



Charter School Review Committee

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City Comptroller, *Ex Officio*

Dr. Jeanette Mitchell
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Committee Members

January 6, 2015

Ms. Erika Lynn Whitehead, Principal
King's Academy
7798 N. 60th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53223

Mr. George P. Hinton
Chair of the Board of Directors
King's Academy
16745 Dane Court West
Brookfield, WI 53005

RE: King's Academy Probation

Dear Ms. Whitehead and Mr. Hinton,

On October 29, 2014, the Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) received and accepted the King's Academy 2013-14 *Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance* report from the Children's Research Center (CRC). That report included a recommendation that the CSRC consider placing King's Academy on probation with requirements to address concerns. The concerns included the school's annual scorecard results, particularly in the areas of student achievement on local measures and standardized year-to-year testing for students below proficiency, as well as the teacher return rate.

At its meeting on December 16, 2014, the CSRC considered the particular concerns and made the decision to place King's Academy on probation with specific conditions.

Specifically, the CSRC is concerned about the following issues:

- While showing growth, students have demonstrated insufficient local measure progress over the past four years in reading, math, and writing (see table below).

Percentage of Students Achieving Local Measure Goals				
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Reading	34.5%	48.8%	55.3%	63.4%
Mathematics	57.4%	41.7%	58.2%	69.7%
Writing	28.1%	65.0%	58.4%	50.0%

- Year-to-year progress for fourth- through eighth-grade students who were below proficiency on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) reading and math subtests the prior year have not consistently met the CSRC expectation that at least 60% of these students either progress one quartile or one proficiency level.

King's Academy WKCE Year-to-Year Progress Students Who Were Minimal or Basic and Showed Improvement Based on Former Proficiency-Level Cut Scores* 4th Through 8th Grades		
School Year	Reading	Math
2011-12	56.5%	41.7%
2012-13	66.7%	48.1%
2013-14	43.5%	62.9%

*In 2012-13, the state began using revised National Assessment of Educational Progress-based cut scores; the former cut scores were applied to the 2012-13 data in order to examine progress from 2012-13 to 2013-14.

- The instructional staff return rate has declined over the past three years, from 82.4 % in the fall of 2011 to 60.0% in the fall of 2012 and 42.9% in the fall of 2013. Of all instructional staff, classroom teachers returned at a rate of 80.0% in the fall of 2011, 50.0% in the fall of 2012, and 22.2% in the fall of 2013.
- Student return rates have declined since the school's first year of operation, from 79.3% in the fall of 2011, to 69.9% in the fall of 2012, and back up slightly to 72.5% in the fall of 2013.

The CSRC is placing King's Academy on probation with the following conditions.

- Improve the stability of the school's leadership by maintaining at least 80% of current administrative and board leadership through the 2014-15 academic year. Current leadership consists of one principal and 9 members of the board of directors. The required improvement seems feasible if the school continues to maintain its relationship with external support organizations such as Partners Advancing Values in Education and Schools That Can Milwaukee.

- Increase total points earned for engagement indicators on the scorecard in 2014–15. The total points earned in 2013–14 for these indicators was 19, or 76.0% of the possible 25 points in this area.
- Increase total points earned for local measures on the scorecard in 2014–15. Total points earned in 2013–14 for all local measures was 9.3, or 62.0% of the possible 15 points.
- Meet the CSRC expectation that at least 75% of the first graders who met the summed score benchmark on the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening in the spring will remain at or above the second-grade summed score benchmark in the spring of the subsequent year. In the spring of 2015, at least 75% of the second-grade students who met the benchmark in the spring of 2014 as first graders will be expected to again meet their benchmark.
- Ensure that all instructional staff hold Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction licenses or permits for each year of operation.
- Submit a written explanation, including specific actions taken, to CRC by January 30, 2015, addressing the progress the school has made toward the recommendations for school improvement listed in the 2013–14 *Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance* report. Specifically, this includes:
 - » Conducting a data conference with individual teachers in September, using student Measures of Academic Progress test results from the spring of 2014;
 - » Matching returning teachers with new teachers in order to promote coaching and mentoring of teachers;
 - » Investigating the cost and probability of hiring outside coaches or mentors for the teachers;
 - » Developing ways to reach parents regarding support of their children's education;
 - » Encouraging and training parents to use Compass Learning at home;
 - » Investigating the cost and probability of hiring a Response to Intervention coordinator; and
 - » Improving the school's systems and procedures for managing database or spreadsheet records as required by CRC, e.g., regarding data that needed to be reported for all special education students and for attendance.

The placement of King's Academy on probation will result in an increased level of CSRC monitoring. The cost of additional monitoring shall be borne by King's Academy.

At the end of the 2014–15 school year, the CSRC will review and assess the extent to which King's Academy has addressed and improved the school's overall engagement indicators, student academic progress, and stability of the school's leadership. At that time, the CSRC will determine whether to continue the school's probationary status, end the school's probationary status, or not continue the school's charter with the City of Milwaukee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeanette Mitchell", is written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Jeanette Mitchell
Chair, Charter School Review Committee