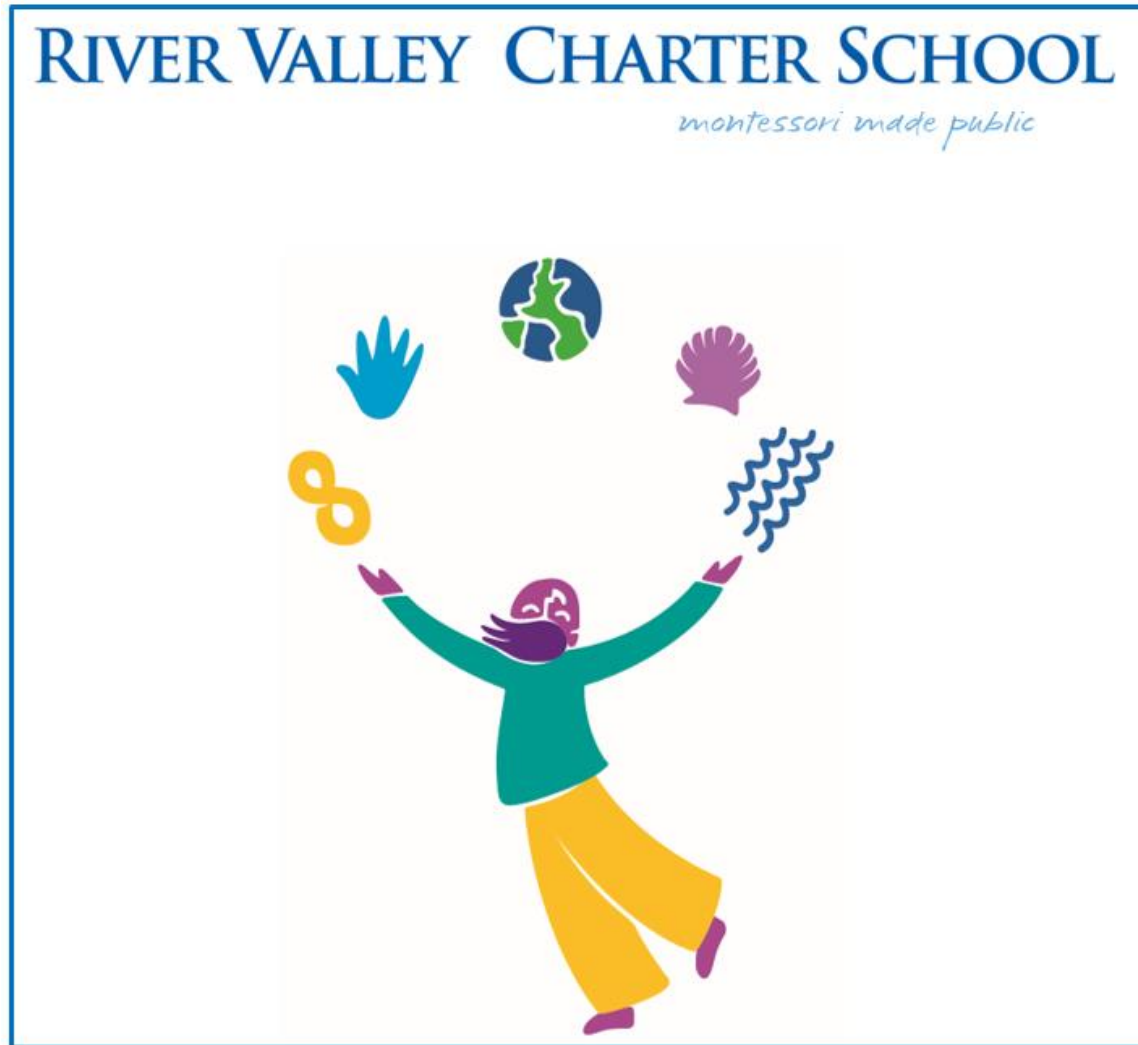


Annual Report of a Public Charter School 2019-2020



RIVER VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

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Date Report was Finalized: July 31, 2020

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INTRODUCTION TO RIVER VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

<i>River Valley Charter School (RVCS)</i>			
Type of Charter	Commonwealth	Location of School	Newburyport
Regional or Non-Regional	Regional	Chartered Districts in Region	Amesbury, Newbury, Newburyport, Salisbury, West Newbury
Year Opened	1999	Year(s) Renewed	2003, 2009, 2014, 2019
Maximum Enrollment	288	Enrollment as of 6/12/2020	288
Chartered Grade Span	K-8	Current Grade Span	K-8
# of Instructional Days per school year	180	Students on Waitlist as of July 7, 2020	196
Instructional Days during 2019-2020 School Year	181 total days: 118 in-person 63 remote		
School Hours	8:30am – 3:10pm	Age of School as of 2019-2020 School Year	Twenty years
Mission Statement The mission of River Valley Charter School is to provide a rigorous academic program based on the Montessori philosophy and rooted in the history, culture, and ecology of the Merrimack River Valley. Students will reach their full potential as scholars and become self-reliant and productive members of society. They will be adept at critical thinking and creative problem solving and will be fully prepared to succeed in future schools, careers, and civic life.			

LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES' CHAIRPERSON

June 29, 2020

To the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education,

On behalf of the River Valley Charter School community, it is our pleasure to submit to you the 2019-2020 Annual Report. This has been a year, book-ended by remarkable events. The River Valley Charter School began the year with the celebration of our 20th anniversary and the welcoming of our new Director. We end the year swept up in the COVID-19 pandemic and racial upset that has affected world and local communities. Despite the uncertainty that continues to define this crisis, the River Valley Charter School's mission is our guiding light.

River Valley Charter School (RVCS) provides a high-quality public Montessori program. The Montessori philosophy is centered on the whole-child approach to education. Our primary goal is to help children reach their full potential both academically and personally, while instilling in them a sense of their place in the world and their responsibilities as productive members of society. In the midst of this pandemic and racial reckoning, our educational mission and Montessori philosophy are as relevant as ever.

As in previous years, RVCS continues to maintain a sound fiscal position and reliably smooth school operations. School policies and student performance continue to meet state standards. Capital investments continue as we maintain the building and modify as needed to better ensure health and safety. Our governing body is robust and benefits from a talented group of Trustees representing the parent body, alumni, and the local community.

In July 2019, we welcomed Jonnie Lyn Evans as our new School Director. Jonnie Lyn had served as Assistant Director for 6 years prior and was a founder of the school 20 years ago. Her understanding of the mission and philosophy of RVCS runs deep. The Board's top priority this year was her smooth transition into the primary leadership position of the school. As Director, Jonnie Lyn is building on what was already a solid foundation, and she continues to strengthen the RVCS program and our community. It is notable that among her goals for the 2019-2020 academic year, she identified issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion among her priorities. In doing so, she has begun the work of drawing our attention to anti-racist education.

The state-wide closure of schools on March 16 due to COVID-19 required significant changes to the delivery of the RVCS program. The school quickly adapted. RVCS pivoted to provide a robust remote learning experience and technology support. The school also connected with individual families to ensure families' food and housing security. Our Director communicated regularly to the RVCS community to keep families informed and to understand their experiences. RVCS leadership and faculty responded thoughtfully and flexibly to school closure, and our school community, on the whole, has been impressed.

To be clear, the RVCS community has responded well to the current crisis, but we are most certainly not through it, nor are we (nor anyone) on stable ground. It goes without saying that this summer will be an intense time of work and preparation for an unpredictable new school year. While we are confident that we have a strong community and a solid team of Board, administration, and faculty members, we know that this year will not be smooth. We know that the mission of delivering an excellent public Montessori program will be most challenging this coming year.

Thank you for taking the time to review the enclosed report, and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Pamela Armstrong
Chair, Board of Trustees

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Faithfulness to the Charter

Mission and Key Design Elements

There were no changes to our mission or key design elements in the 2019-2020 school year.

The mission of the River Valley Charter School is to provide a rigorous academic program based on the Montessori philosophy and rooted in the history, culture, and ecology of the Merrimack River Valley. Students will reach their full potential as scholars and become self-reliant, productive members of society. They will be adept at critical thinking and creative problem solving and will be fully prepared to succeed in future schools, careers, and civic life.

Key design elements of the River Valley Charter School program include:

- An educational program based on the Montessori philosophy
- A curriculum rooted in the history, culture, and ecology of the Merrimack River Valley
- A focus on the development of students' critical thinking and problem-solving capabilities.

Montessori Principles

River Valley Charter School (RVCS) provides a high-quality Montessori program within the public-school arena. The school maintains its commitment to the Montessori pedagogy by hiring Montessori-trained and/or certified teachers in every classroom and by providing tuition support for accredited Montessori training to meet the school's expectation that all K-6 lead teachers be Montessori trained. RVCS also supports authentic Montessori programming by staying abreast of best practices in the ever-expanding arena of public Montessori programs.

Every classroom in grades K through six has two adults including a full-time lead teacher and a full-time assistant teacher; this configuration is a core component of the Montessori approach. During 2019-2020, one Kinderhaus (kindergarten) classroom and one Elementary 1 classroom of grade 1-3 students had co-lead teachers. Out of twelve grade K-6 lead teachers, ten have Montessori certifications, and two are Montessori trained. Out of eight grade K-6 assistants, four have Montessori certifications, and four are Montessori trained. Our classrooms are outfitted with genuine Montessori learning materials and furniture, which are essential to creating a prepared Montessori learning environment. We offer multi-age classrooms, hands-on learning, a project-based curriculum, frequent opportunities for student collaboration and student-directed learning, all hallmarks of the Montessori philosophy.

Montessori education is centered upon a whole-child approach to learning. Our primary goal is to help children reach their full potential both academically and personally, while instilling in them a sense of their place in the world and their responsibilities as productive members of society. The curriculum is designed to develop the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive elements of each student, and is based on a belief that children are naturally eager to learn when appropriate conditions exist. Our learning environments operate on the principle of freedom within limits. This

contributes to the development of independence and decision-making skills of our students. Most lessons are given in small group settings and are customized to meet the learning needs of each student. With two teachers in every classroom, instruction is individualized to the greatest extent possible. The multi-age classrooms in grades 1-8 enrich the curriculum options by offering students the opportunity to learn from and teach each other. Teachers provide lessons based on both their Montessori training and the guidelines of the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

The success of this approach is evident through the skills and characteristics that our students develop. They are remarkably adaptable, they learn to work independently, they bring great creativity to their learning, and their curiosity inspires them to seek answers to their own questions. River Valley students demonstrate excellent collaboration and communication skills and are adept at exchanging ideas both in writing and through discussion. They have extensive experience at public speaking and possess strong presentation skills. Our students are encouraged to make decisions from the earliest grades and learn to make good choices and manage their time well. They also learn that mistakes are part of the learning process and provide important opportunities for self-reflection and growth. The independence and the variety of challenging and authentic learning opportunities children experience at River Valley foster excellent critical thinking and problem-solving skills, not just with paper and pencil exercises, but especially in real world applications.

River Valley staff demonstrate a consistent commitment to the Montessori principles of whole-child education, developing a strong sense of community, emphasizing and providing a climate of genuine collaboration, seeking to develop deep understanding of academic concepts, providing active learning opportunities, and developing a sense of social justice in children. Examples of each of these core principles are provided below.

Whole-Child Education: Our staff demonstrates deep concern for and awareness of every student. To begin each day, staff greet every child as they exit their car or the school bus, prior to the student even entering the school building. Our school counselor welcomes every student at the front door of the school to get a quick glimpse of each student's emotional state as they begin their day. Our

"Education is not something which the teacher does, but is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is not acquired by listening to words, but in virtue of experiences in which the child acts on his environment. The teacher's task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child."

Dr. Maria Montessori, To Educate the Human Potential

individualized approach to instruction during the school day allows teachers to carefully assess each student's readiness to learn, and to respond to personal, social, or emotional concerns directly. Classrooms for our younger students contain "peace

corners," where students can go for a quiet moment to help them feel centered and ready-to-learn, or where two students can speak together to resolve differences. At all levels, lessons are given on "grace and courtesy," a Montessori expression used to help students reflect on and learn how to be respectful and at peace with themselves and others. Students are physically active during classroom learning periods, allowing kinesthetic learners to access their strengths, and all students to develop independence and remain engaged in their learning.

During the 2019-2020 school year, every classroom continued to implement the RVCS Habits of Learning curriculum ([described in more detail in the Academic Performance section of this document](#)) which prioritizes and strengthens our whole child approach to education. When RVCS

transitioned to remote teaching and learning, during the COVID-19 closure, we started to consider the use of online portfolios for their use documenting students' Habits of Learning. This initiative will continue into the 2020-2021 school year such that all students will ultimately have an online portfolio containing selected pieces of core content work as well as examples of their Habits of Learning.

Developing a Strong Sense of Community: Each classroom at River Valley functions as its own small community. Students are expected to maintain the order and cleanliness of the learning environment, and our multi-age structure provides natural opportunities for students of different ages to assume various roles in this work. Every class, including our middle school, holds regular community meetings. At these meetings students discuss the successes or challenges that their community faces and develop strategies and responses accordingly.

Students in grades four through eight typically participate in overnight field trips during which place-based learning curriculum and community-building activities are emphasized. These trips allow students to demonstrate their skills and abilities outside of the academic environment, further strengthening each student's standing within the community. During the 2019-2020 school year, and because of the COVID-19 pandemic, only some of our classrooms participated in overnight field trips as many had to be cancelled.

"It is up to the teacher to arrange that the moral teachings of life emerge from social experiences. Morals have at the same time a practical side, which governs social relations, and a spiritual side, which presides over the awakening of conscience in the individual."

Dr. Maria Montessori, From Childhood to Adolescence

Students at all levels eat lunch in their classrooms with their peers and teachers, allowing for informal social time that provides additional personal and community connections. Our Specials schedule for grades 1-6 is arranged so that students from two classrooms are grouped together, by grade, further extending connections across a grade level. In order to develop school-wide community, River Valley holds monthly, whole-school assemblies where both students and staff share the projects and activities happening throughout the building and beyond. The assemblies included student presentations, skits, songs, and other student-led entertainment. Middle school advisory groups serve as hosts of the school-wide assemblies. During 2019-2020, River Valley students led four whole-school assemblies. This year a group of staff members helped the students facilitate the assemblies.

Genuine Collaboration: Much of the learning that happens at River Valley happens *between* students. Though direct instruction in all core academic areas is provided to every student each day, students spend a large portion of the learning time working with each other. Classrooms are furnished with group tables and provide open floor space for group work, and students are encouraged to work

"...It seems that the capacity of really understanding is connected with discussion, with criticism, or with assent of others. The satisfaction of knowing must be immediately communicated to others, and in this communication, enthusiasm increases."

Dr. Maria Montessori, The Erdkinder and the Functions of the University

together on many assignments. This approach not only fosters collaboration, but also provides students the

opportunity to articulate their thinking to others, which helps to deepen their comprehension.

Additionally, our commitment to tying the curriculum to the history, culture and ecology of the Merrimack River Valley naturally lends itself to project-based learning. Project work expectations typically include both reporting and presentation (often multi-media), and our students are responsible for collaborating to assure successful execution of these expectations, modeling the skills required for success beyond the school environment.

Deep Understanding: The River Valley curricular approach is one of mastery learning rather than of simply covering concepts. Our curriculum maps articulate learning goals for each level, yet our teachers have the flexibility to present concepts in varying order and manners to suit the learning style and pace of each student.

Rather than structuring the day to assign a limited amount of time to each subject area, the Montessori approach provides both students and teachers

flexibility in the time they choose to devote to any given pursuit. When a student, or group of students, demonstrates an interest in exploring a concept, question, or issue more deeply, the Montessori philosophy calls for teachers to facilitate such interest.

“Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence.”

Dr. Maria Montessori, Spontaneous Activity in Education

Much of the student work is project-based, and students frequently have a voice in the topics they research. For example, every October, our Elementary 1 students engage in a Mystery History project where each child selects a notable historical figure, researches their life, creates a biography, and formally presents their research to students and parents while dressed in the costume of their historical figure. Our Elementary 2 grade 4-6 students, regularly engage in project-based work, exploring topics from the Industrial Revolution to our local ecosystems. Through frequent field trips, students gain opportunities to engage in meaningful and hands-on activities that bring relevance and deeper comprehension to their studies. Nearly all projects culminate in some form of presentation, providing students the opportunity to teach others about their learning, and providing teachers opportunities for authentic assessment.

Active Learning Opportunities: Maria Montessori pioneered the now widely accepted principle that the work of the hand informs the learning of the mind. Given this fundamental belief, Montessori classrooms are designed to provide active learning opportunities for all students. Montessori

“Curiosity is an impulse to investigate. Once the child has felt the fascination of one object, he will become zealous in the conservation of all objects.”

Dr. Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind

manipulative materials allow students to experience concrete representation of abstract concepts. Students are free to move about the classroom, providing important kinesthetic opportunities. Students

have an active voice in their learning process, and rarely learn in a sit-and-listen format. Our place-based learning focus allows students multiple opportunities to actively engage in learning experiences outside the school walls. From exploring the wetland ponds on our school site to advocating for greater awareness and focus on climate change, River Valley students continually experience and learn from the surrounding world in active ways.

Developing a Sense of Social Justice in Children: River Valley students at all levels participate in community service work that provides them with perspectives on larger communities and the issues that people beyond our school walls may face. Our younger students visit facilities for the elderly and disabled and learn through experiences as they interact with these communities. Students in grades four through eight frequently engage in formal and informal debates, where topics regularly center on social justice issues.

Our Elementary 2 students work with two local soup kitchens/food pantries and are able to reflect upon the challenges

“An education capable of saving humanity is no small undertaking; it involves the spiritual development of man, the enhancement of his value as an individual, and the preparation of young people to understand the times in which they live.”

Dr. Maria Montessori, Education and Peace

faced by this segment of our community. Elementary 1 and Elementary 2 students frequently design and run fundraising efforts for non-profit organizations, from the local food bank and animal shelter to hospitals and international NGOs. Our middle school students engage with and fundraise for a variety of social justice causes as well. Recently, middle school students advocated for the creation of a Community Service Project Group. The project group met weekly and identified support opportunities for numerous local community organizations including: the Pettengill House, the MSPCA, Our Neighbor's Tables, Boston Children's Hospital, Port Rehabilitation Facility, local police and fire departments, and the Center for Reproductive Rights.

Every classroom community develops a social contract at the beginning of each school year defining the expectations and conditions for a peaceful, respectful, and productive learning environment. This process provides opportunities for students to articulate and deepen their thinking regarding social justice in the school setting. Our belief has been that the concept of social justice in a larger context should come as a natural extension of our efforts to build community within the school: as students come to see themselves as valued members of the classroom and school community, they are poised to see that they have connections to, and a role to play in, their local and global communities.

In 2019-2020, we took initial steps to broaden our approach to social justice. We solidified the existence of a Queer Straight Alliance for students and identified a trained employee to serve as the long-term advisor. We also created a team to serve as a resource for teachers to support their growth in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion, thus helping teachers to become more adept at supporting students' education in this area. Last, the School Director launched her inaugural year with a social justice goal so that she could become more knowledgeable about leading this work in the school community overall.

The race-related events in the spring of 2020, and more specifically the way in which these events put a spotlight on racial injustice in the United States, has reaffirmed that we must be even more explicit about teaching children about systemic racism, our responsibility for addressing it, and how to effect change. While our Montessori pedagogy ensures that students have a sense of social justice in general terms, living in a community with limited diversity makes it easy to ignore societal inequities on a day-to-day basis. River Valley has renewed and strengthened its commitment to teaching about equity, ensuring equity, and helping students accept responsibility for this work as well.

Curriculum Rooted in the Merrimack River Valley

Place-based learning is a central element of the River Valley curriculum. The geographic, historical, and cultural resources of the Merrimack River Valley provide outstanding learning opportunities, and the school is committed to integrating these resources into the curriculum for all students. We believe that learning experiences beyond the classroom walls are essential in fostering deeper knowledge and critical thinking. To this end, the River Valley Charter School Foundation, a 501(c)3 dedicated to supporting education at RVCS, committed to providing \$50,000 in financial support for field trips during the 2019-2020 school year. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these learning opportunities were cancelled. Ultimately, the RVCS Foundation provided the school with \$23,000 for field trips during 2019-2020. While the RVCS Foundation continues to generously support the school, it has pledged funds to support COVID-19 re-opening efforts next year rather than field trips since it is unknown whether students will be able to participate in trips in a manner similar to past years. Funds made available through the RVCS Foundation are received from private foundations and families, further strengthening the commitment and collaboration of our school community.

During the 2019-2020 school year, River Valley students participated in approximately 65 field trips resulting in a number of place-based learning projects and experiences. The descriptions below represent a fraction of the total student outings.

At the middle school level, students received instruction in navigation, water quality sampling, and watershed studies during the year. At the beginning of the school year, they sailed on the Gundalow Piscataqua, a recreation of the gundalow river boats that were once prevalent throughout our local waterways. They also attended Camp Cody and visited the Parker River for a partnership in

"We cannot create observers by saying 'observe', but by giving them the power and the means for this observation and these means are procured through education of the senses."

Dr. Maria Montessori

Authentic Salt Marsh Studies with the Mass Audubon. Our Elementary 2 students traveled to historical and scientific sites such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Chewonki Outdoor

Classrooms, a wastewater treatment plant, and the Spencer-Pierce-Little Farm in Newbury, to study the rich history of our region. Ecological studies were supported through trips to such locations as: Maudslay State Park, Plum Island National Wildlife Refuge, Nature's Classroom, the Massachusetts Audubon, and the Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary. Community service work included weekly trips to St. Paul's and St. Basil's Soup Kitchens, Our Neighbor's Table, and harvesting crops at the Emery House to help address food insecurity on Massachusetts's North Shore.

Elementary 1 and Kinderhaus students studied the history of the Merrimack River Valley through trips to locations such as the Coffin House, Strawberry Banke, the Customs House, the Spellman Museum, and the Peabody Essex Museum. Their study of local ecology was supported through trips to local farms, the Parker River Wildlife Refuge, the Ipswich Wildlife Sanctuary, the shores of the Merrimack River, and Maudslay State Park. All Elementary 1 students participated in a year-long project to support the endangered Blandings Turtle, with every class raising two turtles in their classroom, recording and sharing data with Mass Wildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. The project would normally have culminated with a release-to-the-wild event in the spring. This year, the release was cancelled due to COVID-19. Community service work also included trips to The Heritage House and Our Neighbor's Table.

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Capabilities

A Montessori classroom inherently provides opportunities for both critical thinking and problem solving. Students are offered freedom within limits, and this freedom requires that they develop their abilities to make positive and effective choices. The physical structure of our learning environments encourages collaborative work, where students exchange ideas and opinions. Through these two

“Adaptability- this is the most essential quality; for the progress of the world is continually opening new careers, and at the same time closing or revolutionizing the traditional types of employment.”

Dr. Maria Montessori, From Childhood to Adolescence

processes, both critical thinking and problem solving are fostered. Within this framework, our teachers routinely seek to extend these skills by supplementing our core curriculum with additional learning opportunities.

River Valley students are regularly asked to discuss, explain and provide evidence for their thinking. Rather than relying on textbooks, teachers introduce concepts through small group lessons and the use of timelines and Montessori manipulative materials. Students then explore the concept and are encouraged to develop or discover connections with prior knowledge and life experience. The structure of the classrooms allows for extensive student collaboration, and students frequently engage in conversations to refine and extend their comprehension. Teachers understand that effective instruction will emphasize higher order thinking skills and the “why” behind each concept. Project-based learning is a core element of the Montessori philosophy providing students deeper exploration topics and the opportunity to extend their thinking beyond simply learning content.

In grades four through six, students regularly engage in formal debates and teachers in grades seven and eight employ the Socratic dialogue technique. Through the examination of an issue and the process of developing and defending a position, students improve their abilities to consider divergent viewpoints, articulate their thinking and consider the implications of policies and decisions. Most debates are scored and discussed by classmates, providing opportunities for all students to engage in higher order thinking on each topic.

Students in grades five and six participated in the Math Olympiad curriculum but were unable to compete in the final event due to the pandemic closure. Non-routine problems were presented each week, and students were exposed to a variety of problem-solving approaches and encouraged to collaborate to find multiple solutions to each problem.

In the middle school, students were challenged in all subject areas to engage in abstract and higher order thinking. All middle school teachers expect students to be prepared to provide evidence and explanation as they express their original ideas and positions. Content knowledge, though vital in many situations, is secondary to developing the skills of curiosity, perseverance, and seeing mistakes as learning opportunities.

Beyond classroom work, middle school students also participate in project groups that provide significant student leadership opportunities. In prior years, middle school students participated in project groups that used pre-developed programming such as Model United Nations, Destination Imagination, and Science Olympiad. Two years ago, River Valley’s approach to project groups was changed to be more student-driven. 2019-2020 project groups were designed around the following categories: visual arts, health and fitness, dramatic expression, community service, and the

environment. In groups of 7-12 students, the project groups met for three hours weekly under the supervision of mentor teachers. In their groups they worked collaboratively to design relevant curriculum and create goals and assessments for the year. The project groups are designed to culminate in final presentations or competitions that represent durable learning experiences for the students. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, many of the groups were not able to participate in a culminating event.

The Health and Fitness project group participated in a winter hike and was able to reach the 6,288 foot Mount Washington summit in mid-February, prior to school closure. They had spent the year learning about fitness and exercise, body systems, hiking practices, weather, and safety and emergency response. The Performing Arts project group was one-day shy of their dramatic rendition of “You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown” when school was closed due to the pandemic. They had served as student directors, set builders and costumers and were ready to put on multiple shows for the River Valley community. Students in the Woodworking group worked to develop fundamental woodworking skills and then, with teacher support, applied them to individual projects of their choosing. Every student in the group first created their own wooden toolboxes and then made items such as skateboards, coat racks, and furniture. The Visual Arts students worked in small cohorts to create artistic pieces of work and had plans to put on an exhibition for the greater community. The Community Service project group participated in vigorous discussions about the variety of causes they were interested in working to support. They collaborated on a number of community events to help raise funds to donate to those causes. They also cooked meals to help support local food pantries and soup kitchens.

While not every group was able to reach their final goals, students demonstrated collaboration, creativity, and higher order thinking processes throughout the yearlong project group program.

Amendments to the Charter

Date	Amendment Requested	Pending or Approved?
3/03/2020	River Valley Charter School Accountability Plan	Approved

The 2020-2024 Accountability Plan was approved on March 3, 2020. As approval came just ten days prior to the March 13, 2020 COVID-19 pandemic closure, a number of the goals and measures were not fully implemented or adopted in the 2019-2020 school year. [See the 2020-2024 Accountability Plan here.](#)

Access and Equity: Discipline Data

The most recent, publicly available student discipline data is available at <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/ssdr/default.aspx?orgcode=04820000&orgtypecode=5&=04820000&>.

In 2018-2019, the most recent year for which there is publicly available student discipline data, there was one half day out-of-school suspension, no in-school suspensions or emergency removals.

2018-19 Student Discipline					
Student Group	Total # of Students	Students Disciplined	% of In-School Suspension	% of Out-of-School Suspension	% of Emergency Removal
All Students	293	1			
EL	1				
Economically Disadvantaged	30	0			
Students with Disabilities	62	1			
High Needs	85	1			
Female	161	0			
Male	132	1			
American Indian or Alaska Native	1				
Asian	9	0			
African American/Black	2				
Hispanic/Latino	11				
Multi-race, Non-Hispanic/Latino	11	0			
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0				
White	259	1			

Behavioral Expectations & Disciplinary Responses

The Habits of Learning curriculum, combined with Montessori's Grace and Courtesy lessons, serve as the backbone of behavioral expectations for River Valley Charter School students. All behavioral infractions are viewed as opportunities for learning, and natural consequences are utilized over prescribed punishments. River Valley's Code of Conduct highlights the school's individualized approach to discipline. Most often, behavioral issues are handled by the classroom teacher with the support of the School Counselor. When necessary, the Assistant Director becomes involved. As a small school, administration is aware of all major disciplinary actions and is able to monitor for disparities among subgroups.

Generally, River Valley continues to suspend very few students. Out-of-school suspensions are used in extremely limited circumstances such as those that would occur if a student were to engage in dangerous, assaultive, or illegal behavior or in instances when there are repeated occurrences of the same infraction. In-school suspensions are also used infrequently. River Valley Charter School matches its disciplinary response to behavioral infractions using concepts of Restorative Justice and logical behavioral consequences.

Dissemination Efforts

Best Practice Shared	Vehicle for Dissemination (describe method, format, venue used to share)	Who at the school was involved with the dissemination efforts? (Title)	With whom did the school disseminate its best practices? (highlight partners and locations including school districts)	Result of dissemination (share changes in practice, new opportunities for students as a result. List artifacts, materials, agendas, results from partners, indicate if school rec'd grand funding and if grant report was written)
High Quality Public Montessori	Hosted Third Annual Public Montessori Convening, an all-day event	RVCS Grade K-6 Faculty School Director, Jonnie Lyn Evans	Teachers and administrators from public Montessori schools in the northeast region: Hill View Montessori Charter Public School, Mill Falls Charter Public School, Dante Alighieri Montessori/Boston Public School	Presented and shared presentation materials and slide deck, as well as unit and curriculum materials with attendees
High Quality Public Montessori	Attended week-long National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector leadership training	School Director, Jonnie Lyn Evans Assistant Director, Dan Bouchard	Administrators worked collaboratively with other Montessori public schools to share our school's twenty-year experience providing K-8 public Montessori programming	Shared policies and practices with multiple public Montessori schools throughout the country
High Quality Public Montessori	In-person visit	School Director, Jonnie Lyn Evans	The Putney School in New Hampshire	Shared middle school program information and practices with the Putney school administration
Best Practices	Hosted meeting	School Director, Jonnie Lyn Evans	MA northeast regional charter schools	Shared policies and practices with multiple charter schools in the northeast region through collaborative efforts with MA Charter Public School Association
Best Practices	Serve as Trustee on Board of Trustees	School Director, Jonnie Lyn Evans	Hill View Montessori Charter Public School Board of Trustees	Share best practices and policies with the board of trustees

Best Practice Shared	Vehicle for Dissemination (describe method, format, venue used to share)	Who at the school was involved with the dissemination efforts? (Title)	With whom did the school disseminate its best practices? (highlight partners and locations including school districts)	Result of dissemination (share changes in practice, new opportunities for students as a result. List artifacts, materials, agendas, results from partners, indicate if school rec'd grant funding and if grant report was written)
Parent Education	Speaker Series (nationally recognized speakers)	RVCS Parents' Alliance School Director, Jonnie Lyn Evans	Local community of parents and educators	<i>The Navigating the Parent Years Speaker Series</i> is a collaborative effort of the Newburyport Public Schools, the Newburyport Youth Services Commission and River Valley Charter School. It brings community members from different schools together who learn about our school through first-hand parent communication.
Shared Costs	Served as site and sponsor for in-person SEI course	RVCS faculty	Faculty from Hill View Montessori Charter Public School and other private schools	New opportunities for EL students as a result of faculty SEI certification
Best Practices	Participation in a Special Education Leadership Class	RVCS Special Education Coordinator, Lisa Kelley	Other MA public schools participating in the class	Shared policies and practices with peers in the class
Best Practices	In-person and online communications	Special Education Coordinators, Patti Innes and Lisa Kelley	Hill View Montessori Charter Public School Special Education Department	Shared policies and practices with the special education staff

Academic Performance Success

Student Performance

The most recent, state-based, publicly available student performance data can be accessed at <http://reportcards.doe.mass.edu/2019/DistrictReportcard/04820000>.

2019 Official Accountability Report – River Valley Charter School	
Overall Classification	Not requiring assistance or intervention
Reason for Classification	Substantial progress toward targets
Progress toward improvement targets	67% Substantial progress toward targets
Accountability percentile	70

Other Performance Data

In 2018-2019 RVCS piloted a system of Universal Screeners in multiple K-6 classrooms ([more information about the use of Universal Screeners is below](#)). During 2019-2020, the pilot was adopted as standard practice in the school. Universal screeners were used with fidelity in grades K-6 in math and in grades K-3 for language arts. Ultimately, screening data will be used to track student progress over time. In addition, we are working toward the creation of a dashboard and we anticipate assessment data culled from the universal screeners will be one part of the dashboard.

High-Quality Academic Programming

The Montessori Method

The Montessori Method is about 100 years old and while it has consistently been evolving over those 100 years, River Valley Charter School works to stay true to the Montessori approach in all academic settings, whether in person or remote, as happened in the spring of 2020. Throughout the 2019-2020 school year, all levels continued to deliver curriculum based on both the Montessori pedagogy and the history, ecology and culture of the Merrimack River Valley as stated in our mission.

Before March 2020, our Montessori programming generally mirrored every other year in the history of our school. As a result of the closure on account of the pandemic, all levels provided online instruction from March 16, 2020 through the end of the school year. The instruction and assessments were provided in a few ways. For our kindergarten through grade three classrooms, teachers met with students on Zoom and provided both online materials and paper packets that were either mailed, picked up, or dropped off at student homes. In the upper grades (4-8), teachers met with students on Zoom and provided instruction, assignments, and assessment through the Google Classroom platform. There was daily communication with students and families at every level. The school continued to offer specials instruction including physical education, music, science, art and engineering in addition to our regular classroom instruction. Special education teachers met with their students in extra small groups or one-on-one sessions through Zoom. Every special education student had their own Google Classroom.

For the 2020-2021 school year, our academic program will change in the following ways: Our grade K-3 students will receive the same instruction as in the past, but in small cohorts of mixed age students. Half of their time they will be at school receiving in-person instruction and half the time they will be at home receiving remote instruction. Our students in grades 4-6 will rotate week by week from an indoor program to an offsite, outdoor program. Middle school students will be learning in school $\frac{2}{3}$ of the time and at home $\frac{1}{3}$ of the time. Teachers at all levels will continue to present curriculum, instruction and assessments in keeping with the mission of our school.

Habits of Learning Curriculum/Student Portfolios

During the 2019-2020 school year, all levels continued to implement and refine our Habits of Learning curriculum. The Habits of Learning, also called the Eight Cs for Curiosity, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Commitment, Communication, Citizenship, and Compassion, were identified as expected outcomes of the RVCS Peace Education Curriculum Map and represent Dr. Montessori's vision of education as a tool to promote peace.

Students in grades K-6 work on portfolios that, rather than reflect a collection of best practices, include work samples and reflections based on the Eight Cs. In grade eight, expectations for students' Celebrations of Learning (COLs) were adjusted to reflect the Habits of Learning. This year's eighth grade students' COL presentations were presented remotely and leveraged the online portfolio described below.

As a result of the pandemic closure, and in response to a long-held goal to document student work in an online format, River Valley used the time during closure to investigate and test of the use of online portfolios for students. Grade eight students were required to do this work and created personal websites that included examples of work from content areas as well as indications of their Habits of Learning. Faculty, as well as students in grades 4-6, were introduced to online portfolios to begin considering their application in future years.

Universal Screeners and Literacy

The Quick Phonics Screener provided faculty with pre-reading/reading skill data. Teachers, working in conjunction with a Literacy Interventionist used the data to create instructional groupings as well as to identify areas where teachers needed support with their instructional practices.

Two Kinderhaus lead teachers were trained in Foundations as were multiple Elementary 1 assistants. Lesson study provided an opportunity for grade 1-3 teachers to come together and share how the Foundations program could be integrated into our Montessori programming.

The Acadience Math Screener was administered twice this year in all the K-6 classrooms. The spring closure prohibited River Valley from conducting the spring administration. Classroom, grade-level and school-based reports were shared with teachers to begin conversations about curricular areas in which teachers may need additional materials or targeted professional development.

The SAEBRS screener, which stands for Social, Academic, and Emotional Behavioral Rating Scale, was also administered in grades K-6 during 2019-2020. The data from this screener was used to verify that students with social/emotional needs were getting support services from the school counselor and other student support personnel. This screener provides baseline information that supports planning and resource allocation more than usefulness as a diagnostic tool for the identification of students with social, academic or emotional behavioral deficits.

Screening data continues to be useful as part of our Response to Intervention program and will continue to support this process. We continue to see a better distribution of RtI resources, more consistency across classrooms, and most importantly, increased capacity within the general education classroom.

Coaching

Two administrators and a lead teacher from the Elementary 1 and Elementary 2 levels were trained as coaches under the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector's (NCMPS) coaching model. One administrator used the coaching model to oversee the work of the Kinderhaus program and middle school. The Elementary 1 and 2 teacher coaches used the model to work with peers from their levels as well as with each other. Feedback from this pilot was very positive and we plan to increase our use of Montessori coaches. To this end, we hope to train additional staff and create a more collaborative coaching model rather than identifying one faculty member to oversee all of this work.

The NCMPS coaching model is based on regular ongoing observation and reflection as well as specific targeted goal setting. Coaches observe teachers multiple times and then meet weekly to discuss observations. The coached teacher reflects on their own performance and sets small goals on which to focus. The coaching sessions are non-evaluative, and observations are not shared with teachers' supervisors unless safety is of concern.

Student Teachers

During the 2019-2020 school year, River Valley partnered with Salem State University to serve as a site for one student intern at the Kinderhaus and Elementary 1 level. For the first half of the year she worked in an Elementary 1 classroom and for the second half of the year she worked in the Kinderhaus program. The student teacher was welcomed and utilized as if she were a regular staff member. She provided classroom support, participated in school duties, and received professional development alongside RVCS peers. The graduate was subsequently hired to serve as a Kinderhaus assistant in the upcoming school year.

Going forward into next year, River Valley will welcome three pre-practicum students. One student is a Mt. Holyoke Middle School Mathematics Masters candidate who will work in our middle school for twelve hours/week. Two Salem State undergraduate candidates will work in our Elementary 1 program supporting teachers and students during the 2020-2021 school year, whether our program is in-person or remote.

Progress Reports

2019-2020 was supposed to be the first full year we used our newly-designed grade K-6 progress reports. The reports feature a page for our Habits of Learning curriculum in addition to a page for each of the academic areas. The academic areas have fewer measures than our previous progress reports and include an engagement score to indicate a child's interest and commitment to working in that academic area. For each academic area, the student's strength in that area is highlighted, as well as a goal for future growth. During the 2019-2020 school year we transitioned our seventh and eighth grade teachers to the same automated progress report system thus streamlining the process from an operational perspective. Through the integration of progress reports, we continue to move our academic tracking practices toward more reliable, automated, and consistent processes. Unfortunately however, due to the COVID-19 closure, we did not utilize the progress reports for all

three marking periods, following the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's guidelines not to assess students' remote learning outcomes.

Supports for All Learners

The school's approach to supporting students with diverse learning needs did not change during the 2019-2020 school year.

In total, there were five licensed special education teachers at River Valley during the 2019-2020 school year: one for K-3, one for 4-6, two for 7-8, and one that served students across grades 4-8. This represented the addition of two licensed special educators compared to the previous year. We employed one instructional assistant for K-3, a literacy interventionist to serve students in grade 1-3, a 1:1 staff member and a speech and language pathologist. River Valley has a full-time school counselor and a part time school psychologist and subcontracts for occupational therapy and physical therapy.

Looking Ahead

At the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year, we began planning for the creation of a dashboard to be implemented during this school year. The purpose of the dashboard was to highlight key indicators of school success including information relevant to student learning. The dashboard will include student performance data indicators as well other indicators to support the accountability committee in their work, the board in their governance work, as well as serve as a vehicle to share information about the school with the greater community. Work on this project continues as it was interrupted by the pandemic.

Organizational Viability

Organizational Structure of the School

The 2019-2020 school year began with significant changes in leadership. Andy Willemsen, School Director for the last six years, gave his notice of resignation in November of 2018 for school yearend 2019. Jonnie Lyn Evans, who had served as the school's assistant director for six years, took over as the head of school beginning July 1, 2019. The transition was smooth due to the fact that the two leaders had worked together for so long. With the promotion of the Assistant Director, that position became available and was filled by an individual new to both public education and the charter school sector. Dan Bouchard, a MA licensed principal with twenty years' experience in education in the parochial sector, took over as the assistant director.

Level Coordinators finished a second year serving on the Coordination Team, meeting weekly with administration. The purpose of the Coordination Team is to provide representation from staff about their perspective and needs, and to assure open and continuous communications between faculty and administration. Level Coordinators shared information about ongoing initiatives with their peers, facilitated level meetings, and provided support for some level-related administrative functions. The level coordinator positions will continue into the 2020-2021 school year. One coordinator will be new to the team.

Organizational Changes in the Upcoming Year

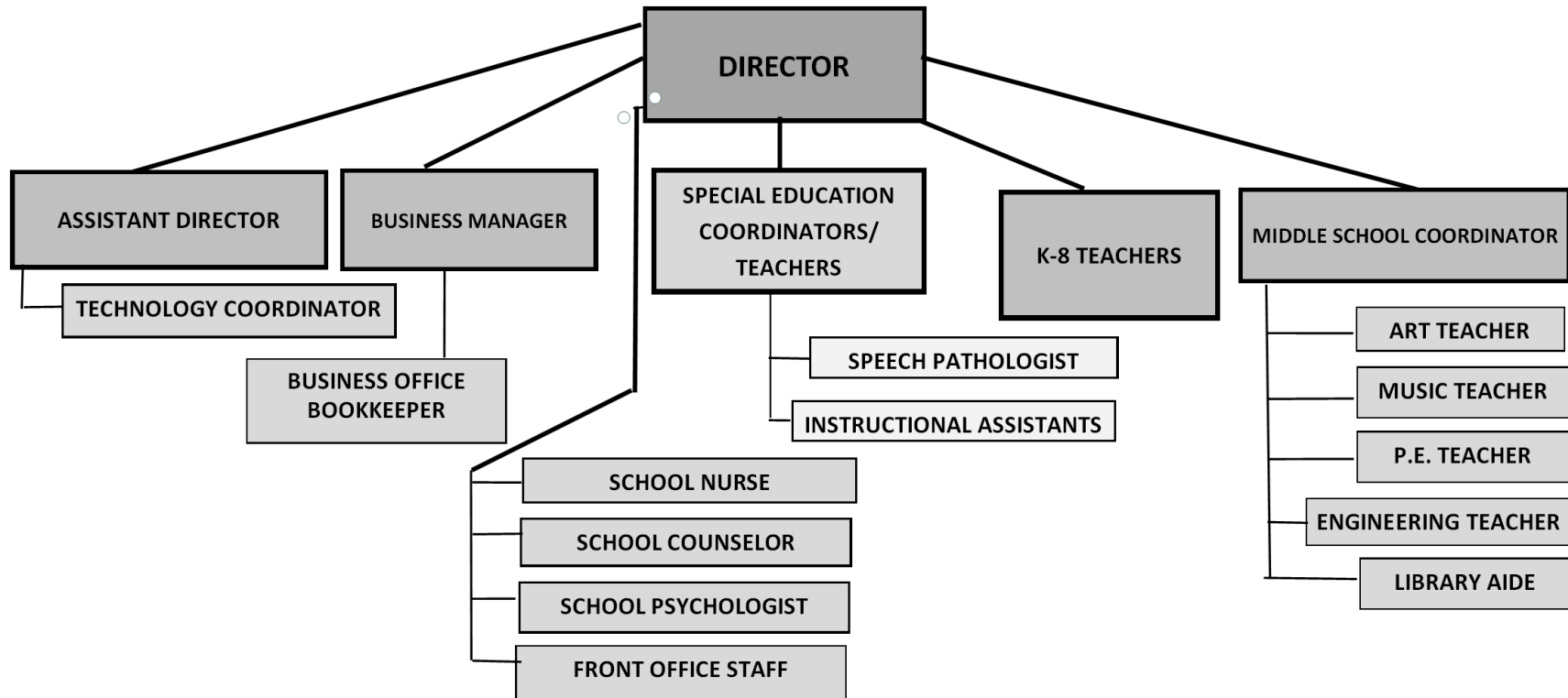
No changes to the organizational structure are expected to occur during the 2019-2020 school year except those that will support the school's ability to provide an in-person educational program to the greatest number of students during the pandemic. To reduce class size at the Elementary 1 level, River Valley plans to remove grade one students from the Elementary 1 classroom (typically these are multi-age classrooms of grade 1-3 students). River Valley will create two additional classrooms with students in grades K and 1 instead, for a total of four. These classes will be taught by a Kinderhaus teacher and a teacher from the Elementary 1 program. This will allow our first grade students to return to teachers they are familiar with and to serve as role models in a multi-age classroom. It will also reduce the need to create a separate learning platform for our first grade students who would have struggled to adapt to the Google Classroom with their second and third grade peers. To facilitate the smallest cohorts possible, our grades K-3 classes will be broken down further, into cohorts of eight students. Staff is being juggled to make this temporary accommodation.

Other changes to the school structure include the addition of a new position: Outdoor Educator. Four Outdoor Educator positions are being created in response to plans for in-person reopening and will allow us to offer an offsite, outdoor program to our Elementary 2 students. The program was initially conceived as a way to support smaller class sizes and physical distancing guidelines. While this concept is a change from our typical Elementary 2, it is not one that veers from our educational philosophy. Further, it is frequently promoted in progressive educational journals. Adoption of outdoor programming aligns with our core belief that children learn by doing and by having experiences in their natural environment. We are excited to pilot this program next year.

We also anticipate hiring at least one Remote Teaching and Learning Specialist to provide services for students in grades 2-6 whose families choose to participate in a fully remote program during the 2020-2021 school year.

An updated Organizational Chart is included on the following page.

Organizational Chart



Budget and Finance

FY20 Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Change in Net Assets Unaudited, at FY20 Year End

OPERATING REVENUE

Per-pupil tuition	\$ 4,376,246
In-kind MTRS pension	773,540
Program specific private grants and contributions	91,438
Program Fees	71,258
Government grants	73,877
In-kind transportation	21,622
Total operating revenue	5,407,981

OPERATING EXPENSES

Personnel and related

Salaries and wages	3,004,473
In-kind MTRS pension	773,540
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	424,484
Professional development	29,817
Total personnel and related	4,232,314

Occupancy

Building and grounds	142,597
Lease expnese	123,047
Utilities	51,191
Insurance	14,559
Taxes, sewer betterment	2,768
Total occupancy	334,162

Direct student costs

Consultants and service contractors	65,682
Program expenses	57,144
Instructional materials	42,125
Technology and equipment	28,885
In-kind transportation	21,622
Testing and assessment	840
Total direct student costs	216,298

Other operating costs

Insurance	42,440
Technology and equipment	41,932
Professional fees	32,235
General supplies	21,241
Dues and subscriptions	13,436
Minor equipment	9,388
Travel	8,325
Equipment leases	6,655
Miscellaneous	5,876
Telephone	4,165
Printing and postage	3,080
Advertising and recruitment	2,147
Bad debt expense	428
Total other operating costs	191,348

Depreciation and amortization

	213,995
Total operating expenses	5,188,117

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CHANGES IN NET POSITION FROM OPERATIONS	219,864
GENERAL REVENUE (EXPENSE)	
Capital Contribution	15,000
Interest and other income	12,631
Contributions	4,258
Total general revenue	31,889
CHANGES IN NET POSITION	251,753
NET POSITION:	
Beginning of year	1,684,007
End of Year	\$ 1,935,760

Unaudited Statement of Net Assets for FY20 Year End

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$	1,421,230
Accounts and grants receivable		12,590
Prepaid expenses and other		6,499

Total current assets		1,440,319
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RESTRICTED CASH

89,323

RIGHT TO USE LEASE ASSET, NET

3,163,729

CAPITAL ASSETS, NET

831,427

Total assets	\$	5,524,798
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LIABILITIES AND NET POSITION

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accrued payroll	\$	331,077
Lease liability, current portion		88,656
Accrued expenses		18,374
Accounts payable		14,906
Total current liabilities		453,013

LONG TERM LIABILITIES

Lease liability, long term		3,136,025
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Total liabilities		3,589,038
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NET POSITION

Unrestricted		1,165,285
Invested in capital		770,475
Total net position		1,935,760

Total liabilities and net position	\$	5,524,798
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FY21 Approved School Budget**Approved by the Board of Trustees on June 23, 2020 for the Year Ending June 30, 2020****OPERATING REVENUE**

Per-pupil tuition	\$	4,152,959
Program specific private grants and contributions		100,000
Government grants		119,799
Program Fees		28,000
Total operating revenue		4,400,758

OPERATING EXPENSES**Personnel and related**

Salaries and wages	3,074,000
Payroll taxes and fringe benefits	522,500
Professional development	20,000

Total personnel and related	3,616,500
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Occupancy

Buildings and grounds	206,200
Lease liability interest expense	119,500
Utilities	54,000
Insurance	15,000
Taxes, sewer betterment	3,200
Vehicle Expenses	1,250

Total occupancy	399,150
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Direct student costs

Consultants and service contractors	52,500
Instructional materials	43,500
Technology and equipment	20,000
Program expenses (RVCS)	10,900
Testing and assessment	2,000

Total direct student costs	128,900
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Other operating costs

Insurance	47,300
Professional fees	45,500
Technology and equipment	38,500
General Supplies	30,000
Dues and subscriptions	15,500
Minor equipment	10,250
Equipment leases	7,200
Miscellaneous	6,000
Travel	6,000
Printing and postage	5,000
Telephone	4,500
Advertising and recruitment	2,350

Total other operating costs	218,100
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Depreciation and amortization

216,500

Total operating expenses	4,579,150
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OTHER REVENUE (EXPENSES)

Contingency-Emergency Facility Cleaning	10,500
Contingency-Board of Trustees	1,308

Total other revenue (expenses)	11,808
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Total expenses	4,590,958
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CHANGES IN NET POSITION FROM OPERATIONS

(190,200)

(continued on next page)

GENERAL REVENUE

Interest and other income

7,200

Total general revenue

7,200

CHANGES IN NET POSITION

(183,000)

NET POSITION, BEGINNING OF YEAR

1,684,007

NET POSITION, END OF YEAR

\$ 1,501,007

Cash Basis

Net Surplus (Deficit) from Operations

\$ (183,000)

Adjustment - Non-Cash Items

Non-Operating Income

7,200

Amortization Expense

138,000

Depreciation Expense

78,500

Total Non-Cash Items

223,700

Capital expenditures: Non-Impact to Budget

Capital reserve funds-deposited per vote by Board of Trustees

(40,000)

Capital reserve funds-withdrawal for capital expenditures voted by Board of Trustees

40,000

Lease Liability Principal Payments

(88,656)

Total Capital Outlay & Lease Liability Principal Pymt

(88,656)

Total Cash Used by Existing Resources

\$ (47,956)

*** The budget was approved by the Board of Trustees on June 23, 2020. This budget will be amended for any unforeseen material revenue and expense impact due to COVID-19 and changes in Federal and State Funding.

FY21 Enrollment Table

Number of students pre-enrolled via March 16, 2020 submission	288
Number of students upon which FY21 budget tuition line is based	288
Number of expected students for FY21 first day of school	288
Please explain any variances: N/A	

FY21 Capital Plan

The River Valley Charter School Board of Trustees has committed to funding a restricted Capital Reserve Fund for future infrastructure needs. Trustees have allocated \$40,000 per year to this fund over the last eight years, and the fund balance as of June 30, 2020 is \$89,323. These funds will be available for any urgent facility or site needs, as well as any planned infrastructure expenses.

Through careful fiscal planning, the Trustees expect to position the school to absorb any unforeseen infrastructure costs without significant impact on annual operations.

During FY 2020-2021, RVCS plans the following capital improvements and non-capital improvements:

- Interior Alterations & Renovations due to COVID-19 health and safety guidelines: Approximate Investment of \$5,000.
- Installation of touchless faucets for all kitchen sinks and upgrade several kitchen sinks to help reduce the risk of spreading disease such as COVID-19: Approximate cost \$12,000.
- Upgrade the Security Access System due to a single point of failure: Approximate Investment of \$10,000.
- Installation of outside Security Cameras to increase the provide greater security and protection of the building and grounds of the School: Approximate Investment of \$23,000.

During FY 2019-2020, RVCS completed the following capital and non-capital improvements:

- Renovation of interior spaces that included updating and installing bathroom stalls in the Middle School: Investment of \$6,879
- Renovation of Art Room for potential installation of a kiln: Investment of \$1,585.
- Renovation to mitigate water damage to various interior spaces of the School: Cost of Repairs- \$4,582.
- Miscellaneous Repairs and Maintenance using the Capital Reserve Funds: \$1,770.
- Purchase of a Woodworking Program that includes tool chest, hand tools and patented workbenches to allow 16 students to work simultaneously on woodworking projects: Investment of \$15,000.

Total expenditures on capital improvements for FY 2019-2020 were \$23,464. The School also expended \$8,625 on non-capital improvements. Of these funds, \$17,089 of Capital Reserve Funds were used to offset leasehold and capital equipment investments. The remainder of the capital improvement funding, \$15,000, came in the form of a capital grant from the River Valley Charter School Foundation to support the woodworking program.

With the school's current Capital Reserve Fund approach, as well as the Board's efforts to secure a low interest rate on the mortgage debt for an extended period, River Valley has taken a conservative and visionary approach to the future needs and financial stability of the school.

Additional Information

Accountability Plan Performance for 2019-2020

Faithfulness to Charter

Objective 1: River Valley Charter School will provide a Montessori learning environment that reflects best practices for public Montessori education.		
<p>Measure 1A: River Valley will alternate between a self-assessment and an external audit of its Montessori program every year using the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector's Essential Elements Rubric. Every year the audit will switch such that there are three external audits and two internal during this charter term.</p> <p>Annually, River Valley will obtain at least a satisfactory rating in each of the five domains of the rubric (Adults, Montessori Learning Environment, Family Engagement, Leadership & Organizational Development, Assessment). The rating is based on a four-point rubric (unsatisfactory, needs improvement, satisfactory, exemplary), and will reflect the average score of all the standards within each of the five domains*.</p> <p><i>*The National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector recreated the Essential Elements document to more appropriately recognize the implementation of the Montessori Method in the public sector. Previously the Essential Elements, created by the American Montessori Society, contained 22 elements (of which two were excluded because they did not apply in a public-school environment); the new rubric, redesigned by the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector, contains 26 standards and a four-point rating scale of each element.</i></p>	<p>Not Met</p>	<p>An external audit of River Valley Charter School's Montessori program was scheduled for March of 2020. Due to the school closure resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the audit was cancelled.</p> <p>No results are reported for this measure.</p>

(The Essential Elements Rubric is included as <i>Accountability Attachment for 1A: Essential Elements.</i>)		
<p>Measure 1B: Every year, all grade K-6 lead teachers will self-evaluate their Montessori classroom environment and practices using the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector’s Teacher Reflective Practice Inventory. All lead teachers who have been asked to return to River Valley for employment the following year will score at least 80% on the instrument, which includes 22 indicators of Montessori best practices as defined by the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector.</p>	<p>Not Met</p>	<p>All grade K-6 lead teachers, of which there were 12, participated in a self-evaluation of their Montessori classroom environment and practices. Seven of the 12 educators, or 58%, scored 80% or above on the self-assessment. The range of scores was 74-95%.</p> <p>Interestingly, a number of the educators took the assessment in late February, prior to the closure, and for the purpose of vetting the instrument. Those who self-assessed in February rated themselves lower when reflecting after the three month closure, possibly indicating a loss of confidence when teaching remotely.</p> <p>A copy of the survey is included as Accountability Attachment 1B: Teacher Reflective Practices Inventory.</p>

Objective 2: River Valley Charter School will provide educational experiences that connect student learning to the history, culture, and ecology of the Merrimack River Valley. River		
<p>Measure 2A: Annually, every class will engage in a minimum of three place-based learning experiences related to the history, culture or ecology of the Merrimack River Valley.</p>	<p>Not Met</p>	<p>Due to the March closure of school, this measure was not met. Between September and March 13, RVCS students participated in approximately 65 field trips.</p> <p>Supporting evidence summarizing every classroom’s place-based learning experiences is on file at the school.</p>
<p>Measure 2B: All grade 5-8 students will participate in an annual survey to rate students’ understanding of the connection of in-school learning with the history, culture, or ecology of the Merrimack River Valley.</p>	<p>Not Met</p>	<p>This measure was not implemented this year as we waited for approval of the new Accountability Plan and then were dealing with our response to the COVID pandemic.</p>

Ninety percent of the surveyed students will indicate that at least one of their out-of-classroom experiences connected in-class learning to the history, culture or ecology of the Merrimack River Valley. In addition, on a 1-5 Likert scale (with 1 indicating the place-based experience was not relevant to classroom learning and 5 indicating that classroom learning was amplified through place-based experiences which tied learning to the real world), ninety percent of the surveyed students will rate their experiences at least 3.		
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Objective 3: Learning experiences at River Valley Charter School will support students in the development of critical thinking and creative problem solving.		
Measure 3A: Annually, with at least a 50% response rate of River Valley Charter School caregivers, 80% or more respondents will agree or strongly agree in separate questions that River Valley Charter School provides opportunities for their child(ren) to develop critical thinking skills and creative problem-solving skills.	Not Met	Due to the pandemic, the Accountability Committee of the Board of Trustees chose not to administer this survey for this year. It was felt that families were struggling to respond to the virus and its implications and that it would be difficult for them to separate their child's in-person learning experience from their remote experience.
Measure 3B: Each year, the overall percentage of grade K-6 students, including River Valley's primary subgroups (students with high needs and students with disabilities), whose progress report scores show that they usually or consistently demonstrate critical thinking skills (defined as making connections and challenging assumptions, supplying evidence for arguments, and using reflections/feedback as a tool for growth) will increase from the fall to the spring grading period.	Not Met	Due to the pandemic, RVCS did not utilize the standard progress reports at yearend. Instead, teachers held 1:1 online conferences with parents to discuss future goals for their students.
Measure 3C: All graduating students will participate in a River Valley Celebration of Learning (COL)* event, and 90%, including River Valley's primary subgroups (students with high needs and students with disabilities), will earn an average final score of 3.0 or better (out of a 1-4 scale), on a rubric that assesses content and presentation. The presentation is a culminating experience that integrates the River Valley Charter School academic curriculum as well as River Valley's Habits of Learning curriculum, thereby representing application of critical thinking and creative problem solving.	Not Met	It was originally anticipated that students would not be able to participate in their graduating Celebration of Learning this year due to the pandemic and its impact on learning and public presentations. As we neared the end of our remote learning period we invited students to participate in a remote COL and all 26 eighth grade students chose to participate. Further, we used remote Celebrations of Learning to launch a pilot online portfolio program. The Celebrations of Learning were not scored this year due to the fact that online COL presentations were new and introduced in response to the school being closed.

Dissemination

Objective 4: RVCS will share its Montessori curriculum with other public schools in Massachusetts over the course of its charter term.		
Measure 4A: By the end of the charter term, RVCS staff will deliver at least five mission-related presentations to five different MA public school audiences to disseminate best practices in public Montessori education.	Met	<p>RVCS hosted its third annual Public Montessori Convening to bring together public Montessori schools located in the Northeast for collaboration and sharing of best practices. Approximately 70 individuals attended the half day event where RVCS staff led workshops on multiple topics relevant to public Montessori programming.</p> <p>Presentation information is on file at the school. Total presentations during this charter term is one.</p>

Recruitment and Retention Plan

Recruitment Plan

2020-2021

School Name: **RIVER VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL**

2019-2020 Implementation Summary

River Valley Charter School implemented its recruitment strategies as laid out in the 2019-2020 Recruitment plan and actively engaged in attracting new students in order to broaden the diversity of our student population. For our enrollment lottery, we received 229 applications, representing highly successful recruitment efforts for the school. 88 of the new applications were for Kinderhaus, where most spots are available. This compares to 99 kindergarten applicants last year. 141 applications came in for grades 1-8, which is an increase from 96 applicants in the 2019 enrollment lottery.

The Kinderhaus roster of 34 students entered River Valley Charter School in the 2019-2020 school year included zero students who were later identified in need of financial assistance. Three Kinderhaus students were on Individual Education Programs (IEPs) by the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

As is the case each year, a number of Kinderhaus spots are taken by siblings of currently enrolled students. For the 2020-2021 school year, 16 of the spots will be filled with siblings. Given this influence, our incoming class of Kinderhaus students will likely not alter our enrollment statistics significantly despite our recruitment efforts, i.e., we anticipate that we will not meet the comparison index or gap narrowing targets next year.

General Recruitment Activities for 2019-2020

For general recruitment activities we attended the Greater Newburyport Mother and Families' annual Early Education Fair in the fall of 2019, held at the Newburyport City Hall, to provide information to parents investigating schools for their children. We partnered with the local Chamber of Commerce to advertise our school and notify families about our enrollment lottery in February of 2020. We also partnered with the Newburyport Youth Services (NYS) to provide open channels for our students to partake in activities offered by NYS (regardless of residence), but also to advertise our school in all of their literature.

Additionally, we continued to work to recruit diverse families whenever possible. As RVCS is in an area of the state with limited cultural and socio-economic diversity, it is challenging to attract a wide and diverse population of students. Additional general recruitment activities include advertising efforts via:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Local newspaper press releases in English and Spanish
- Advertisements in the local newspaper and at libraries
- Public service announcements on the local cable television network
- Enrollment Information Sessions with tours (offered at night and on weekends)
- Website posts

We also enhanced our general marketing activities to include:

- School name on the weather ticker during storms on all the local news stations
- An “EyeOpener” advertising RVCS featuring middle school students on local network news morning program to promote school and the enrollment lottery
- An article published about RVCS students impacting the climate and community
- Radio interview with the local radio station by Assistant Director
- Distribution of RVCS tagged “coffee sleeves” to 8 local cafes to distribute to customers
- School sponsored “leaf raking” event for local Councils on Aging to assist elderly with their fall cleanups
- Local newspapers invited to school events for dissemination to the community.
- Partner with a local author for a “Book Launch” at a local bookstore, hosted by RVCS students and open to the public
- “River Valley Views” for local dignitaries and educators to tour RVCS and gain First- person perspective of the Montessori education provided at RVCS

Recruitment Plan – 2020-2021 Strategies	
Special Education Students/Students with Disabilities	
<p>CHART data</p> <p>School percentage: 15.6%</p> <p>GNT percentage: NA%</p> <p>CI percentage: 15.2%</p> <p>The school is <u>above</u> CI percentages</p>	<p><i>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies:</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Met GNT/CI: no enhanced/additional strategies needed</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute informational flyers to the special education departments of each of our sending districts. • Connect with local school SEPACs.

Limited English-proficient Students/English Learners	
<p>CHART data</p> <p>School percentage: 0%</p> <p>GNT percentage: .3%</p> <p>CI percentage: .4%</p> <p>The school is <u>below</u> both GNT percentages and CI percentages</p>	<p><i>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute informational flyers to ELL coordinators of each of our sending districts. • Publish enrollment materials with a banner/footer indicating that translation and interpreter services are available if needed. • Make the Montessori Enrollment Session video available to all attendees in Spanish. • Have bilingual (Spanish-speaking) parents available at Enrollment Sessions. • Ask Spanish-speaking parents to share enrollment information in their multicultural communities. • Distribute flyers to local Rec Departments where there may be increased incidence of minority populations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a Spanish version of the application available on the school's website. • Place a sticker advertisement in Spanish in the local newspaper. The sticker adheres to the front page, top of the fold, and is visible to all readers, as well as to customers in any retail establishment that sells newspapers regardless of whether the paper is purchased. • Partner with the local the Chamber of Commerce to share recruitment information with agencies that support diverse communities. RVCS will ask to be included in events these agencies hold where there is a population of non-English speaking families and local resources are being presented. • Connect with the Newburyport Human Rights Commission, and individuals working on Sanctuary City status, to establish relationships with organizations who work with immigrants. • Advertise in North Shore Kid, an online resource for parents, visited by 300,000 individuals/month. This is a "go-to" resource for local families looking for events, schools, and other child-related information. • In a contract with the SEEM Collaborative, Faculty members were provided a Sheltered English Immersion Endorsement class, at no cost. 14 RVCS teachers participated and now have SEI endorsement.
	<p style="text-align: center;">2020-2021 Additional Strategy(ies):</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Did not meet GNT/CI: additional and/or enhanced strategies below:</i></p> <p>New strategies to recruit Limited English-proficient students/English learners in 2019-2020 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance our efforts to disseminate information about our program to EL populations in our area by reaching out to local multicultural organizations including the Racial Justice Committee of the YWCA and Amesbury Community Services Center to broaden RVCS' reach to more diverse populations. • Add a message in Spanish during an Eye Opener video providing information about the lottery and enrollment; aired during morning WCVB news programming. • Partner with Amesbury Chamber of Commerce to share recruitment information with agencies that support diverse communities. RVCS will ask to be included in events these agencies hold where there is a population of non-English speaking families and local resources being presented. <p>All strategies will be implemented annually. RVCS anticipates 2-3 years to see GNT/CI changes.</p>

Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch (Low Income/Economically Disadvantaged)	
<p>CHART data</p> <p>School percentage: 8.0%</p> <p>GNT percentage: 8.4%</p> <p>CI percentage: 12.3%</p> <p>The school is <u>below</u> CI percentages</p>	<p><i>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute flyers to community service agencies (Head Start, Hugh Doyle Resource Center, Salvation Army, Pettengill House, SNAP, WIC) • Distribute flyers to the low-income housing developments in our sending towns/speak at low-income housing development events. • Provide economically disadvantaged students reduced rates or free access to before and after school childcare for working parents/guardians. • Continue collaborative relationships with Nourishing the North Shore to bridge connections with low income families in the area. • Post enrollment information at local soup kitchens (Salvation Army, Among Friends, Our Neighbor's Table) and food pantry with whom the school has a collaborative relationship. • Conspicuously post a banner advertising free, full day kindergarten. • Work with Suzanne Dubus, CEO of the Jeanne Geiger Center, to identify and connect with clients served by this agency. • Conduct a fall outreach and a secondary outreach closer to the time of the lottery at low income residential areas in our region. • Working through the Director of the Newburyport Learning Enrichment Center, invite the tenant leadership group to visit RVCS so that they can reinforce flyer information we share with residents of the park. • Amplify the relationship with Our Neighbors' Table, a food pantry that serves 3,500 guests/year, to include presence at their events. • Connect with all of the Tenant Leadership Councils at each of our sending district's low income housing areas to provide marketing information about our public school programming. • Partner with Newburyport Youth Services to increase after school opportunities for older students (grades 6-8) by providing transportation to their after-school facility. • Host summer Camp Invention program for the greater Newburyport are. The camp is staffed by RVCS Montessori teachers and includes a limited number of scholarships for free attendance. Follow up after the camp ends with information about the school.
	<p><i>2020-2021 Additional Strategy(ies):</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Did not meet CI: additional and/or enhanced strategies below:</p> <p>The trend for enrolling Economically Disadvantaged students has been increasing over the last five years, from 1.0% in 2014 to 8.0% in 2020, although down from 8.7% in 2019. RVCS believes it will continue to see increased numbers of economically disadvantaged students as it continues to increase targeted recruitment efforts.</p>
	<p>New Strategies to implement in the 2020-2021 school year:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with Boys and Girls Club of Lower Merrimack Valley in Salisbury to access another stream of diverse students. • Actively foster communication with local low-income housing authorities, especially those in Amesbury, to educate families about our program. <p>All strategies will be implemented annually. RVCS anticipates 1-2 years to see GNT/CI changes.</p>
<u>Students who are sub-proficient</u>	<p>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute flyers to local tutoring agencies including Fun Way Learning Center, Math Port, ClubZ Tutoring, T Cubed, Simms Tutoring, Successful Solutions. • Provide the local Boys and Girls Club with paper applications and flyers about River Valley Charter School • Advertise that River Valley has small class sizes in middle school math (by employing double the number of math teachers as in the other middle school content areas).
<u>Students at risk of dropping out of school</u>	<p>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RVCS' summer school programming and drop-in sessions for middle school students are attractive to families who may have students at risk of dropping out of school.
<u>Students who have dropped out of school</u>	<p>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies</p> <p>NA</p>

Retention Plan

2020-2021

2019-2020 Implementation Successes and Challenges:

Although our efforts for retention were successful, River Valley continues to see similar patterns of attrition. Successful efforts included the following:

- Increased special education staffing (we added two new special education teachers, bringing our number of special education teachers to five).
- Our RtI program is vetted and solidified, based on work we did with the MCPSA.
- We entered into a new relationship with Newburyport Youth Services, an organization that focuses on older students. The partnership expanded our offerings for older children.
- Numerous teachers participated in an SEI endorsement course, ensuring that we are prepared to support EL students.

Nevertheless, our attrition rate for the 2019-2020 school year rose from the previous year to 13.5% of our students withdrawing overall. As such, River Valley did not meet the 92% goal. The school's retention rate was 86.5%.

An analysis of the 2019-2020 withdrawals provided the following information: students transfer to private schools, homeschool, or out of district due to commuting distances that do not allow them to stay at River Valley. A number of students also returned to their local district.

We continue to identify ways to increase our retention rates by educating our families about our Montessori programming with the goal of ensuring they are joining the RVCS community because of our educational programming rather than for other reasons (such as free full day kindergarten).

Overall Student Retention Goal	
Annual goal for student retention (percentage):	90%

Retention Plan – 2020-2021 Strategies	
Special Education Students/Students with Disabilities	
<p><u>CHART data</u></p> <p>School percentage: 24.6%</p> <p>Third Quartile: 6.8%</p> <p>The school's attrition rate is <u>above</u> third quartile percentages.</p>	<p><i>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a strong special education program staffed by qualified professionals. • Offer summer sessions to qualifying students. • Maintain a Response to Intervention program/Student Support Team. • Offer afterschool enrichment programs where less emphasis is placed on academics. • Offer additional support services before and after school to middle school students. • Train at least one staff member in Positive Behavioral Intervention practices to better support students with extensive behavioral needs. • Revamp the school's Student Support Team protocol to improve classroom teachers' ability to support students with diverse learning needs. • Hire a Literacy Consultant to support teachers in increasing their capacity to support students with disabilities and assist students with specific related learning needs.
	<p><i>2020-2021 Additional Strategy(ies), if needed</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Above the third quartile: additional or enhanced strategies needed.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find new ways to make Team meetings for special education more accessible and productive for parents with the use of technology and remote meeting platforms. • Enhance efforts to involve more parents in SEPAC to promote the school and family collaboration for students with learning needs. • Increase SEPAC presence on school social media. • Identify Crisis Interventionist to oversee crisis intervention team, providing ongoing professional development

Limited English-proficient Students/English Learners	
<p><u>CHART data</u></p> <p>School percentage: NA%</p> <p>Third Quartile: 0%</p> <p>The school's attrition rate is <u>below</u> third quartile percentages.</p>	<p><i>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a relationship with an ELL service provider. • Ensure adequate number of teaching staff are SEI-endorsed. • Maintain SEI endorsement of at least one member of the administrative team and increasing numbers of the teaching staff. • Provide extra services (by an ELL service provider) to students who are not qualified ESL learners but whose backgrounds suggest that they are struggling due to English language learning (e.g., parents speak non-English at home, etc.) • Ensure current families are aware that RVCS offers ELL services. Offer all families an afterschool foreign language program to allow Spanish-speaking families opportunities to share their culture within the community.
	<p><i>2020-2021 Additional Strategy(ies), if needed</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>No ELs were enrolled during the 2019-2020 school year. No retention strategies needed. (Technically, an EL was enrolled but the student placed out via the WIDA assessment.)</i></p>

Students eligible for free or reduced lunch (low income/economically disadvantaged)	
<p><u>CHART data</u></p> <p>School percentage: 20%</p> <p>Third Quartile: 5.7</p> <p>The school's attrition rate is above third quartile percentages.</p>	<p><i>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to school-based counselor to identify additional services available in the area. • Provide a high quality free or reduced-price lunch program to qualifying students. • Provide reduced cost before and after care program to qualifying students. • Provide reduced cost enrichment programming to qualifying students.
	<p><i>2020-2021 Additional Strategy(ies), if needed</i></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Above median and third quartile: enhanced/additional strategies needed.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase connections with families at risk of financial needs particularly in the current economic downturn due to Covid-19. • Update and enhance the resources for financial and meal assistance during the Covid-19 pandemic with monthly refreshes of information.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure equal access to programming offered during the pandemic by providing families with hardware, software, and connectivity as well as by providing students in need with the appropriate clothing resources to participate in the school's outdoor program (rain gear, weatherproof boots, etc.) • Partner with Nourishing the North Shore, a local food insecurity organization, to connect families to this local resource. Families receive access to fresh, free, locally sourced, healthy food through NNS.
<u>Students who are sub-proficient</u>	<p><i>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide summer sessions to qualifying students. • Provide Homework Help for grades 4-8 • Provide students with computer-based programming to reinforce/practice math skills. • Reduced cohort sizes in grades K-6 to ensure students receive additional 1:1/small group instruction.
<u>Students at risk of dropping out of school</u>	<p><i>Continue 2019-2020 Strategies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide drop-in summer sessions for Middle School student
<u>Students who have dropped out of school</u>	<p><i>Continued 2019-2020 Strategies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NA

School and Student Data Tables (Appendix C)

River Valley Charter School's student demographic enrollment data can be found on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's website at <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=04820000&orgtypecode=5&>

STUDENT RACE AND ETHNICITY AND SELECTED POPULATIONS	
Race/Ethnicity	% of School
African-American	.7
Asian	2.8
Hispanic	4.9
Native American	.3
White	87.5
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0
Multi-race, non-Hispanic	3.8
Selected Populations	
First Language not English	1.4
English Language Learner	0

STUDENT RACE AND ETHNICITY AND SELECTED POPULATIONS	
Students with Disabilities	15.6
High Needs	21.5
Economically Disadvantaged	8.0

ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR			
Name, Title	Brief Job Description	Start date	End date
Jonnie Lyn Evans School Director	Serves as the organization's Chief Executive Officer providing organizational and academic leadership. Supervises all K-8 faculty.	07/01/2019 *	
Dan Bouchard Assistant Director	Serves as the organization's assistant to the director.	07/01/2019	
Lisa Kelley & Patricia Innes Special Education Co-Coordination	Supervise special education programs at the K-grade 3 and grade 4-8 levels, respectively.	08/01/2015 *	NA
Colin Vandenburg Middle School Coordinator	Oversees the middle school curriculum and supervises all Specialists faculty.	09/01/2014 *	NA
Pamela Dawe Jones Technology Coordinator	Oversees the technological infrastructure of the school.	11/01/2011	NA
Deb McCreven Business Manager	Provides financial and facility management.	01/01/2000	NA
* date represents the member's start date for this position; member was previously an RVCS employee			

TEACHERS AND STAFF ATTRITION FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR				
	Number as of the last day of the 2019-2020 school year	Departures during the 2019-2020 school year	Departures at the end of the school year	Reason(s) for Departure
Teachers	42	0	2	Two employees chose to end their employment
Other Staff	16	0	1	One employee chose to end their employment

BOARD AND COMMITTEE INFORMATION	
Number of commissioner-approved board members as of August 1, 2020	16
Minimum number of board members in approved by-laws	11
Maximum number of board members in approved by-laws	20

BOARD MEMBERS FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR				
Name	Position on the Board	Committee affiliation(s)	Number of terms served	Length of each term Terms begin July 1 and end June 30
Amber Hewett	Vice Chair	Executive Committee on Trustees	First term completed, extending into second term	2017-2020 2020-2023
Mark Bishop	Treasurer	Executive Finance	First term in progress	2019-2022
Nina Keery	Trustee	Committee on Trustees	First term completed, extending into second term	2017-2020 2020-2023
Pam Brockmeier Armstrong	Chair	Executive Finance	First term completed, extending into second term	2017-2020 2020-2023
Catherine Martin	Trustee	Committee on Trustees	First term in progress	2018-2021
Karina Moltz	Secretary	Executive	First term in progress	2018-2021
John Siegfried	Trustee		Completed first term Left at end of second year of second term	2015-2018 2018-2021
Erin Seaton	Trustee	Committee on Trustees	First term in progress	2019-2022
Nancy Durkee	Trustee	Accountability	Completed first and second terms	2019-2022
Mark Belanger	Trustee		Completed second term	2014 2015-2018 2018-2020
Jennifer McCormick	Trustee	Development Chair	Completed second term	2014-2017 2017-2020
Alfred Link	Trustee	Accountability Finance	Completed first term, extending into second term *returning board member	2017-2020 2020-2023
Katherine Brown	Trustee		Completed first term. Left in first year of second term.	2016-2019 2019-2022
Josh Porter	Trustee	Committee on Trustees	Completed first term. Left in first year of second term	2016-2019 2019-2022

BOARD MEMBERS FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR				
Ali Fields	Staff Representative	NA	Completed one-year term	2019-2020

BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR	
Date/Time	Location
July 21, 2020 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
August 11, 2020 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
September 8, 2020 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
October 20, 2020 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
November 10, 2020 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
December 8, 2020 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
January 12, 2021 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
February 9, 2021 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
March 9, 2021 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
April 13, 2021 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
May 11, 2021 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
June 22, 2021 - 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic

COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULES FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR		
Name of Committee	Date/Time	Location
Accountability Committee	8/3, 8/31, 10/12, 11/2, 11/30, 1/4, 2/1, 3/1, 4/5, 5/3, 6/14 All meet at 6:00pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
Development Committee	8/5, 9/2, 10/14, 11/14, 12/2, 1/6, 2/3, 3/3, 4/7, 5/5, 6/16 All meet at 6:00pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
Finance Committee	8/4, 9/1, 10/13, 11/3, 12/1, 1/5, 2/2, 3/2, 4/6, 5/4, 6/15 All meet at 6:30pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
Committee on Trustees	7/21, 8/11, 9/8, 10/20, 11/10, 12/8, 1/12, 2/9, 3/9, 4/13, 5/11, 6/22 All meet at 5:00pm	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic
Executive Committee	8/27, 10/8, 10/29, 11/26, 1/28, 2/25, 4/1, 4/29, 6/10	Remote – via Zoom during pandemic

COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULES FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR		
	All meet at 8:30am	

Additional Required Information (Appendix D)

Position	Name	Email Address	No Change/ New/Open Position
Board of Trustees Chairperson	Pam Brockmeier Armstrong	rvcsbot@rivervalleycharter.org	New
Charter School Leader	Jonnie Lyn Evans	jlevans@rivervalleycharter.org	New
Assistant Charter School Leader	Dan Bouchard	dbouchard@rivervalleycharter.org	New
Special Education Directors	Patricia Innes and Lisa Kelley	pinnes@rivervalleycharter.org lkelly@rivervalleycharter.org	No change
MCAS Test Coordinator	Dan Bouchard	dbouchard@rivervalleycharter.org	New
SIMS Coordinator	Dan Bouchard	dbouchard@rivervalleycharter.org	New
English Language Learner Director	Dan Bouchard	dbouchard@rivervalleycharter.org	New
School Business Official	Deb McCrevan	dmccrean@rivervalleycharter.org	No change
SIMS Contact	Patricia O'Leary	polaey@rivervalleycharter.org	New

Enrollment

Action	2020-2021 School Year Date(s)
Student Application Deadline	Tuesday February 23, 2021
Lottery	Thursday February 24, 2021

Accountability Attachment for 1A: Essential Elements Rubric

Domain 1—Adults

STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
Teachers have Montessori credentials, from a MACTE or AMI accredited training program, for the age group they teach, in addition to any required licenses or credentials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All teachers are fully trained at the appropriate level and hold required licenses or credentials. • All auxiliary staff (special education, PE) are Montessori trained or oriented. • Montessori principles are evident in the actions of all adults. Key actions include: speaking softly, clearly, and respectfully to children and adults, refraining from offering unnecessary help, inviting as opposed to commanding, and student engagement in meaningful work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of teachers are fully trained at the appropriate level, with the remainder in the process of earning an appropriate Montessori credential. • Auxiliary staff have been oriented in Montessori theory and practice. • Montessori principles are evident in many, but not all adults' actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85% of all teachers are fully trained at the appropriate level, with the remainder in the process of earning an appropriate Montessori credential. • Montessori principles are evident in some adults' actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 85% of all teachers are fully trained at the appropriate level. • Absence of robust knowledge of Montessori theory and practice is evident in the actions of adults; key actions include: interrupting students who are concentrating, using a loud, intrusive voice, attempting to control rather than model respectful behavior.
Each teacher is supported by a paraprofessional/ assistant given Montessori-specific orientation for that role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classrooms are staffed with an assistant who has completed a Montessori Assistant's course. • The school provides an orientation workshop for all assistants. • All assistants play an integral role in the culture of the classroom, providing support in the care of the environment, modeling positive behavior, assisting the teacher when students need redirection, and other duties as assigned by the teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of all classrooms are staffed with an assistant who has completed a Montessori Assistant's course. • The school provides an orientation workshop for all assistants. • Many assistants play an integral role in the culture of the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of all classrooms are staffed with an assistant who has completed a Montessori Assistant's course. • Some assistants play an integral role in the culture of the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer than 75% of all classrooms are staffed with an assistant who has completed a Montessori Assistant's course • Assistants, when they are present, are disengaged from the work of the room or function solely as disciplinarians.
All adults, Montessori trained or not, embrace core Montessori principles, respecting the process of human development and supporting children's independence, freedom, responsibility, and growth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All adults interact with children in ways that are deeply respectful and support their development as appropriate to the children's age and level of independence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults sometimes set developmentally inappropriate expectations for children, expecting too little or too much independence and responsibility. • Adults sometimes interact disrespectfully with children (e.g., interrupting, ordering, teasing, contradicting, controlling...) • Montessori trained staff interact appropriately, but untrained staff are poorly supported in appropriate interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults often set developmentally inappropriate expectations for children, expecting too little or too much independence and responsibility. • Adults often interact disrespectfully with children (e.g., interrupting, ordering, teasing, contradicting...). • Untrained staff show no awareness of appropriate interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult interactions with children are not guided by Montessori principles, and are developmentally inappropriate and disrespectful (controlling, interrupting, shouting, shaming, blaming, etc.).

Domain 2—Montessori Learning Environment

STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
Children are grouped according to Montessori age groupings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.5-6 • 6-9 • 9-12 • 12-15 • 15-18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All learning environments reflect Montessori age groupings. • Classroom communities serve at least 24 students supervised by no more than two adults. • The primary point of entry to the program is age 3. • For students who enter after age 4, the school has a well-elaborated orientation and induction program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All learning environments reflect Montessori age groupings. • Classroom communities feature at least 24 students supervised by no more than two adults. • Significant numbers of 5-year-olds may enter without prior Montessori experience, but these new students are carefully oriented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed-age environments exist, but children are segregated by age, gender or ability. • There is a stand-alone “kindergarten” program for 5 year-olds, but is working toward a full 3-6 program, and has a reliable method for orienting these children. • Students age out of the school before the end of a 3-year cycle (e.g., after 1st, 2nd, 4th, or 5th grades, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are grouped in single-grade or two-year classrooms. • There is a stand-alone “kindergarten” program for 5 year-olds with no reliable method for orienting these children. • Children are segregated by age, gender or ability.
Learning environments provide uninterrupted 3-hour work periods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classrooms provide 3-hour morning work periods. • Classrooms for older children provide 2-hour work periods, with limited interruption for specials and other programmed activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classrooms provide 2.5-hour morning work periods. • Classrooms for older children provide 2-hour work periods, with limited interruption for specials and other programmed activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All classrooms provide 2.5-hour morning work periods. • Classrooms for older children provide 2-hour work periods, but 2-3 times a week, those periods are taken up with specials and other programmed activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work periods are divided into small portions (e.g.: Readers or Writers Workshop, Literacy Block) with limited opportunity for children to concentrate on self-chosen work.
Specialty programs such as music, art, and second languages are integrated into the three-hour work cycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Montessori teachers confidently deliver Montessori music, using bells, tone bars and other materials integral to this part of the program. • Materials for making and viewing art are visible on shelves, and students have access to them at all times. • Bilingual staff support an immersion approach to second-language instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialty programs (music, art, second language) are offered as separate classes, but do not interrupt extended work periods. • Students have free access to Montessori music materials—bells, tone bars, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialty programs (music art, second language) are offered as separate classes, usually during afternoon work periods. • Students have limited access to Montessori music materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialty programs such as music, art, and second languages are delivered by non-Montessori specialists during work periods. • There are separate morning and afternoon classes. • Students have no access to Montessori music materials.
The environment supports a high degree of student choice in what to work on, where to work, and how long to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can choose to work at tables, on rugs on the floor, or outside. • Students have ongoing access to all materials, and are allowed to choose their work freely during extended work periods. • Almost all instruction takes place in small groups (Elementary & Secondary) or one-on-one (Early Childhood). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can choose to work at tables, on rugs on the floor, or outside. • Students have ongoing access to all materials, and are allowed to choose their work for the majority of work periods. • 80% of instruction takes place in small groups (Elementary & Secondary) or one-on-one (Early Childhood). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students have choice regarding where and what to work on for part of the day. • Students may be assigned work but may choose where and in what order they will do their work. • Whole or large-group instruction is used almost as much as individual and small group instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student movement is restricted. • Most students work at tables. • Most learning is directed by adults. • Most instruction takes place in whole-group formats. • Teaching and learning are expected to follow a pacing set by the teacher.

continued

STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
The full complement of Montessori materials is available in every area, representing the majority of materials on all shelves. Additional materials conform to Montessori standards of order, beauty, and simplicity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The full complement of Montessori materials is available in every area. Montessori materials are meticulously cared for and displayed in an orderly and inviting manner, representing the majority of work available to students. Materials are in constant use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The full complement of Montessori materials is available in every area. Montessori materials are displayed in an orderly and inviting manner, representing the majority of work available to students. Materials are in good repair and ready for use. Materials are in regular use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is less than a full complement of Montessori materials. Montessori materials are visible, but not organized in a way that invites robust engagement and concentration. Montessori materials are liberally supplemented with other curricular approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Montessori materials may be visible, but the majority of work involves other materials and resources, such as worksheets, text books, or computers. The environment is cluttered, with little attention to order, beauty and simplicity.
The learning environment offers ongoing access to real-world materials and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children have ample opportunities to engage in care of the classroom, food preparation, dining and meal cleanup, and plant and animal care, and these activities are a regular part of children's activity. Tools and materials for practical activities are functional and child-sized. Appropriate cutlery, glassware and dishes are used daily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children have some opportunities to engage in care of the classroom, food preparation, dining and meal cleanup, and plant and animal care, and are at times engaged with them. Functional child-sized tools and materials are available, but the supply is limited or some are not appropriate for children's use. Appropriate cutlery, glassware and dishes are used daily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some real world activities are available, but children do not spontaneously engage in them. Tools and materials are very limited, or mostly inappropriate for children's use. Care of the classroom, food preparation, dining and cleanup, and plant and animal care are handled mostly by adults. Children eat with disposable cutlery, plates, and cups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No real world activities are available. Care of the classroom, food preparation, dining and cleanup, and plant and animal care are handled by adults. Children eat with disposable cutlery, plates, and cups.
The learning environment offers appropriate access to a prepared outdoor environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children have free access, within appropriate limits, to a well-prepared outdoor learning environment. The outdoor environment is in regular use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children have some access to a well-prepared outdoor learning environment. The outdoor environment is in occasional use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the outdoor environment is tightly restricted by adults. The outdoor environment is not well prepared or appropriate for children's use. The outdoor environment is infrequently in use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to the outdoors is only available during "recess", as a free play activity. The outdoor environment is not well prepared or appropriate for children's use.
SPED students are fully included and supported within the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Montessori teachers are dual certified as SPED teachers and able address all but most significant learning issues through the Montessori program. SPED and Resource Teachers are Montessori trained or oriented and work in collaboration with Montessori teachers to provide special services within the prepared environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPED students are pulled out for small portions of the day, or specialists come in the classroom but work with the SPED students apart from the rest of the group and primarily through non-Montessori materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPED students are pulled out of the Montessori classroom for large portions of the day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPED students have a separate program for most or all of the day.
ELL students are fully included and supported within the classroom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Montessori teachers are dual certified as ELL teachers. ELL Resource Teachers are Montessori trained or oriented and work in collaboration with Montessori teachers to provide special services within the prepared environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELL students are pulled out for small portions of the day, or specialists come in the classroom but work with the ELL students apart from the rest of the group and primarily through non-Montessori materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELL students are pulled out of the Montessori classroom for large portions of the day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ELL students have a separate program for most or all of the day.

Domain 3—Family Engagement

STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
A strong partnership between home and school is evident in all formal and informal communications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well-developed Family Handbook elaborates mutual expectations in clear, accessible language. • Robust, two-way communication begins prior to enrollment and is visible in a website, newsletters, letters home, and processes for parent-teacher conferences. • All relevant documents are translated into languages reflecting the school's population • The school's Parent Engagement plan may include home-visits. • Faculty and staff reflect the ethnic, linguistic and racial makeup of the student-body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A well-developed Family Handbook elaborates mutual expectations in clear, accessible language. • The school maintains an active website. • Most classrooms distribute newsletters and other regular communications such as websites, blogs, or Google groups. • Highest priority documents are translated into the languages reflecting the school's population. • Efforts are made to hire faculty and staff that reflect the ethnic, linguistic and racial makeup of the student- body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Family Handbook exists, but is out-of-date and not widely distributed. • Communication between home and school is limited to informing families of events, deadlines, and other administrative matters. • Some classrooms distribute newsletters and other regular communications, but there is no coordinated system for ensuring that all members of the community are informed. • Translation services are limited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Family Handbook may exist, but is out-of-date and not widely distributed. • Communication between home and school is sporadic, and usually in the form of announcements from the administration. • Translations are sporadic or non-existent.
The school provides ongoing opportunities for family education, including information sessions, discussion groups, observation of classrooms, and parent-teacher-student conferences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The enrollment process features multiple opportunities for parents to learn about Montessori and the family commitment expected by the school. These events are well planned and executed, and attended by large numbers of prospective families. • A robust family induction process, includes open houses, orientation evenings, and networking with experienced families. • Family education opportunities are offered monthly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The enrollment process features some opportunities for parents to learn about Montessori and the family commitment expected by the school. • The school offers an orientation evening for new families. • Family education opportunities are offered quarterly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The enrollment process may feature events such as open houses, but they are poorly advertised and sparsely attended. • The school offers an annual Open House. • Family education opportunities are offered sporadically. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The enrollment process includes no opportunities for families to learn about the school, and any families enroll without any knowledge of Montessori education. • No family education opportunities are offered.

continued

STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
The school cultivates a strong school-home association, in which parents have authentic opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the school's mission and communicate with school leadership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school maintains a designated space for adults to gather, which includes a resource library filled with material related to Montessori, child development, parenting, and other topics of interest. • The school employs a Community Engagement specialist, who supports the family community by partnering with parent leaders, assisting in the coordination of volunteer opportunities. • There is an active school board and/or governance council with significant family representation. • Minutes of all meetings are shared with the entire community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's School-Home or Family Association is active, with parent/adult leaders visible in the school. • Minutes of all meetings are shared with the entire community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has a School- Home Association, but it is not active. • The school's Board or governance council may have family representation, but families do not regularly attend meetings. • Minutes of meetings are not regularly shared with the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no formal structures through which families can participate in the school.

Domain 4—Leadership and Organizational Development

STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
An experienced Montessori educator guides the implementation of the Montessori program, as Principal, Program Director, Curriculum Coordinator or Instructional Coach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Montessori trained school leader communicates and advocates effectively for full Montessori implementation. At least one instructional coach, with Montessori training for at least one program level, supports full Montessori implementation as a primary responsibility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school leader is not Montessori trained, but is enthusiastically engaged in ongoing Montessori professional development. A trained Program Director or Montessori Coach supports the untrained school leader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school leader is not Montessori trained, and has engaged in minimal Montessori professional development. The school does not employ a Montessori Program Director or Coach, but does rely on the expertise of experienced teachers or consultants in making program decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school leader is unwilling to engage in Montessori professional development The school leader regards Montessori as an aspect of the school program rather than the essence of the school program. The school leader engages in teacher evaluation and program development systems that are in conflict with Montessori principles and practice.
The school has a clear vision for how it delivers Montessori education, and has an active cycle of reflection and self-review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has a current and active strategic/school improvement plan, which is grounded in Montessori principles, informed by multiple constituents, and widely understood and embraced by the school community. The school regularly employs Montessori consultants to provide internal and external audits of program quality, and incorporates consultant feedback into an ongoing strategic planning process. The school has a well-articulated and transparent process for inducting, mentoring and evaluating teachers. Teachers are evaluated based on a protocol designed to support fully implemented Montessori practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has a living strategic/school improvement plan, which is grounded in Montessori principles, informed by multiple constituents, and made available to the school community. The school has employed a Montessori consultant within the past three years to provide internal support for strategic planning and instructional improvement. Teachers are evaluated based on a protocol that is friendly to Montessori pedagogical principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is in the process of developing a strategic/school improvement plan, which includes goals for improving Montessori practice. The school does not look to outside resources for Montessori support. Teachers are evaluated in part or whole based on a protocol that does not reflect Montessori practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's strategic/school improvement plan includes no goals for improving Montessori practice. Teachers are evaluated based on a protocol that has no relationship to Montessori pedagogical practice.
The school maintains membership in one or more Montessori professional organizations, and seeks accreditation to ensure consistent quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is accredited or recognized by at least one major Montessori professional organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school maintains membership in at least one major Montessori professional organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is not be a full member (due to costs or other constraints), but leaders and staff attend at least one major Montessori professional organization's conference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has no connections with any Montessori professional organization.

continued

STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
The school has a pipeline for recruiting, training, hiring, and retaining high quality Montessori teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school sponsors two or more teachers for Montessori training annually. The school provides a robust annual Assistant's/Fundamentals Course. The school has a strong relationship with a MACTE accredited or AMI Montessori training center. The school recruits broadly and provides a substantive interview and induction process for all prospective and new hires. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's budget supports sponsorship for Montessori training for at least one new teacher a year. The school offers orientation and professional development designed to support classroom assistants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's operating budget does not support annual sponsorships, but efforts are made to raise funds for the specific purpose of supporting the talent pipeline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has no systems in place to ensure a reliable pipeline of high quality Montessori teachers.
All adults engage in ongoing Montessori professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All adults engage in ongoing Montessori professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 – 90% of adults engage in ongoing Montessori professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some, but fewer than half, of adults engage in ongoing Montessori professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults do not engage in ongoing Montessori professional development.
Adults treat one another with respect and model grace and courtesy in their interactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All adult interactions are respectful, gracious, and courteous. Respect, grace, and courtesy characterize formal and informal school activities. Respect, grace, and courtesy characterize interactions with families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most adult interactions are respectful, gracious, and courteous. Respect, grace, and courtesy characterize most formal and informal school activities. Respect, grace, and courtesy characterize most interactions with families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults are sometimes disrespectful, preemptory or dismissive with one another. There are notable status divisions among trained teachers, support staff, and administrative staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults are generally disrespectful, preemptory or dismissive with one another. Non-teaching staff are blatantly disrespected or delegitimized.
Montessori practice is supported by a clearly defined Montessori scope and sequence, integrated with (but not driven by) state standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty and staff understand and can explain the Montessori approach and how it meets state standards. A Montessori scope and sequence aligned with state standards is shared widely in the school and available to families, district staff, and other stakeholders. Teachers lead with their Montessori training and refer back to state standards as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most faculty and staff understand and can explain the Montessori approach and how it meets state standards. An alignment of the Montessori scope and sequence with state standards is in process. The Montessori scope and sequence is part of internal and external communications. Teachers mostly lead with their Montessori training and refer back to state standards as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many faculty and staff members are unclear on the Montessori approach and how it meets state standards. No alignment of the Montessori scope and sequence with state standards is in use. The Montessori scope and sequence is available but not part of community understanding or regular practice. Teachers mostly lead with state standards and use some Montessori materials and lessons to teach them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty and staff are following a scope and sequence that conflicts with Montessori pedagogy. Teaching is entirely driven by state standards.

Domain 5—Assessment

STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
Assessment protocols integrate measures of academic achievement with measures of executive functions such as self-regulation, initiation, and cognitive flexibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school tracks multiple indicators of success through means such as alumni, parent, and receiving teacher surveys. The school uses cognitive measures such as the Flanker Inhibitory Control Task, or the Minnesota Executive Function Scale (MEFS), to document wide-scope developmental outcomes. The school maintains profiles of all students based on narrative appraisal and work sampling, as well as performance on standardized academic measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is in the process of developing a protocol that allows the documentation of social and emotional and executive function outcomes. The school maintains profiles of all students based on narrative appraisal and work sampling, as well as performance on standardized academic measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school includes narrative appraisals of social and emotional development as part of its assessment and reporting protocols, but has no larger system for tracking wide-scope student outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The only form of assessment is state-mandated tests. Results are reported without context. Minimal standards of proficiency drive instruction.
Ongoing, personalized qualitative assessment, in the form of observation and documentation, drives all instructional decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular, recorded observation is the basis of planning and assessment. The school uses an on-line record-keeping system to ensure that data are collected and managed effectively. Teachers make time daily to record observed activity within the environment. An observer's chair is visible in the environment. Teachers meet weekly as teams to discuss student progress, reflect collectively on challenges, and share potential solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular, recorded observation is the basis of planning and assessment. Some teachers use an on-line record-keeping system to ensure that data are collected and managed effectively. Teachers make time daily to record observed activity within the environment. An observer's chair is visible in the environment. Teachers meet occasionally as teams to discuss student progress, reflect collectively on challenges, and share potential solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some teachers make time daily to record observed activity with the environment, but there is no link to a larger system of data management. Some classrooms have an observer's chair. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no evidence of ongoing, recorded observation. Teachers do not meet to reflect on student progress.
Assessments are delivered in the least obtrusive manner possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formative and summative assessments are delivered to individual students during work periods. Tests are treated as Practical Life activities, with minimal emphasis or work disruption. Test preparation is limited to practice experiences designed to familiarize students with format and language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summative assessments are delivered during testing windows. Total test preparation constitutes no more than one week of student work time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formative and summative assessments are delivered to the whole school/whole class during prescribed testing windows. Test preparation constitutes more than two weeks of student work time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing windows take over the entire school day, with work periods suspended, students grouped in grade-level cohorts, and assessments proctored by unfamiliar teachers. Preparing for tests drives the school's program.

continued

STANDARD	EXEMPLARY	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	UNSATISFACTORY
As students mature, they are increasingly involved in monitoring their own progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning in the elementary level, students keep daily journals of their work. Teachers regularly confer with students to assist in the development of personal learning goals and to reflect on progress. Beginning in the elementary, students regularly participate in parent-teacher discussions of student progress. 	<p>Students keep work journals, but they are not regularly employed in the self-assessment process.</p> <p>Teachers sometimes confer with students to assist in the development of personal learning goals and to reflect on progress.</p>	<p>Students are given assigned "work plans" which they have little input in developing or reflecting on.</p> <p>Work plans require the teacher to "check-off" completed work rather than allowing students to manage their time and productivity.</p>	Students are disconnected from the assessment process, except to receive grades.

Accountability Attachment for 1B: Teacher Reflective Practices Inventory

K-6 Teacher Reflective Practice Inventory

Self-reflection provides an opportunity for you to think about the many parts of your Montessori practice, including your role as the guide, the prepared environment, and your instructional practices.

Using the Likert scale below, please select the number that best represents where you are in your Montessori practice.

*** Required**

1. Email address *

2. 1. Every object in my environment is chosen with regard to development of the child: there is nothing extraneous. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

3. 2. The environment is impeccably clean and tidy, and all materials are displayed in sequence from simple to complex. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

4. 3. Furniture is arranged to nurture concentration and to provide smooth flow. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

5. 4. There is a variety in shapes, colors, textures and materials in the objects in the environment--trays, containers, rugs, and a variety of arts and crafts on the walls and integrated in various areas of the classroom. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

6. 5. The children in my environment understand that the classroom belongs to them; they are fully oriented to the environment and show strong trust for one another and the adults. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

7. 6. There is an attitude of learning from mistakes and an acceptance that errors are a part of the learning process. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

8. 7. There are routines for cleaning and ordering the classroom, introducing more complex materials based on student interest and need, rotating language materials to enrich vocabulary development, and refreshing pictures/art on the walls and in culture folders. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

9. 8. I am direct, specific, and consistent in communicating expectations with regard to social interactions, care of the environment , and purposeful work. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

10. 9. I consistently use the environment, and the materials to provide the first level of support for children's development and I intervene directly only when this support is insufficient. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

11. 10. I am confident in my repertoire of lessons, and I consistently provide presentations with fluency, clarity and economy of movement. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

12. 11. My lesson planning is based on ongoing observation of the children; I take time every day to sit and observe students in the environment. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

13. 12. While engaging with individual children, I am aware of the general classroom and the children's activity. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

14. 13. I consistently identify student learning challenges early, and make necessary adaptations to my environment and/or presentations to meet the unique needs of individual students. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

15. 14. I have a reliable system for documenting ongoing observation of student work, and use that system to monitor student development as well as to communicate progress with parents, support staff, and, when needed, school/district officials. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

16. 15. I am highly sensitive to cultural differences and always appropriately respectful in communications with families. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

17. 16. I am proactive with respect to sharing student concerns and/or challenges with families. I make myself available for e-mail, telephone, and face-to-face conferences with families. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

18. 17. I approach each family with a spirit of empathetic inquiry, with the acceptance that parents want the best for their child. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

19. 18. I consider myself a child development expert, and am up-to-date on the latest research on the subject, including new insights on neuroscience and cognition and their relationship to Montessori theory and practice. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

20. 19. I strive to be fully present in every interaction--whether the other is a child, an adult or the environment. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

21. 20. I understand Maria Montessori's Cosmic vision and regard daily work with children and families as a contribution to the larger cosmic effort. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

22. 21. I continually strive to realize my own human potential, and I look toward the child for inspiration. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!

23. 22. I am intentional about caring for my physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
It's not my strength yet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	It's my Superpower!