

## Minnesota Authorizer Performance Evaluation System (MAPES) Performance Report

### Authorizer Information

**Authorizer:** Chisago Lakes School District

**Authorizer Type:** School District

**Evaluation Period:** January 2016 – December 2020

**Report Issue Date:** December 7, 2020

### Characteristics of the Authorizer

- The Chisago Lakes School District's authorizing mission is to provide an educational opportunity within the borders of the Chisago Lakes School District that offers students unique, high-quality and personalized educational opportunities that are not inherently found in the Chisago Lake School District (CLSD) offerings.
- CLSD currently authorizes one school, TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning Charter School, a hybrid online charter high school.
- The Chisago Lakes Charter School authorization team is made up of four members. The authorization team reports to the Chisago Lakes School Board which has final decision-making authority.

### Overall Performance Rating

**MAPES Overall Performance Rating for Chisago Lakes School District is 2.18: Satisfactory**

#### Performance Measures A: Authorizer Capacity and Infrastructure – 25 Percent Weight of Overall Rating

A.1: Authorizing Mission (2.5 percent)*	4
A.2: Authorizer Organizational Goals (1.25 percent)**	1
A.3: Authorizer Structure of Operations (2.5 percent)	1
A.4: Authorizing Staff Expertise (2.5 percent)	2
A.5: Authorizer Knowledge and Skill Development of Authorizing Leadership and Staff (2.5 percent)**	3
A.6: Authorizer Operational Budget for Authorizing the Portfolio of Charter Schools (2.5 percent)	1
A.7: Authorizer Operational Conflicts of Interest (2.5 percent)	4
A.8: Ensuring Autonomy of the Charter Schools in the Portfolio (2.5 percent)	4
A.9: Authorizer Self-Evaluation of Capacity, Infrastructure and Practices (1.25 percent)**	1
A.10: Authorizer High-Quality Authorizing Dissemination (1.25 percent)**	2
A.11: Authorizer Compliance to Responsibilities Stated in Statute (3.75 percent)	1
<b>Total Performance Measures A Rating:</b>	<b>2.25</b>

**Performance Measures B: Authorizer Processes and Decision-Making – 75 Percent Weight of Overall Rating**

B.1: New Charter School Decisions (11.25 percent)*	2
B.2: Interim Accountability Decisions (11.25 percent: 3.75 percent for expansion requests; 3.75 percent for ready to open standards; 3.75 percent for change in authorizers)	
Expansion Requests (3.75 percent)	2
Ready to Open Standards (3.75 percent)	2
Change in Authorizers (3.75 percent)	2
B.3: Contract Term, Negotiation and Execution (7.5 percent)	1
B.4: Performance Outcomes and Standards (11.25 percent)	2
B.5: Authorizer's Processes for Ongoing Oversight of the Portfolio of Charter Schools (7.5 percent)	2
B.6: Authorizer's Standards and Processes for Interventions, Corrective Action and Response to Complaints (3.75 percent)**	4
B.7: Charter School Support, Development and Technical Assistance (3.75 percent overall weight)**	4
B.8: High-Quality Charter School Replication and Dissemination of Best School Practices (3.75 percent)**	3
B.9: Charter School Renewal and Termination Decisions (15 percent)	2
<b>Total Performance Measures B Rating:</b>	<b>2.15</b>

*\*All percentages are presented in terms of overall weight*

*\*\*Continuous Improvement Measure*

## Performance Measures A: Authorizer Capacity and Infrastructure

### A.1 Measure: Authorizing Mission

**Guiding Question:** *Does the authorizer have a clear and compelling mission for charter school authorizing?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 4-Exemplary

**Finding:** The authorizer has a clear and compelling mission for charter school authorizing.

- In the commissioner-approved Authorizing Plan (AAP), Chisago Lakes School District states that its mission is to provide an educational opportunity within the borders of the Chisago Lakes School District (CLSD) that offers students unique, high quality and personalized educational opportunities that are not inherently found in the Chisago Lakes School District offerings. The mission fully aligns with Minnesota charter school statute purposes, specifically to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement, to increase learning opportunities for all pupils and to encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- The narrative describes how CLSD carries out its mission by chartering schools. CLSD states that the mission is carried out by authorizing charter schools that reside in the school district's boundaries and offer something unique and innovative in its approach to education. For example, the authorizer explains that the one school in its portfolio offers a hybrid learning environment and is located within school district boundaries. Furthermore, the AAP states that CLSD's mission is Learning for All; therefore, its authorizer mission is inherent to the district's core belief to promote learning.
- CLSD implements the mission from its AAP. For example, the same mission is provided in the authorizer's charter school manual and in the AAP. In addition, the mission is provided in the FY 2019 authorizer annual report. The annual report states that CLSD sees the benefit of offering an alternative to a brick and mortar traditional high school.
- The mission is verified internally in practice and documentation at the authorizing organization. For example, the mission statement is written in the June 2020 CLSD authorizer presentation to the board. A hyperlink also demonstrates that the mission is listed on the authorizer's website.
- The authorizer's mission is verified internally with consistent responses from interviewed individuals. For example, authorizing staff members stated that the authorizing mission is to be a high-quality authorizer that authorizes schools within its district boundaries to increase student learning so that students achieve and learn.
- The authorizer's mission is verified by external references. Review of the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools website demonstrates the CLSD mission is posted on an external website.
- CLSD's mission is verified by external school representatives. During the interview, school representatives stated that the authorizer's mission is to provide greater educational opportunity and choice to students within the CLSD border.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.1 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Minnesota Association of Charter Schools website (<https://mncharterschools.org/directory/location-detail.php?ID=180>)
- FY 2018 Authorizer Annual Report
- FY 2019 Authorizer Annual Report
- CLSD Authorizer Board Presentation June 2020
- CLSD Charter School Manual 2019-20
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020
- Charter school leader interview, September 24, 2020
- CLSD 20.05-08 Authorizer Review and Comment Template

## A.2 Measure: Authorizer Organizational Goals

**Guiding Question:** *Does the authorizer have clear organizational goals and timeframes for achievement that are aligned with its authorizing mission and Minnesota charter school statute?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 1-Approaching Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer has organizational goals that are aligned with its authorizing mission and Minnesota charter school statute; however, criteria and timeframes for achievement are unclear.

- According to review of the narrative, the AAP and the CLSD Charter School Manual, the authorizer has four organizational goals: 1) increase school performance; 2) encourage innovative and personalized teaching methods; 3) measure learning outcomes as aligned with the World's Best Workforce; and, 4) maintain quality of the portfolio. Furthermore, according to the narrative, the goals are analyzed at an annual meeting using an assessment rubric. Review of the August 2018 and 2019 board meeting notes demonstrate that the charter school authorization team meets annually to discuss goals; however, timeframes for achievement of goals are not specific. While the authorizer states in the authorizer review and comment submission form that goals are analyzed yearly to determine if the goal continues to be needed and the yearly review is required by its rubric, the goals are not time specific. Furthermore, while review of the board meeting minutes demonstrates that the goals are discussed, they are not specifically aligned with clear criteria (e.g., Goal 1 is measured by items A.4-A.6). More specifically, while the rubric identifies metrics that are used to assess goals (e.g., MCA scores, course completion, student growth), the goals are not quantified. For example, review of August 2018 meeting notes shows a 13 percent increase in 2019 graduation rates (from 40 percent to 53 percent); however, a graduation rate goal had not been identified to determine goal attainment. Similarly, August 2019 notes state that 10<sup>th</sup> graders made a huge jump in numbers meeting growth targets; however, growth targets were not quantified and the timeline is vague. Finally, in the authorizer review and comment submission form, the authorizer states that using multiple data points to determine if they are meeting goals is less limiting than having one specific SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) goal; however, the criteria for achievement is not clear.
- According to review of the AAP, the authorizer implements organizational goals from its AAA/AAP that align with its mission related to offering students unique, high-quality and personalized educational opportunities. For example, the AAP names the four organizational goals that are identified in the annual reports and on the authorizer's website. The second goal states that the authorizer will encourage innovative and personalized teaching methods.

### Key Evidence:

- A.2 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Authorizer August 2018 and 2019 Board Meeting Notes
- Charter School Manual
- CLSD authorizer website
- Charter Annual Assessment Rubric
- CLSD Charter School Manual 2019-20
- CLSD 20.05-08 Authorizer Review and Comment Template

### A.3 Measure: Authorizer Structure of Operations

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer operate with a clear structure of duties and responsibilities and sufficient resources to effectively oversee its portfolio of charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 1-Approaching Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer operates with a clear structure of duties and responsibilities and sufficient resources to effectively oversee its portfolio of charter schools, beginning in March 2018.

- According to the narrative confirmed in the FY 2018 and FY 2019 annual reports, the charter school authorization team is made up of four members, including the Superintendent of Schools, the Charter School Authorizer Team Coordinator/Director of Curriculum, the High School Principal and the Director of Human Resources. The narrative states, and the authorizer confirmed during the interview, that a Director of Business Services also serves in an advisory role. Review of the organizational chart shows the Chisago Lakes School Board has ultimate decision-making power. The Superintendent reports to the Board, while the Principal and Director of Human Resources report to the Charter School Authorizer Team Coordinator. Job responsibilities are defined in the narrative and in the Charter School Manual (e.g., the Superintendent hires, supervises and manages central staff and also delivers board decisions while the Director of Curriculum oversees the academic progress of the school and attends the Minnesota Department of Education [MDE] and Minnesota Association of Charter School Authorizers [MACSA] meetings) and deemed sufficient to meet the needs of the portfolio upon internal verification at the authorizing organization.
- According to the narrative, the current authorization team was implemented in March 2018 and many of their practices have only been in place since then. The authorizer explained in the authorizer review and comment submission form that, prior to March 2018, the authorizer team consisted of a Superintendent, Director of Business Services and Director of Curriculum/Communications. The organizational chart (undated), submitted with the second response, describes these team members' duties (e.g., the Superintendent's duties include making recommendations on application approvals, program expansions and terminations of charter schools; duties of the Director of Curriculum/Communications include providing assistance and guidance to the charter school and reviewing charter school applications; and, duties of the Director of Business Services include overseeing operations of the charter school, application process, program expansion process, accountability process, intervention process, etc. of the charter school). However, the FY 2017 authorizer annual report indicates that a high school principal was also a member of the authorizer team. Review of the organizational chart does not include the principal or articulate the principal's duties. Therefore, the structure of duties prior to March 2018 is not clearly defined. Finally, according to the FY 2017 annual report, the team structure was changed in January 2018 following a needs assessment to evaluate what areas needed increased knowledge and skills; and, according to school leaders, structures improved with systematization following team restructuring in March 2018. This was confirmed during the authorizer interview.
- Level 2 indicators were not met for at least three years. Although the authorizer currently operates with a clear structure of duties and responsibilities in place, this new structure was implemented in March 2018.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.3 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- FY 2016 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2017 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2018 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2019 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- CLSD Charter School Manual
- Authorizer Organizational Structure and Job Descriptions
- Organizational Chart
- FY 2018 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2019 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020
- Charter school leader interview, September 24, 2020
- CLSD 20.05-08 Authorizer Review and Comment Template

#### **A.4 Measure: Authorizing Staff Expertise**

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer have appropriate experience, expertise and skills to sufficiently oversee the portfolio of charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 2- Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer currently has appropriate experience, expertise and skills to sufficiently oversee the portfolio of charter schools; however, not for the entire term of the review.

- According to a review of biographies and resumes, authorizing staff, including six board members and four team members, has experience, expertise and skills in charter school academics, finance and operations. For example, three members hold Master's degrees in Education, two are licensed superintendents, one has served as a school district's finance manager and one has sat on MACSA's executive committee. Furthermore, a proposal from the law firm of Rupp, Anderson, Squires & Waldspurger (RASW), a copy of a RASW attorney's license and an invoice received by CLSD on July 17, 2017 from the Ratwick, Roszak & Maloney (RRM), P.A. for legal services to the TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning, demonstrate the authorizing staff holds the experience, expertise and skills, including law, to sufficiently oversee the portfolio of schools since at least June 2017.
- The authorizer provided evidence to demonstrate that authorizing staff holds the experience, expertise and skills needed to sufficiently oversee the portfolio of charter schools. For example, review of resumes shows that one authorizer staff member has served as superintendent since 2017; and one member, the Authorization Team Coordinator, served as the Vice President of MACSA where she also sat on the executive committee in 2019-20. Evidence also shows legal expertise was added in 2018 and legal services provided by RRM were billed for in June 2017. While the authorizer provided a copy of the former superintendent's resume to detail authorizer experience and expertise prior to 2018, there is no documented evidence to confirm this person's affiliation with CLSD. Therefore, indicators were met for at least three years.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.4 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Authorizer Resumes
- Chisago Lakes School Board Bios
- Proposal to Provide Legal Services for CLSD
- Attorney License
- RRM Invoice
- FY20 MACSA Committee Structure
- CLSD 20.05-08 Authorizer Review and Comment Template



## A.5 Measure: Authorizer Knowledge and Skill Development of Authorizing Leadership and Staff

**Guiding Questions:** *To what degree does the authorizer build the knowledge and skill base of its authorizing leadership and staff through professional development? Is professional development aligned with the authorizer's operations, mission and goals for overseeing its portfolio of charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 3-Commendable

**Finding:** The authorizer provides evidence that it builds the knowledge and skill base of its authorizing leadership and staff through professional development that is aligned with its operations, mission and goals for overseeing its portfolio of charter schools.

- Professional development at CLSD is intentional and planned to build the knowledge and skill base of authorizing leadership and staff. As stated in the AAP, the CLSD Authorization Team takes an annual needs assessment and, based on the results, provides professional development. For example, review of meeting notes from December 10, 2018 indicates that training was provided on corrective action for the charter school in response to needs assessment results indicating that staff did not have a clear understanding of corrective action processes.
- Professional development aligns with authorizer's operations, mission and organizational goals for overseeing its portfolio of charter schools. For example, the Authorizer Training Plan 2020-21 lists topics, including MAPES review, budget, authorizer dissemination of best practices and other topics to be identified per MAPES results. Similarly, authorizer meeting notes indicate that training on authorizer goals was provided on November 15, 2018 regarding the roles and responsibilities as well as the authorizer's autonomy policy.
- In alignment with the AAP, and confirmed by review of authorizer meeting notes, MACSA meeting minutes (2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19), authorizer trainings and MDE Authorizer Conference notes (January 9-10, 2017), as well as notes from a spring 2020 National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) boot camp module, the professional development content areas cover all aspects of charter authorizing operations, including contract outcomes, and, at a minimum, at least one annual training related to applicable statute and legislative changes.
- Professional development is attended regularly by authorizing leadership and staff, is ongoing and occurs more than once a year. For example, according to the FY 2018 annual report, the Superintendent, Curriculum Director and High School Principal need 125 hours to renew their license every five years and are, therefore, constantly attending meetings and conferences that relate to information for charter schools such as monthly MACSA meetings. Furthermore, review of MACSA meeting agendas 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 (nearly monthly) show regular attendance of at least one CLSD member. Similarly, agendas (January 9-10, 2017; July 9, 2018 and September 9, 2019 ) demonstrate attendance at MDE authorizer conferences. Review of a NACSA conference invoice dated June 2018 indicates that at least one CLSD member attended the NACSA conference.
- Professional development is not measured and evaluated. During the interview, the authorizer explained that professional development is generally measured and evaluated through review of a year-to-year needs assessment. They explained that if a topic is no longer identified as a need, then the professional development is deemed effective. The authorizer stated in the review and authorizer review and comment submission form that the needs assessments are compared from one year to the next and if a score is higher, they know the professional development offered to the authorizer staff was effective. However, while the needs assessments were provided for each year of the review term, there is no documented evidence that the authorizer solicited feedback from participants to evaluate professional development or that the authorizer intentionally measures the impact of professional development on its authorizing practices.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.5 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- FY 2016 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2017 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2018 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2019 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- Authorizer Meeting Agendas 2018-2020
- Authorizer Meeting Notes August 2018 and 2019
- Authorizer Needs Assessment Results 2017-2020
- CLSD Authorizer Training Plan
- MACSA Meeting Minutes (2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20)
- MDE Authorizer Meeting Agendas (2017-20)
- NACSA Authorizer Boot Camp Certificates (undated)
- NACSA Leadership Invoice
- MDE Authorizer Conference Agendas
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020
- CLSD 20.05-08 Authorizer Review and Comment Template

## A.6 Measure: Authorizer Operational Budget for Authorizing the Portfolio of Charter Schools

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree is the authorizer’s actual resource allocation commensurate with its stated budget, and the needs and responsibilities of authorizing the portfolio of charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 1-Approaching Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer’s actual resource allocation is commensurate with its stated budget since 2018, and the needs and responsibilities associated with authorizing the portfolio of charter schools.

- As stated in the authorizer interview, and as verified through review of the five-year budget, resource allocations for authorizing are at least consistent with the resources-to-portfolio size ratio the authorizer commits to in its AAP. The AAP notes that the position titles and individual full-time equivalents (FTEs) are subject to change while CLSD is committed to maintaining appropriate expertise. Review of the budget shows that resource allocations for authorizing are consistent with the resources to portfolio size ratio committed to in its AAP. Personnel listed in the AAP, and identified during interviews, include a Curriculum Director, Superintendent, High School Principal, Director of Business Services (in advisory role) and a Director of Human Resources (FY17-FY21). According to the narrative and the FY 2019 Statement of Income and Expenditures, the Chisago Lakes School District’s Charter School Authorization Team also contains one Curriculum Director/Charter School Authorization Team Coordinator at approximately 0.1 FTE (i.e., 20 days annually spent on authorizing activities, monitoring TRIO, attending MACSA meetings, site visits, attending NACSA and updating MAPES).
- The five-year budget shows that CLSD’s resource allocations are sufficient to fulfill authorizing responsibilities and are commensurate with the needs and scale of its portfolio (i.e., number and size of the charter schools). The CLSD currently has one school in its portfolio. As there was no growth in portfolio size, staffing is commensurate with the needs and scale of its portfolio.
- Resource allocations have been sufficient to fulfill authorizing responsibilities since March 2018. As explained during the interview, the authorizer, as result of being in corrective action, changed its staffing structure, without adding to its portfolio, to improve its authorizing practices. The staffing structure change included creating the 0.1 FTE Curriculum Director/ Charter School Authorizing Team Coordinator position.
- Level 2 indicators were not met for at least three years. As noted above, the authorizer implemented changes to its resource allocations in March 2018 as a result of it being in corrective action.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.6 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Authorizer Operational Budget FY19-FY23
- Authorizer Operational Budget FY 21-25
- Authorizer Operational Budget FY17-FY19
- FY15-FY19 Authorizer Statement of Income and Expenditures
- NACSA Alignment Table (A.4)
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020
- Charter school leader interview, September 24, 2020
- CLSD 20.05-08 Authorizer Review and Comment Template

## A.7 Measure: Authorizer Operational Conflicts of Interest

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer implement a clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning the portfolio of charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 4-Exemplary

**Finding:** The authorizer consistently implements a clear policy to address conflicts of interest in all decision-making processes concerning the portfolio of charter schools.

- The authorizer's conflict of interest policy for authorizing, provided in the AAP and the Charter School Manual, demonstrates that a clear conflict of interest policy for authorizing exists. According to review of the conflict of interest policy, members of the Chisago Lakes School District's Charter School Authorization Team with any relationship to a Chisago Lakes School District's authorized school, must disclose that relationship to the Charter School Authorization Team, in writing (completing the Charter School Authorization Conflict of Interest Form), for the Charter School Authorization Team to determine whether a conflict of interest exists. According to the narrative, and as the authorizer team stated during the interview, there have been no conflicts; therefore, team members have not completed the Conflict of Interest Form. Furthermore, conflict of interest statements signed by school personnel show no conflicts have been identified.
- According to review of the conflict of interest policy, CLSD avoids conflicts of interest that might affect its capacity to make objective, merit-based application and renewal decisions (e.g., involvement in school's performance). According to the policy, persons with a conflict of interest are excluded from deliberation and voting on any issues related to the charter school with which there is a conflict, to ensure they have no influence over the CLSD's Charter School Authorization Team, especially regarding compensation of or business deals with themselves or of related persons.
- CLSD describes steps taken to avoid a potential conflict of interest (i.e., the school requested a reference check for a special education teacher from the principal on the authorization team); however, the authorizer reported that this was addressed and there were no conflicts of interest. Furthermore, August 2018 and the August 2019 PowerPoint slides and the August 2019 Authorizer Meeting agenda show that training provided by and for the authorizer included the conflict of interest policy.
- The authorizer ensures that application review and decision-making processes are free of conflicts of interest and require full disclosure of any potential or perceived conflicts of interest between reviewers or decision-makers and applicants. For example, the authorizer explained that the authorizer team no longer includes the business manager given TRIO Wolf Creek does contract for services with the school district, which includes services from the district's business manager. The Director of Business Services therefore, does not serve on the Authorization Team, thus avoiding any potential conflicts.
- As explained during the interview, there have been no conflicts of interest identified; therefore, the policy has not been implemented.
- MDE did not inquire about a specific example known to the department, and there were therefore no documented incidents that required evidence of resolution by evaluators.

- In the MAPES Cohort Two Charter School Leadership Survey, 100 percent of respondents (n=2) responded that they were familiar with the authorizer's conflict of interest policy. In addition, during the interview, 100 percent of respondents indicated they have not experienced a conflict of interest involving the authorizer. Finally, during the charter school leader interview, participants explained that they were aware of a conflict that surfaced during the last review term that the authorizer addressed (i.e., the business manager is no longer part of the authorization team) but no other conflicts.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.7 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- CLSD Charter School Manual
- Special Education Teacher Job Description
- Special Education Candidate Notes
- August 2018 and the August 2019 PowerPoint
- August 2019 Authorizer Meeting Agenda
- MAPES Cohort Two Charter School Leadership Survey
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020
- Charter school leader interview, September 24, 2020

## A.8 Measure: Ensuring Autonomy of the Charter Schools in the Portfolio

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer preserve and support the essential autonomies of the portfolio of charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 4-Exemplary

**Finding:** The authorizer preserves and supports the essential autonomies of the portfolio of charter schools.

- According to the AAP and review of the autonomy policy in the Charter School Manual, CLSD has a clear policy to ensure school autonomy. The policy states that CLSD's role in relation to its authorized charter schools is limited to oversight pursuant to Minnesota law. The policy specifies that Chisago Lakes Schools oversees the school board's management and operation of the school. Specifically, Chisago Lakes Schools monitors and evaluates the fiscal, operational and student performance of its authorized schools and holds schools accountable for their performance.
- CLSD's autonomy policy establishes and recognizes the school's authority over academics, finances and operations and respects the school's authority over the school's day-to-day operations, stating that CLSD does not manage or operate any charter school. Furthermore, Section 4.10 of the contract states that the school's Board of Directors shall decide matters related to the operation of the school, including but not limited to, budgeting, curriculum and operating procedures, and may delegate the day-to-day operation of the school, reporting and school leadership responsibilities to the Director who will seek input from teachers and the Board as needed. Similarly, Section 5.2 5 states that, "except as stated herein or otherwise required by law, the Authorizer shall have no authority, control, power, or administrative or financial responsibility over [the charter school]." This clause does not prohibit the parties from contracting for any services deemed appropriate in the future; and, Section 6.2 states that the CLSD holds the schools it authorizes accountable in five major areas: academic performance, fiscal management, governance, operations and legal compliance.
- CLSD's practice aligns with policy. According to the narrative, and as the charter annual assessment rubric confirms, CLSD holds its schools accountable based on performance outcomes and compliance with statute rather than on processes and inputs. For example, the annual rubric assessment results indicate that CLSD evaluates the school's academic outcomes (e.g., gap closing between its FRP and special education populations with the non-FRP and general education students), operations and legal compliance (e.g., parent satisfaction and reporting compliance) and fiscal management (e.g., audit findings, fund balance). Furthermore, review of the FY 2019 annual report presents completion and passing rates as well as graduation rates by examining the number of students who graduate in relation to the number of credits they begin the program with.
- According to the NACSA Alignment Table, the authorizer's policy aligns with nationally recognized quality authorizing standards. For example, the table states, and the autonomy policy reiterates, that CLSD practices minimize the compliance burden on schools in conducting oversight while NACSA Principles and Standards recommend that an authorizer collects information from schools in a manner that minimizes administrative burden on the school.

- In the MAPES Cohort Two Charter School Leadership Survey, 100 percent of respondents (n=2) indicated that, in the past five years, their authorizer supported the school's autonomy. In addition, 100 percent of respondents indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that the authorizer preserves the school board's autonomy over policy matters related to operating the school. Furthermore, during the school leader interview, all participants described the authorizer's policy and practices to ensure school's autonomy. For example, participants explained that the authorizer supported but did not direct the school's two-year curriculum adoption process.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.8 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- CONTRACT 16.11-16 Revised Renewal Contract-Final
- NACSA Alignment Table
- Charter Manual
- MAPES Cohort Two Charter School Leadership Survey
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020
- Charter school leader interview, September 24, 2020

## **A.9 Measure: Authorizer Self-Evaluation of Capacity, Infrastructure and Practices**

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer self-evaluate its internal ability (capacity, infrastructure and practices) to oversee the portfolio of charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 1-Approaching Satisfactory

**Finding:** Although the authorizer evaluates its internal ability (capacity, infrastructure and practices) to oversee the portfolio of charter schools, this practice has been in place only since 2018.

- Self-evaluations are intentional and planned to build the authorizer’s capacity, infrastructure and practices to oversee its portfolio of charter schools. According to review of the completed authorizer self-evaluation forms, the goal of the authorizer’s self-evaluation is to create organizational structures and commit human and financial resources necessary for conducting its authorizing effectively and efficiently. For example, according to the narrative, the authorizer conducted a self-evaluation in 2020 that identified a need for an authorizer strategic plan. The plan will center on increasing the authorizer team’s knowledge and skills with authorizing, improving its systems around financial capacity, and improving its practices around equity.
- CLSD does not regularly evaluate its internal ability to oversee the portfolio of charter schools. Review of self-evaluations shows that the authorizer conducted them in February 2018, February 2019 and in February 2020. However, an email dated September 29, 2020 states that the self-evaluation form was not implemented in 2017 as it was corrected through the AAP process.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.9 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Authorizer Self Evaluation February 2018, February 2019 and February 2020
- September 29, 2020 CLSD Email to Reviewer



## **A.10 Measure: Authorizer High-Quality Authorizing Dissemination**

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer disseminate best authorizing practices and/or assist other authorizers in high-quality authorizing?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 2-Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer engages with other authorizers to improve the authorizing community of practice.

- The authorizer engages with other authorizers to improve the authorizing community of practice. According to a September 29, 2020 email from the authorizer to reviewers, the authorizer supported MDE staff's presentation regarding the North Star Identification System at a March 1, 2019 MACSA meeting; however, the authorizer is not included on the agenda. Additionally, an August 4, 2020 email exchange with Osprey Wilds authorizing staff demonstrate that CLSD shared its color-coded checklist of operations for opening schools during COVID 19. Furthermore, MACSA agendas (March 18 and March 27, 2020) demonstrate that the authorizer met virtually and shared pandemic practices, and CLSD specifically shared guidance regarding teachers' Zoom video-conferencing use.
- While the authorizer shares best practices with other authorizers, it does not do so on a regular basis. As stated above, CLSD provided evidence that it shared best practices with other authorizers in 2019 and 2020. While the authorizer provided MACSA meeting minutes for all years of the review term, demonstrating CLSD presence at these meetings, including as a voting member at the March 3, 2017 meeting, there is no documented evidence to show the authorizer shared best practices with or provided technical assistance to other authorizers in 2016, 2017 or 2018. Similarly, while the authorizer review and comment submission form states CLSD shared best practices during an April 6, 2018 meeting through participation in a discussion regarding practices related to MACSA standards and on March 3, 2017 when a NACSA special education survey was completed, there is no documented evidence to confirm these. More specifically, the March 3, 2017 minutes state the group stayed to complete the NACSA special education survey; however, there is no documented evidence (including survey results) to confirm this.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.10 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- 2020 MAPES Peer Review Draft
- August 4, 2020 Email Exchange re: COVID-19 Staff Handbook
- September 29, 2020 Email to Reviewers
- MACSA meeting minutes (2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020)
- MACSA March 1, 2019 Agenda
- MACSA April 6, 2018 Agenda
- MN Authorizer Special Education Oversight Practices Survey
- CLSD 20.05-08 Authorizer Review and Comment Template

### **A.11 Measure: Authorizer Compliance to Responsibilities Stated in Statute**

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer comply with reporting, submissions and deadlines set forth in Minnesota Statutes?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 1-Approaching Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer does not consistently comply with all reporting, submissions and deadlines set forth in Minnesota Statutes.

- The MAPES Compliance Data Spreadsheet shows that the authorizer was at least 86 percent compliant in all the areas. More specifically, the spreadsheet shows compliance in 12 of the 14 measures. CLSD scores 100 percent in some categories, such as authorizer annual reports, income and expenditures and MDE required trainings. One of the measures where the authorizer is not compliant is contract compliance. While an email from MDE to CLSD dated July 17, 2020 states that the renewed charter contract was submitted past the deadline (12/30/2015 rather than 12/22/2015), the narrative states that the authorizer takes reporting requirements and deadlines very seriously and has implemented new systems and strategies to ensure compliance responsibilities stated in statute.

**Key Evidence:**

- A.11 Narrative
- MAPES Compliance Data Spreadsheet –Chisago Lakes School District
- 20.07-17 and 20.01-20 MAPES compliance data emails from MDE

## Performance Measures A: Rating (25 Percent Weight of Overall Rating)

**MAPES Performance Measures A Rating for Chisago Lakes School District is 2.25**

### Performance Measures A: Rating Drivers

- The authorizer has a clear and compelling mission for charter school authorizing that fully aligns with Minnesota charter school statute, and it is articulated in the AAP and was also verified internally and externally.
- Review of the authorizer's policies (e.g., conflict of interest and autonomy) demonstrate clear processes exist and are clear to authorizing staff and school leaders.
- Many of the authorizer's practices have only been in place since March 2018; therefore, indicators were not met for at least three years.
- Review of resumes show that the authorizing staff (including the Charter School Authorizer Team Coordinator/Director of Curriculum, the High School Principal and the Director of Human Resources) have appropriate experience, expertise and skills in charter school academics, finance, operations and law.

### Performance Measures A: Recommendations

- Revise organizational goals to ensure that they include clear criteria and timelines for achievement.
- Develop a system to measure and evaluate professional development.
- Adhere to statutory deadlines when submitting renewed charter contracts.

## Performance Measures B: Authorizer Processes and Decision-Making

### B.1 Measure: New Charter School Decisions

**Guiding Questions:** *To what degree does the authorizer have clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate new charter school proposals? To what degree did the authorizer's decisions and resulting actions align to its stated approval and process standards and promote the growth of high-quality charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 2-Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer has clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to evaluate new charter school proposals.

- Review of the new charter school application process (as provided in the Charter School Manual) demonstrates that the CLSD's application process is comprehensive (e.g., the process includes an initial review based on the new charter school assessment) includes clear application questions (e.g., summarize your school's inclusive mission and vision; describe the plans that address special populations; and include at least two scenarios of a five-year budget forecast) and guidance (such as reference to statutory requirements) and includes fair, transparent procedures, timelines (e.g., applications are due by December 1, determinations are made no later than April and an applicant has 30 days to make revisions in the case requirements are not met) and rigorous criteria (e.g., a successful application must meet 90 percent of all rubric items).
- According to review of the authorizer's charter school inquiries table, six inquiries (prior to application submission) were denied over the review term because they did not meet location requirements. No formal charter applications were submitted; therefore, the authorizer's decisions and resulting actions are consistent across the portfolio of charter schools.
- Authorizer's decisions and resulting actions align with its AAA/AAP. For example, the AAP includes links to the new charter school application, new charter school application evaluation criteria and the charter school manual.
- Level 2 indicators were not met for at least four years. According to the narrative and review of the charter school manual, application processes have been in place since Spring 2017 when the CLSD corrective action plan was completed and approved by MDE.

**Key Evidence:**

- B.1 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- CLSD Charter School Manual
- New Charter School Application
- CLSD New Charter Timeline
- New Charter School Assessment Rubric

**B.2 Measure: Interim Accountability Decisions (i.e., site/grade level/early learning expansions, ready to open, and change in authorizer)**

**Guiding Questions:** *To what degree does the authorizer have clear and comprehensive approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate proposals of existing charter school expansion requests and other interim changes? To what degree did the authorizer's decisions and resulting actions regarding charter school expansion and other interim changes align to its stated approval and process standards and promote the growth of high-quality charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 2-Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer's approval criteria and process standards to rigorously evaluate proposals of existing charter school expansion requests and other interim changes are clear and comprehensive, beginning in 2017.

- Review of the CLSD Charter School Manual, the authorizer's expansion application and change in authorizer application processes are comprehensive; include clear application questions (e.g., is the school meeting current contract goals?) and guidance; and include fair, transparent procedures, timelines (e.g., expansion applications are due May 1 of the year prior to planned expansion) and rigorous criteria (e.g., evidence of need for expansion, evidence of meeting current contract goals as assessed in the expansion grades/sites assessment rubric).
- According to review of the authorizer's annual reports, no expansion requests were made, no changes, and no ready-to-open processes were implemented during the review term; therefore, the authorizer's decisions and resulting actions are consistent across the portfolio of charter schools that consists of one school.
- The authorizer's decisions and resulting actions align with its AAA/AAP. The AAP includes links to the authorizer's expansion application, charter school manual and expansion assessment rubric.
- Level 2 indicators were not met for at least four years. According to the narrative, the processes have been implemented since the spring of 2017 when the authorizer's corrective action plan was completed and approved by MDE.

**Key Evidence:**

- B.2 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Charter School Manual
- FY 2016 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2017 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2018 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- FY 2019 Annual Report – Chisago Lakes School District
- Expansion Application
- Expansion Assessment Rubric
- Change in Authorizer Application
- Change in Authorizer Assessment Rubric
- Ready to Open Site Visit
- Ready to Open Task List

### **B.3 Measure: Contract Term, Negotiation and Execution**

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer execute contracts that clearly define material terms and rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 1-Approaching Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer does not consistently execute contracts that clearly define material terms and rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer.

- The CLSD contract with TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning Charter clearly states the rights and responsibilities of the school and the authorizer (e.g., the right to amend their annual service learning plan).
- The authorizer has one school in its portfolio; therefore, the authorizer's contracting practices are consistent across the authorizer's portfolio of charter schools.
- According to MDE, 50 percent of contracts submitted by the authorizer over the term of the review were not statutorily compliant. More specifically, the compliance data spreadsheet indicates there were multiple deficiencies in the contract (execution date December 8, 2015) and it was never brought into compliance. The contract was replaced with a new renewal contract effective July 2016, which was found to be in compliance by MDE.

**Key Evidence:**

- B.3 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- CONTRACT 16.11-16 Revised Renewal Contract-Final
- 20.07-17 MAPES Compliance Data Spreadsheet CLSD
- CLSD 20.05-08 Authorizer Review and Comment Template

## B.4 Measure: Performance Outcomes and Standards

**Guiding Questions:** *To what degree does the authorizer execute contracts with clear, measurable and attainable performance standards? To what degree does the authorizer hold charter schools in its portfolio accountable to its academic, financial and operational performance outcomes and standards?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 2-Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer executes contracts with clear, measurable and attainable performance standards. Additionally, it holds charter schools in its portfolio accountable to its academic, financial and operational performance outcomes and standards.

- According to MAPES compliance data, the contract in CLSD's portfolio of schools has been deemed statutorily compliant by MDE. The contract defines clear, measurable and attainable performance outcomes and standards in academics, finance and operations. The contract also defines the consequences for meeting or not meeting performance outcomes and standards. Additionally, a review of the school's contract demonstrates that the school's contract includes a performance framework that outlines goals for academic performance (e.g., graduation, closing the gap, college and career readiness), operational performance (e.g., board member attendance) and financial performance (e.g., fund balance of at least 30% annually).
- As stated above, CLSD's contracts define clear, measurable and attainable academic, financial and operational performance outcomes and standards. They also define consequences for not meeting performance outcomes. For example, Section 16.6 states, "the authorizer may terminate or not renew the contract upon failure to demonstrate satisfactory academic achievement for all students, including the requirements for pupil performance contained in the contract."
- The authorizer has one school in its portfolio. Therefore, performance outcomes and standards are consistent across the portfolio of charter schools.
- A review of the contract demonstrates that the contract aligns with the performance standards of its AAP. The AAP states that the performance framework defines clear, measurable and attainable academic, operational and financial performance standards. The performance framework is designed to achieve outcomes that meet or exceed expectations adopted by the commissioner for public school students per Minnesota Statute 124E.10, Subdivision 1(a)(15)(b), including the five goals of World's Best Workforce (e.g., gap closing, graduation, career and college readiness).
- CLSD holds its charter school accountable to academic, financial and operational performance outcomes and standards defined in the contract. Standards are contained in the CLSD charter contract. According to review of the 2016 renewal rubric and the assessment rubrics for FY 2018 and FY 2019, the authorizer holds the charter school accountable to academic, financial and operational performance outcomes and standards defined in the contract, including graduation rates, board attendance and fund balance. Furthermore, review of the annual reports demonstrates that the authorizer reports the school's academic, operational and financial performance.
- Level 2 indicators were not met for at least four years. According to the narrative, the contracting processes have been implemented since the spring of 2017 when the corrective action plan was completed and approved by MDE.



**Key Evidence:**

- B.4 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- 16.11-16 Revised Renewal Contract -Final
- 17.12-06 CLSD -Trio Renewal Contract Review Rubric- Final
- Trio Wolf Creek Goals 2016-21
- Trio Annual Assessment Tracker 2016-21
- Annual Assessment Rubric 2016-17, 17-18, 18-19
- Trio Renewal Rubric 2016

## **B.5 Measure: Authorizer's Processes for Ongoing Oversight of the Portfolio of Charter Schools**

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer monitor and oversee the charter schools in the areas of academics, operations and finances according to the processes outlined in the contract and the AAA/AAP?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 2-Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer monitors and oversees the charter schools in the areas of academics, operations and finances according to the processes outlined in the contract and the AAP.

- As described in the narrative, the Authorizer Charter Manual and in the authorizer interview, CLSD has clear processes for oversight and monitoring. For example, CLSD conducts three different types of site visits: annual, ongoing and renewal. The manual states that site visits allow the authorizer to observe the school in action first-hand, hear directly from all key stakeholders, and corroborate school-reported information and data. Furthermore, the manual states all charter schools will participate in performance reviews following a similar format (i.e., using the assessment rubric). Review of the Annual Assessment Rubric shows that the authorizer requires the charter school to report on the academic, financial and operational state of the school annually.
- Review of the Charter Annual Assessment Rubric and FY19 Annual Report, confirms that CLSD conducts charter oversight that competently evaluates academic, financial and operational performance and monitors compliance with applicable law. The annual reports describe how CLSD incorporates achievement of World's Best Workforce goals in its ongoing oversight and evaluation of charter schools; presents passing rates over the past three school years to report an upward trend; identifies compliance complaints (if any) and presents outcome data regarding financial indicators (e.g. fund balance).
- Review of the annual site assessments and the annual assessment rubric demonstrate that CLSD's oversight activities align with stated oversight and monitoring processes in its AAA/AAP. For example, CLSD evaluates each school annually on its performance relative to whether it meets the standards and targets stated in the charter contract (including essential compliance requirements), and clearly communicates evaluation results to the school's governing board and leadership. Furthermore, visit notes show that ongoing site visits began in September 2017 and occur five or six times per school year. School board minutes from 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 show that the authorizer attends nearly every school board meeting.
- The authorizer has one school in its portfolio. Therefore, the authorizer's oversight and monitoring practices are consistent across the portfolio of charter schools.
- Level 2 indicators were not met for at least four years. According to the narrative, the processes have been implemented since the spring of 2017 when the corrective action plan was completed and approved by MDE.

**Key Evidence:**

- B.5 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Trio Annual Assessment Tracker 2016-21
- Annual Assessment Rubric 2016-17, 17-18, 18-19
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020

## **B.6 Measure: Authorizer's Standards and Processes for Interventions, Corrective Action and Response to Complaints**

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer have clear and comprehensive standards and processes to address complaints, intervention and/or corrective action?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 4-Exemplary

**Finding:** The authorizer has clear and comprehensive standards and processes to address complaints, interventions and corrective action.

- According to the narrative and review of the CLSD Charter School Manual, the authorizer has established clear and comprehensive standards and processes to address complaints, intervention and corrective action. The manual states that the CLSD will address complaints regarding authorized schools in a timely and factual manner, following a five-step process that includes a complaint form (should the issue escalate to the district level), as well as a hyperlink to the MDE complaint form (should MDE need to be notified). Furthermore, the manual explains the five intervention levels, stating that the steps (e.g., a notice of concern, notice of deficiency, charter revocation) are not sequential and may be implemented at any time in alignment with described metrics (e.g., signs of weak performance and failure to comply with applicable law).
- The authorizer has one school in its portfolio. Therefore, the authorizer's decisions and resulting actions are consistent across the portfolio of charter schools and align with its stated standards and processes in its AAA/AAP. The AAP outlines the processes that are provided in the Charter School Manual.
- Review of annual assessments shows intervention and corrective action were not warranted; therefore, no evidence needed be provided to demonstrate that decisions made regarding complaints, intervention and corrective action aligned with data generated under oversight and monitoring practices.
- According to review of the NACSA Alignment Table, the authorizer's policy aligns with nationally recognized quality authorizing standards. For example, the table states that CLSD has progressive steps that are detailed and tied to the annual assessment in alignment with NACSA principles and standards that recommend authorizers establish and make known to schools at the outset an intervention policy that states the general conditions that may trigger intervention and the types of actions and consequences that may ensue.
- School representatives described the authorizer's standards and processes for addressing complaints and providing interventions, explaining that the intervention system is progressive. Furthermore, while school leaders stated that they had not gone through either process, they understood that the complaint process may trigger a letter from the authorizer and intervention could result in revocation.

**Key Evidence:**

- B.6 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Charter School Manual
- Complaint Form
- NACSA A.4
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020
- Charter school leader interview, September 24, 2020

## **B.7 Measure: Charter School Support, Development and Technical Assistance**

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer support its portfolio of charter schools through intentional assistance and development offerings?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 4- Exemplary

**Finding:** The authorizer consistently supports its portfolio of charter schools through intentional assistance and development offerings.

- CLSD supports and technical assistance are proactive. For example, review of the Charter Assistance Plan demonstrates that the authorizer identifies ten dates and areas of support that CLSD will, at a minimum, intentionally provide to its schools through the school year. In addition, according to the narrative and the FY19 Annual Report, CLSD conducts an annual on-site visit and interviews students and staff to inform in what areas the school needs assistance.
- According to review of the Charter Assistance Plan and narrative, CLSD provides supports and technical assistance in a variety of areas, including but not limited to curriculum support, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) accountability measures, financial, student performance data, science standards and cultural competency.
- According to the autonomy policy, CLSD provides supports and technical assistance in a manner to preserve school autonomy. For example, in alignment with the autonomy policy, which states CLSD will be a source of accurate, intelligible, performance-based data to the schools it oversees, the narrative states and school leaders confirmed that the school is free to make decisions regarding how the information they learned from these trainings is applied.
- The authorizer has one school in its portfolio; therefore, CLSD provides supports and technical assistance in a manner that is consistent across the portfolio of charter schools.
- According to the narrative and review of an October 5, 2019, email from the school to the authorizer in which the school requested support regarding gifted services as well as review of the authorizer's website that includes a list of resources (such as links to conferences, events and workshops), CLSD supports and technical assistance are regularly offered, based on demonstrated need and designed to prevent problems.
- A review of the authorizer's training materials and the school's annual reports demonstrate that the authorizer's supports and technical assistance are designed to promote high-quality charter schools as they include topics related to the schools' academics (e.g. science standards and ELA curriculum), finances and operations (e.g. board governance training), and include resources provided by external organizations (such as the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools and the MN Association of Charter Schools).

**Key Evidence:**

- B.7 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- TRIO Wolf Creek Annual Report (2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19)
- Email from School Director to CLSD October 5, 2019
- Calendar Invite October 29, 2019
- CLSD website
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020
- Charter school leader interview, September 24, 2020

## **B.8 Measure: High-Quality Charter School Replication and Dissemination of Best School Practices**

**Guiding Question:** *To what degree does the authorizer plan and promote model replication and dissemination of best practices of high-quality charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 3-Commendable

**Finding:** The authorizer plans and promotes model replication and dissemination of best practices of high-quality charter schools.

- According to the narrative and the Charter School Manual, the authorizer’s intentional plan to disseminate best practices includes monthly attendance at MACSA meetings where the authorizer’s attending member readily shares what is working well for its charter school(s) with the other authorizers. In addition, the authorizer provided an email to other authorizers on July 13, 2020 reporting that its charter school was featured on a local news channel for its hybrid model and is willing to answer questions and share best practices with others.
- According to review of email to other authorizers, one or more identified models/practices are moving toward dissemination. More specifically, a July 13, 2020 email to authorizers included a link to a news story from a local news station (KSTP) recognizing TRIO Wolf Creek as an experienced hybrid school. The email also states that TRIO would be willing to offer support to the other charter schools in the state as they work to implement hybrid models due to COVID-19. Furthermore, the school created a resources page on their website, which includes a “Top Five Tips for Distance Learning” slideshow.
- No evidence was provided to demonstrate that models/practices have been disseminated to or realized at one or more schools beyond the original.

**Key Evidence:**

- B.8 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- Charter School Manual
- Annual Reports
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020
- Charter school leader interview, September 24, 2020

## B.9 Measure: Charter School Renewal and Termination Decisions

**Guiding Questions:** *To what degree does the authorizer have clear and comprehensive standards and processes to make high stakes renewal and termination decisions? To what degree did the authorizer's renewal and termination decisions align to its stated renewal standards and processes and promote the growth of high-quality charter schools?*

**Performance Level Rating:** Level 2- Satisfactory

**Finding:** The authorizer has clear and comprehensive standards and processes to make high-stakes renewal and termination decisions; however, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate the authorizer's renewal standards and processes reflect a clear strategy to promote high-quality charter schools.

- According to the narrative, which a review of the contract and renewal application confirms, CLSD uses transparent and rigorous standards and processes designed to employ data to make renewal decisions and terminate charter schools when necessary. The Renewal Assessment Rubric indicates that the renewal process is based on evidence collected over the duration of the charter term, including four accountability categories: academic and education program; fiscal management; governance and leadership; and, operations and legal compliance. Furthermore, renewal is addressed in Section 6.1 of the Chisago Lakes School District's Charter Contract, articulating that renewal requirements include attainment of the school's academic goals. Likewise, non-renewal and termination are addressed in Section 16 of the contract. Termination procedures are also outlined in the Chisago Lakes Charter School Manual.
- The authorizer has one school in its portfolio. Therefore, the authorizer's decisions and resulting actions are consistent across the portfolio of charter schools.
- The FY 2017 Annual Report and contract indicates CLSD renewed the one school in its portfolio through June 30, 2021. Additionally, the school's renewal contract review rubric indicates that the renewal term appears to be warranted based on the evaluation of the school's academic, financial and operational performance, in alignment to the renewal standards provided in the authorizer's AAP. Finally, the renewal assessment survey in the 17.12-5 renewal contract shows the school met renewal standards to receive a five-year renewal, beginning July 1, 2016, due to demonstrating achievement of contract goals; therefore, indicators were met for at least four years.
- According to the NACSA Alignment Table, the authorizer's policy aligns with nationally recognized quality authorizing standards. For example, the table shows best practices base the renewal process and renewal decisions on thorough analyses of a comprehensive body of objective evidence defined by the performance framework in the charter contract. CLSD Authorizing Program makes all renewal decisions based on comprehensive review of the performance framework in the charter contract.
- The FY19 Annual Authorizer Report states, academic performance is still an ongoing need and the charter school continues to make progress but academics is an area where there could be improvement. Therefore, there is insufficient evidence to show the authorizer's renewal standards and processes reflect a clear strategy to promote high-quality charter schools.

**Key Evidence:**

- B.9 Narrative
- AAA/AAP
- 17.12-05 TRIO Renewal Contract FINAL 12 05 2017
- 16.12-27 Chisago Lakes – TRIO Renewal Contract Review Rubric – 2<sup>nd</sup> Review
- Renewal Application
- Renewal Assessment Rubric
- TRIO Renewal Application August 2020
- Annual Assessment Tracker
- Charter School Closure Plan
- Charter School Manual
- Contract
- NACSA Alignment Table
- Authorizer interview, September 23, 2020



## Performance Measures B: Rating (75 Percent Weight of Overall Rating)

**MAPES Performance Measures B Rating for Chisago Lakes School District is 2.15.**

### Performance Measures B: Rating Drivers

- The authorizer's practices align with its AAP and are clearly outlined in the Charter School Manual.
- CLSD's contracts define clear, measurable and attainable academic, financial and operational performance outcomes and standards, but the compliance data spreadsheet indicates there were multiple deficiencies on the contract.
- The authorizer has one school in its portfolio. Therefore, practices are consistent across the portfolio of charter schools.
- Many of the authorizer's practices have only been in place since March 2018; therefore, indicators were not met for at least three years.

### Performance Measures B: Recommendations

- Continue to avoid contract deficiencies to verify the contract is aligned with statute and is complete (as shown in the MDE Renewal Contract Statutory Compliance and Qualitative Review Rubric dated July 31, 2016 but corrected and met on November 14, 2017).

## Appendix A: Authorizer Portfolio Information

**Operational Schools:** TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning Charter School

**Preoperational Schools:** N/A

**Closed Schools:** N/A

**Never Opened Schools:** N/A

**Schools that have transferred into portfolio:** N/A

**Schools that have transferred out of portfolio:** N/A

**Merged schools over the term of the review period:** N/A

## Appendix B: Evaluation Methodology

SchoolWorks is committed to ensuring inter-rater reliability and consistency across all MAPES reports. In order to achieve this, SchoolWorks adopts the following methodology.

1. SchoolWorks assigned each authorizer a two-person evaluation team that includes a team lead and team writer.
2. All evaluators then engage in a training with the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) during which they norm around ratings, evidence and report language.
3. The lead and writer review all submitted documents and rate the evidence submitted by the authorizer.
4. Teams participate in a pre-interview call. During this call, the team comes to consensus, deciding upon initial ratings. Also during this call, team members identify any standards for which they need additional clarification.
5. Team members lead in-person interviews with authorizing staff and representatives from the authorizer's portfolio of charter schools. Following the interview, evaluators may ask for additional documentation to be submitted by the authorizer.\*\*\*
6. Team members use interview responses and any additional document submissions in alignment with the MAPES standards and, if applicable, revise their initial ratings.
7. Team members participate in a consensus call during which they finalize their ratings.
8. Draft reports are completed and reviewed by a SchoolWorks content editor. The content editor reviews ratings and evidentiary alignment with the MAPES rubric within each individual report, and
9. ensures consistency of ratings across all reports.
10. The SchoolWorks project manager reviews all reports to ensure consistency of ratings and sufficiency of evidence.
11. Draft reports are submitted to MDE for review.
12. MDE shares draft reports with authorizers for factual review. During the factual review, authorizers may submit additional documentation to clarify factual errors.
13. SchoolWorks evaluators review the factual corrections submitted by the authorizer and any accompanying documentation. Based on the authorizer's submissions, they consider whether additional evidence impacts the ratings identified in the final report.
14. Evaluators finalize their MAPES reports and submit to the SchoolWorks project manager.
15. The SchoolWorks project manager reviews all finalized reports.
16. Final reports are submitted to MDE for review.

\*\*\*Due to COVID-19, interviews were conducted via videoconference.