus group with school leaders; and two days of on-site observations and interviews.

### **Authorizer High Quality Authorizing Dissemination (A.10)**

**Describe how your organization disseminated best authorizing practices and/or assisted other authorizers in high quality authorizing over the past year.**

The UST Authorizing Office is committed to promoting high quality authorizing across Minnesota and the nation. The organization uses the following strategies to share best practices, assist other authorizers, and engage with professionals in the field:

- Participating in the Minnesota Association of Charter School Authorizers (MACSA), including holding an officer position as well as serving on the Executive Committee and the Principles and Standards Committee;
- Participating in Minnesota Comeback, including serving on the Leadership Council and chairing the Charter Implementation Team;
- Participating in the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA),
- Speaking and/or providing training on authorizing at meetings and conferences; and
- Providing individual and small group consultation with colleagues and responding to requests for guidance.
- UST staff presented at the FY2018 NACSA conference and participated in a NACSA evaluation of the South Carolina Public Charter School District. Both activities were designed to assist authorizers in improving their practices and also provided the Director with a great opportunity for professional development.



## Charter School Support, Development, and Technical Assistance (B.7)

**Describe how your organization supported its portfolio of charter schools through intentional assistance and development offerings over the past year.**

### Support and Development Plan

The University of St. Thomas' (UST's) plan for support and technical assistance takes the approach of facilitation rather than provision. Specifically, we encourage UST schools to take the lead in selecting and providing development and take our cues from schools' expressed needs. By allowing school leaders to receive information on best practices from one another rather than directly from UST, our hope is that leaders will form meaningful connections and that the information gained can be used or discarded without any concern about rejecting an idea generated by the authorizer. UST continues to work to create a network across our schools that enables the sharing of best practices, continuous improvement, and ongoing learning.

Participation by UST-authorized charter schools in support, development, and technical assistance is optional and provided at no cost to schools. There will be no negative consequences for schools who decline to participate. Specific activities that UST used over the past year to establish a 'Charter Network' and facilitate growth opportunities include:

- **Resource on Charter Law and Related Topics.** We are available to answer questions regarding UST authorizing practices, the charter law (when the answer is clearly defined in law), and related topics. This includes ensuring that schools are aware of changes in Minnesota's Charter Law by providing up-to-date copies of the law (and highlights of items we perceive as major) following legislative sessions.
- **Liaison with MDE.** We are present for our schools when they are working with MDE on a statutory question or other issue and when possible, work to facilitate solutions.
- **Information Hub.** We serve as a 'hub' for information. If a charter school leader calls with a question or request for assistance with best practice, we provide referrals to other schools or individuals we believe may be able to help. Additionally, we send out regular email updates to charter school leaders with news from our schools as well as key updates and information on topics of expressed interest and best practices.
- **Other UST Departments and Colleges.** UST authorized charter schools may choose to work with other departments and colleges within the University. To protect autonomy, we neither encourage nor prohibit such partnerships. When a school calls us with a request for another department/area of UST, we offer to make the initial connection and attempt to ensure that the school receives a response.
- **Use of Space.** Occasionally schools need off-site space for a meeting, board retreat, or other gathering. When the authorizing program is approached with such a request, we do our best to accommodate the school and do not charge for the space.
- **School Leadership Gatherings.** We offer our school leaders the opportunity to come together at least once per year to share ideas and information.
- **Trainings.** Through surveys and conversations, we may choose to work with school leaders to identify common areas of growth across our network of charter schools and organize training opportunities to meet their needs. Typically, we call upon our school leaders or experts in the field to conduct the trainings. The one area where we frequently provide direct training to schools is with regard to authorizer policies/procedures/accountability plan metrics.

It is important to note that not all requests for support and/or assistance may or may not be granted, based on the availability of human and/or financial resources

## **High Quality Charter School Replication and Dissemination of Best School Practices (B.8)**

**Describe how your organization planned and promoted, within its portfolio, the model replication and dissemination of best practices of high performance charters schools over the past year.**

The University of St. Thomas (UST) Charter School Authorizing Program has a four-part plan for model replication:

1. Require new charter school applications to identify research supporting the educational model, curricula, and instructional methodology;
2. Implement a streamlined application process for proven high-quality model replication and/or expansion that reduces the application burden while maintaining rigorous evaluation standards;
3. Encourage existing high-quality schools within UST's portfolio to apply for Federal CSP Replication/Significant Expansion grants and the Best Practices Award Competition; and
4. Promote and support the replication of existing high-quality schools within UST's portfolio.

UST has a four-part plan for the dissemination of best practices:

1. Identify best practices within the UST network and external (local, state, and national) for dissemination to UST authorized charter schools using a variety of vehicles such as authorizer updates, networking sessions, and/or professional development offerings;
2. Identify best practices within the UST network and encourage schools to share through presentations and/or publications;
3. Identify best practices within the UST network and invite faculty from UST's College of Education, Leadership, and Counseling to visit the schools and/or meet with school leadership; and
4. Share information with UST authorized charter schools about learning opportunities.

Additionally UST staff encourage schools in our portfolio every year to apply for best practice/innovation awards. F2F Academy, was recognized by the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools for their work with "Different & Innovative Forms of Measuring Outcomes." Face to Face Academy developed a more impartial measurement for graduation rates which moves away from the dependency of "last school of enrollment" and instead focuses on the amount of time spent in each school.

## **Portfolio Information**

### **General Charter School Portfolio Data (as of June 30, 2018)**

**Preoperational Charter Schools in Authorizer's Portfolio:**

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number (if assigned)	Charter School Program (CSP) Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Approved to Serve	Projected Enrollment when Fully Enrolled	Proposed Location	Proposed Opening Date
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**Operational Charter Schools in Authorizer's Portfolio:**

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2018	Location	Charter School Demographic and Enrollment Information	Charter School's World's Best Workforce Report
Academia Cesar Chavez Charter School	4073	No	PK-8	1801 Lacrosse Ave, St Paul, MN 55119	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to the School's WBWF Report</a>
Community of Peace Academy	4015	No	PK-12	471 Magnolia Ave E Saint Paul, MN 55130-3849	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>
Face To Face Academy	4036	No	9-12	1165 Arcade St. Saint Paul, MN 55106-2615	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>
Global Academy	4186	No	K-8	4065 Central Ave NE Columbia Heights, MN 55421-2917	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>
HOPE Community Academy	4070	No	K-12	720 Payne Avenue Saint Paul, MN 55130-4127	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2018	Location	Charter School Demographic and Enrollment Information	Charter School's World's Best Workforce Report
Hiawatha Academies	4170	No	K-12	3810 E. 56th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55417 (Morris Park)  1611 E. 46th Street, Minneapolis MN, 55407 (Northrop)  3800 Pleasant Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55409 (Hiawatha College Prep)  4640 17th Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55407 (Northrop Middle)  3500 E. 28th St., Minneapolis, MN 55406 (HCHS)	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to the School's WBWF Report</a>
Metro Deaf School	4005	No	PK-12	1471 Brewster St Saint Paul, MN 55108-2612	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>
PIM Arts High School	4110	No	9-12	7255 Flying Cloud Drive Eden Prairie, MN 55344	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>
Spero Academy	4113	No	K-6	2701 California St. NE Minneapolis, MN 55418	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>
St Paul Conservatory Performing Art	4112	No	9-12	16 W 5th Street Saint Paul, MN 55102-1403	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	CSP Grant Recipient	Grade Levels Served in FY 2018	Location	Charter School Demographic and Enrollment Information	Charter School's World's Best Workforce Report
Twin Cities Academy	4132	No	6-12	690 Birmingham Saint Paul, MN 55106-5199	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>
Twin Cities German Immersion Charter School	4152	No	K-8	1031 Como Avenue Saint Paul, MN 55103-1021	<a href="#">Hyperlink to MN Report Card</a>	<a href="#">Hyperlink to School's WBWF Report</a>

#### MDE Officially Recognized Early Learning Programs at Charter Schools in Authorizer's Portfolio:

Name of Charter School	Officially Recognized Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening Program	Officially Recognized Instructional Preschool Program to provide early childhood education and preparation for transition to kindergarten for children ages 3-5	Officially Recognized Instructional Prekindergarten Program for four-year-olds to prepare children for entry into kindergarten the following year
Academia Cesar Chavez	No	No	Yes
Community of Peace Academy	No	No	Yes
Metro Deaf School	No	Yes	No

#### Charter School Portfolio Activity in FY 2018

In FY 2018, did any charter schools leave your organization's portfolio and transfer to another authorizer during or at the end of the year?

No

If yes, complete the table below for each applicable school:

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	New Authorizing Organization	Effective Date of Transfer
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**In FY 2018, did your organization terminate or revoke the charter contract for any charter school before the end of the contract term?**

No

**If yes, complete the table below for each applicable school:**

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	Reason(s) for Contract Termination	Effective Date of Contract Termination
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**In FY 2018, did any charter schools voluntarily close (i.e., closure was initiated by the school) during or at the end of the year?**

No. Sankofa Underground North Academy voted to close 7/10/2017; however, this closure was included in the prior report as the bulk of the process took place during FY2017.

**If yes, complete the table below for each applicable school:**

Name of Charter School	Charter School LEA Number	Reason(s) for Closure	Effective Date of Closure
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## Charter School Portfolio Performance

### World's Best Workforce

**Describe how your organization incorporates achievement of World's Best Workforce goals in its ongoing oversight and evaluation of charter schools.**

The World's Best Workforce bill, passed in 2013, focuses on five goals: Ensuring that:

- All children are ready for school,
- All third graders can read on grade level,
- All achievement gaps are closed,
- All students graduate from high school, and that
- All students are college and career ready.

The UST authorizing program supports all of these goals and examines school progress toward their achievement through the metrics in our accountability plan, many of which are aligned with the WBWF goals. In addition, we are able to remain abreast of school performance on WBWF measures as we read schools’ full WBWF reports (generally included as a part of schools’ annual reports) and independently examine the information available via the MDE Data Center on a regular basis. For example, while we do not have a metric explicitly dedicated to third graders reading on grade level, a number of our accountability plan indicators examine proficiency and growth for students at all grade levels—and we look at this information by grade as it is entered and can then dialogue with schools about results as necessary. Other indicators, such as graduation level, are explicitly included in our framework for all schools serving high school grades.

While it is still difficult to accurately ascertain whether students are college and career ready, we have already begun examining the data through Minnesota’s Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDS) and Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System (ECLDS) and look forward to a time when we can incorporate it into our accountability frameworks. This impressive collection of data will allow a critical window into the work of our schools and allow us to answer questions about whether students are truly entering and finishing school ready for the next stages of their lives.

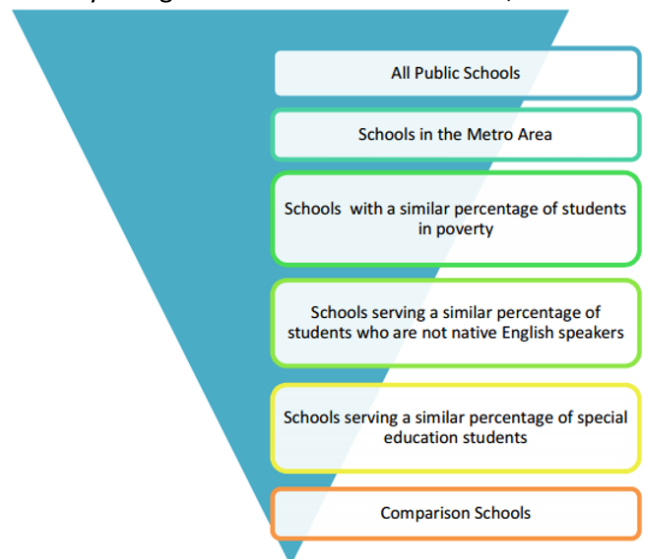
## Academic Performance

**Present outcome data regarding key academic performance indicators your organization used when evaluating your portfolio of charter schools. Provide a narrative analysis of this data, indicating strengths and areas for improvement.**

In order to evaluate the learning program, the performance framework template utilized by UST includes twelve or more possible indicators, which examine the following categories of information: school-specific goals, goals aligned with Minnesota Department of Education systems, proficiency and growth on standardized tests, fulfillment of duties to English Learners (ELs) and Special Education students, attendance, and whether the school is meeting its stated mission.

The intent of the Academic Performance section is to provide a multi-faceted understanding of student performance at the charter school. The measures used to understand academic performance include:

- Performance on the North Star Excellence and Equity System: MN’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan;
- Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) Data: All authorized schools shall participate fully in the MCAs;



- At least one additional school-selected standardized assessment which must be approved by the authorizer in advance of the evaluation rubric's finalization and be utilized for a minimum of three years before a change in assessment can be requested;
- At least one mission-specific academic goal;
- Program alignment with chartered mission and vision;
- Graduation rate data; and
- College and career readiness data.

As charter schools are expected to improve student performance, several academic goals involve the use of demographically similar comparison schools which are identified using a filtering process (depicted at right). The process begins with a list of public schools in the metro area available through the Minnesota Department of Education.

The goal of the process described above is to generate 3-5 schools serving a similar population with which the authorized school can be compared. It is important to note that at times, the process above will produce too many or too few matches. In that case, the parameters of items b, c, and d above may be adjusted to find an adequate number of the best possible matches. Due to shifting demographics in schools, matches may vary from year to year.

The picture of portfolio performance can be complex when examining the academic data. The University is proud of the fact that almost all of our (gen ed) schools outperformed their comparison schools and resident district in both reading and math. This is indicative of the fact that the schools represented in the data work hard to ensure that no student falls through the cracks. The University is also gratified that our portfolio includes a number of schools that have repeatedly achieved Reward status, been identified as High Quality Charter Schools, and been cited as 'Beating the Odds' schools. Additionally, the portfolio includes schools recognized for their innovative practices and schools that serve over 90% students qualifying for special education services.

We believe our broad and comprehensive accountability measures provide additional insight into schools' strengths and challenges—particularly when the school population is significantly different from the state's population. Yet we find that the overall picture seen when viewing our MDE portfolio data is aligned with our own assessment—results are mixed. While many St. Thomas charters are demonstrating strong academic gains for students, others must make improvements to ensure that their model produces strong outcomes for those who attend—the most important purpose of any school. Data summarizing UST charter schools' performance on the MCA/MTAS can be found on the Minnesota Department of Education website [MDE Report Card](#). Moving forward, St. Thomas will continue to push those schools experiencing weak academic results to improve, learn from successful charter and district schools, and take whatever steps are necessary to ameliorate student learning. Ultimately, we believe in the charter promise of accountability for results, meaning charter schools must demonstrate their ability to provide a safe, effective program in order to continue their operations.

A summary of each school's academic performance is presented below, which shows that the majority of schools are meeting standard. As noted above, UST evaluates its schools using a series of key indicators which encompass both qualitative and quantitative data. The indicators are scored using a four-point scale including the following categories: Does Not Meet Standard, Approaching Standard, Meets Standard, or Exceeds Standard. For some compliance indicators, it is not possible to exceed the standard, thus, it is not possible to



achieve an overall 4.0 rating of ‘Exceeds Standard.’ Each school’s performance against these indicators is summarized below.

### UST Academic Performance Measures

Does Not Meet Standard	Approaching Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard
1.1	Students in all subgroups will meet proficiency targets set by the Minnesota Department of Education.		
1.2	MCA II Proficiency: Students are performing as well as or better than the state, the resident district, and comparable schools on MCA II math and reading exams.		
1.3	MCA II Growth (Normal Curve): Students who are continuously enrolled are making growth academically as measured by MCA II exams.		
1.4	MCA II Growth (Comparison Groups): Students are making expected growth compared to the state, resident district, and comparable district schools.		
1.5	Students are performing at or above the national median, as measured using standardized assessments.		
1.6	Students are making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis.		
1.7	The school is meeting its school-specific academic goal(s).		
1.8	Annual Measureable Achievement Objectives (if applicable): If the school receives Title I or Title III funding, students are meeting the state-established expectations for English language learner (ELLs) academic progress.		
1.9	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to English language learners (ELLs).*		
1.10	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with individual education plans (IEPs).*		
1.11	The school’s learning program exemplifies the mission and vision of the school.		
1.12	The school is meeting state-established targets for graduation rates.		
1.13	The school meets or exceeds the attendance rate for AYP.		
1.14	Students are attaining English Language Proficiency at rates equal to or greater than students statewide as measured by the ACCESS test.		
*Only possible scores are “Does Not Meet Standard,” “Approaching Standard,” and “Meets Standard”			

	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	1.10	1.11	1.12	1.13	1.14	Overall
Academia Cesar Chavez	N/A							N/A				N/A	N/A	N/A	
Community of Peace	N/A							N/A				N/A	N/A	N/A	
Face to Face Academy	N/A		<sup>1</sup>				TBD	N/A	N/A					N/A	
Global Academy	N/A							N/A				N/A			
Hiawatha Academies	N/A							N/A				N/A	N/A		
HOPE Community Academy	N/A							N/A				N/A		N/A	

<sup>1</sup> MCA Proficiency for Students in Poverty: Are students living in poverty (defined as qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch) performing as well as or better than the state and resident district on MCA math and reading exams?

Metro Deaf School	N/A	2	3	4	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					N/A	
PIM Arts High School	N/A							N/A						N/A	
St. Paul Conservatory of Performing Arts	N/A					TBD		N/A						N/A	
Spero Academy	6	7	8	9	N/A	N/A		N/A				N/A		N/A	
Twin Cities Academy	N/A							N/A				N/A		N/A	
Twin Cities German Immersion School	N/A							N/A				N/A		N/A	

## Operational Performance

**Present outcome data regarding key operational performance indicators your organization used when evaluating your portfolio of charter schools. Provide a narrative analysis of this data, indicating strengths and areas for improvement.**

In order to evaluate the organizational health of schools, the performance framework template utilized by UST includes twenty or more indicators which encompass a variety of qualitative and quantitative measures such as board adoption of best practices, quality of the school facility, and the presence of critical policies and procedures. A successful charter school requires a board and leadership team with competency in a variety of governance, operational, and compliance-related areas. The Organizational Effectiveness indicator seeks to capture a school's performance through a variety of qualitative and quantitative measures. The intent of the Organizational Effectiveness section is to ensure that schools are following all UST, MDE, and statutory compliance requirements, providing academic programs that meet state and federal requirements, properly governing schools, and utilizing certain accepted best practices all in service of providing students with a safe, stable, and effective school.

Overall, operational performance is strong across UST authorized charter schools as demonstrated in the summary chart below. Governance is a prime example of success in our portfolio. All board members from UST authorized schools exhibit an understanding of the role of the board, which can be attributed to the fact that almost all of our boards engage in professional development above what is required by statute. The boards of

<sup>2</sup> Academic Outcomes for Grades K-2: Students will meet or exceed their individual academic goals based on the indicators agreed upon by UST and MDS in the accountability plan.

<sup>3</sup> Academic Outcomes for Grades 3-8: Students will meet or exceed their individual academic goals based on the indicators agreed upon by UST and MDS in the accountability plan.

<sup>4</sup> Academic Outcomes for Grades 9-12: Students will meet or exceed their individual academic goals based on the indicators agreed upon by UST and MDS in the accountability plan.

<sup>5</sup> Academic Outcomes for Exempt Students: Exempt Students will meet or exceed their Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals.

<sup>6</sup> State Accountability System Goal: Students in the special education subgroup will meet or exceed the state's proficiency levels for the same subgroup in both math and reading.

<sup>7</sup> Are students initially assessed as performing at or above grade level meeting or exceeding their individual academic goals based on school and authorizer approved assessment tools?

<sup>8</sup> Are students initially assessed as performing below grade level meeting or exceeding their individual academic goals based on school and authorizer approved assessment tools?

<sup>9</sup> Exempt Students: Are exempt students meeting or exceeding their individual academic goals based on their IEP?

the school’s in our portfolio also routinely engage in strategic planning and make efforts to engage the entire school community.

**UST Operational Performance Measures**

Does Not Meet Standard	Approaching Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard
3.1	All board members meet the statutory requirements for training on board roles and responsibilities, governance, and employment practices.		
3.2	All board members exhibit understanding of the role of the board and utilize nonprofit governance best practices.		
3.3	The board completes a self-review each school year.		
3.4	The board meet the governance model requirements laid out in its bylaws as required by Minnesota Statute and board membership includes a balance of skills and expertise.		
3.5	The school board periodically engages in strategic planning, and the school exemplifies the strategic direction set by the board.		
3.6	The board comprehensively evaluates the performance of the school leader through and annual evaluation process.		
3.7	The school board has a board-approved professional development plan for the director.		
3.8	The board keeps a governance binder that includes bylaws, policies, board committee minutes and board packets.		
3.9	The board reviews, updates, and approves its policies.*		
3.10	The board regularly reviews, updates, and approves its bylaws.*		
3.11	The board submits a complete board packet to UST at least 3 days prior to all board meetings.*		
3.12	The board understands and meets the requirements of the Open Meeting Law.*		
3.13	The school has strong academic and organizational leadership.		
3.14	The school exhibits a high level of parent satisfaction.		
3.15	The school is able to maintain a high percentage of teacher retention.		
3.16	The school’s educational staff is appropriately licensed.*		
3.17	The school remains consistently full with retention rates at or above the school’s agreed upon target rates.		
3.18	The school follows the admission policies and procedures outlined in law.**		
3.19	The school’s physical plant is safe and conducive to learning.		
3.20	The school completes criminal background checks for teachers and board members.*		
*Only possible scores are “Does Not Meet Standard,” “Approaching Standard,” and “Meets Standard”			
**Only possible scores are “Does Not Meet Standard” and “Meets Standard”			

	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.10	3.11	3.12
Academia Cesar Chavez	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Blue	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green
Community of Peace	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Face to Face Academy	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Global Academy	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Hiawatha Academies	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
HOPE Community Academy	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green
Metro Deaf School	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
PIM Arts High School	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

St. Paul Conservatory of Performing Arts	Green	Green	Yellow	Blue	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green
Spero Academy	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Twin Cities Academy	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green
Twin Cities German Immersion School	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

	3.13	3.14	3.15	3.16	3.17	3.18	3.19	3.20	Overall
Academia Cesar Chavez	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Green
Community of Peace	Blue	Green	Yellow	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green
Face to Face Academy	Blue	N/A	Blue	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Yellow	Green
Global Academy	Blue	Blue	Red	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green
Hiawatha Academies	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
HOPE Community Academy	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow
Metro Deaf School	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green
PIM Arts High School	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Blue	Green	Green
St. Paul Conservatory of Performing Arts	Green	Blue	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green
Spero Academy	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
Twin Cities Academy	Blue	Green	Yellow	Green	Blue	Green	Blue	Green	Green
Twin Cities German Immersion School	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green

### Financial Performance

**Present outcome data regarding key financial performance indicators your organization used when evaluating your portfolio of charter schools. Provide a narrative analysis of this data, indicating strengths and areas for improvement.**

In order to evaluate the fiscal health of schools, the performance framework template includes eight indicators which include timely production and reporting of financial information, use of best practices, compliance with law, results of external audits, enrollment, and maintenance of a fund balance sufficient to cushion against unexpected events. The intent of the Financial Viability section is to ensure the successful operation of the school into the future and to ensure the proper use of public funds.

In examining the data available by authorizing portfolio via the MDE Report Card and other elements of the website, it is clear that our authorized schools are generally in a strong financial position—a fact echoed in the overall strong performance schools demonstrated against the financial elements in our accountability framework (see individual school profiles below). For example, all UST schools have an active finance committee that meets regularly to review the school’s financial health. Additionally all of our schools have a fund balance above 16% and are not at risk of falling into Statutory Operating Debt.

#### UST Financial Performance Measures

Does Not Meet Standard	Approaching Standard	Meets Standard	Exceeds Standard
2.1	The school provides financial material to UST at least 3 days prior to its school board meetings.*		
2.2	The school has an active finance committee that meets regularly.		
2.3	All charter board members meet the statutory requirements for board financial management training.		
2.4	The board has a fund balance policy that includes fund balance goals over time.		

2.5	The school has completed an annual audit.**
2.6	The school has a clean audit with no major findings.
2.7	The school establishes and maintains a balanced budget.
2.8	The school has a sufficient fund balance.
*Only possible scores are “Does Not Meet Standard,” “Approaching Standard,” and “Meets Standard”	
**Only possible scores are “Does Not Meet Standard” and “Meets Standard”	

	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.8	Overall
Academia Cesar Chavez	Green	Blue	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Blue	Blue	Green
Community of Peace	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green
Face to Face Academy	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green
Global Academy	Green	Blue	Blue	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green
Hiawatha Academies	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
HOPE Community Academy	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Blue	Blue	Green
Metro Deaf School	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green
PIM Arts High School	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
St. Paul Conservatory of Performing Arts	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Green	Blue	Green
Spero Academy	Green	Blue	Green	Blue	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green
Twin Cities Academy	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Green	Green
Twin Cities German Immersion School	Green	Blue	Green	Green	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	Green

## Other Performance

**Present outcome data regarding other key performance indicators your organization used when evaluating your portfolio of charter schools. Provide a narrative analysis of this data, indicating strengths and areas for improvement.**

As noted under academic performance above, a number of UST authorized charter schools have received recognition for their performance. Community of Peace, Face to Face Academy, Twin Cities academy and Twin Cities German Immersion School have all been designated as high quality charter schools. Additionally F2F has won the innovation award and a number of the schools in our portfolio have earned the MDE Finance award.

In SY2018, one UST authorized school was on intervention. On June 24, 2015 Academia Cesar Chavez was placed on a Level 1 Intervention: Notice of Concern, based on “concerns regarding the academic success of ACC students,” which began in SY13 and intensified in SY14 and SY15. Although the school’s academic results increased in 2018 they trail considerably behind those of comparison groups. Thus, ACC remains on intervention until a clear return to acceptable performance has been achieved. HOPE Community Academy received a three year renewal because of low academic performance as well as special education concerns and capacity concerns which stemmed from the school board to administration and affected implantation capacity, compliance reporting, and professional development.

Additionally because of the decline in proficiency across a number of campuses in the Hiawatha network we are closely monitoring their academic performance.