

2016–2017 Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

September 2017



Escuela Verde

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE	2
A. Description and Philosophy of Educational Methodology	2
1. Mission and Philosophy.....	2
2. Instructional Design	3
B. School Structure	4
1. Board of Directors.....	4
2. Areas of Instruction	5
3. Advisor Information	7
4. Hours of Instruction/School Calendar.....	8
5. Parental Involvement.....	9
6. Waiting List.....	11
7. Discipline Policy	11
8. Graduation Information	12
C. Student Population.....	14
D. Activities for Continuous School Improvement.....	16
III. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE	17
A. Attendance	17
B. Student-Parent-Advisor Conferences.....	18
C. Special Education Student Records.....	18
D. High School Graduation Plans and Grade-Level Promotion	19
1. High School Graduation Plans	19
2. High School Graduation Requirements.....	20
E. Local Measures of Educational Performance.....	20
1. Literacy: STAR Reading	21
2. Math: STAR Math	22
3. Writing.....	23
4. IEP Goals for Special Education Students	24
F. External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance	25
1. Wisconsin Forward Exam	25
2. ACT Aspire and ACT Plus Writing	26
a. ACT Aspire for Ninth and Tenth Graders	27
b. ACT for Eleventh and Twelfth Graders	28

G.	Multiple-Year Student Progress	29
1.	Seventh- to Eighth-Grade Performance on the Wisconsin Forward Exam	31
2.	Progress From the 2016 Aspire to the 2017 Aspire	31
a.	Students at or Above Benchmark.....	31
b.	Students Below Benchmark.....	32
3.	Benchmark Progress From the Spring 2016 Aspire to the Spring 2017 ACT	33
H.	CSRC School Scorecard.....	33
IV.	SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	37

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Contract Compliance Chart
Appendix B: Student Learning Memorandum
Appendix C: Trend Information
Appendix D: CSRC 2016–17 School Scorecard

This report includes text from Escuela Verde’s student/parent handbook and/or staff handbook. CRC obtained permission from the school to use this text for the purposes of this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR ESCUELA VERDE 2016–17

This is the fifth annual report to describe the operation of Escuela Verde as a school chartered by the City of Milwaukee. It is a result of intensive work undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), school staff, and the NCCD Children’s Research Center (CRC). Based on the information gathered and discussed in the attached report, CRC has reached the following findings.

I. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE SUMMARY¹

Escuela Verde has met all of the educational provisions in its contract with the City of Milwaukee and the subsequent requirements of the CSRC.

II. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

A. Local Measures

1. Primary Measures of Educational Progress

The CSRC requires schools to track student progress in reading, writing, mathematics, and individualized education program goals throughout the year to identify students in need of additional help and to assist teachers in developing strategies to improve the academic performance of all students.

This year, Escuela Verde’s primary local measures of academic progress resulted in the following outcomes.

- There were 98 students enrolled for the entire year who completed the fall and spring STAR reading tests; 65.3% of those students showed progress from fall to spring. The school’s goal was 60.0%.
- A total of 98 students who were enrolled for the entire school year completed the fall and spring STAR math tests; 54.1% of those students showed progress from fall to spring. The school’s goal was 60.0%.

¹ See Appendix A for a list of each education-related contract provision, page references, and a description of whether each provision was met.

- A total of 97 middle and high school students who were enrolled for the entire school year had spring writing samples assessed. More than four fifths (84.5%) of students scored a 21 or higher; the school's goal was 90.0%.

2. Secondary Measures of Educational Outcomes

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, Escuela Verde identified measurable outcomes in the following secondary areas of academic progress.

- Attendance
- Parent conferences
- Special education student records
- Graduation plans
- Testing of new high school enrollees

The school met all five of these internal goals.

B. Year-to-Year Progress

Escuela Verde administered required standardized tests noted in its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

- Year-to-year progress for seventh- to eighth-grade students: There were too few students who completed the Forward Exam during consecutive years to include results this year.
- 2016 Aspire to 2017 Aspire:
 - » Six (60.0%) of 10 students at or above the English benchmark in 2016 maintained benchmark status in 2017. There were too few students at or above the benchmark on any other subtest or the composite score in 2016 to report results this year.
 - » Between 41.4% and 57.9% of students below benchmark progressed on Aspire subtests and on the composite score between 2016 and 2017.

C. CSRC School Scorecard

The school scored 69.4% on the pilot high school scorecard this year. Due to the small number of students in the middle school, data were available for too few measures to complete the K–8 scorecard this year.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Jointly identified by the school leadership and CRC, the following recommendations continue a focused school improvement plan in the 2017–18 school year.

- Revisit and strengthen personal learning plans with an emphasis on reading and writing. Special attention should be given to using local measure assessments that are better aligned with the curriculum.
- Increase the rigor and content of projects to enable students to demonstrate their knowledge through the creation of more original and solid products. All projects should assist students to improve their reading and math skills.
- Engage additional support staff to assist low achievers.

IV. RECOMMENDATION FOR ONGOING MONITORING

This is Escuela Verde's fifth year as a City of Milwaukee charter school. The school met all provisions of its contract with the City. Because of the school's status as a fifth-year school, its contract compliance status, and its scorecard rating, CRC recommends that the school continue regular, annual monitoring and reporting. Escuela Verde increased its percent standing on the pilot scorecard by 1.5% (from 67.9% in 2015–16 to 69.4% this year) and improved its performance on reading, math, and special education local measures from last school year to this school year.

I. INTRODUCTION

This is the fifth regular program monitoring report to describe educational outcomes for Escuela Verde, a school chartered by the City of Milwaukee. This report focuses on the educational component of the monitoring program undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (the CSRC) and was prepared as a result of a contract between the CSRC and the NCCD Children's Research Center (CRC).

CRC used the following process to gather the information in this report.

- At an initial site visit, CRC conducted structured interviews with advisors working with students at both the middle and high school levels and reviewed and copied critical documents for CRC files.
- CRC staff assisted the school in developing desired outcome measures for students at both the middle school and high school for a learning memorandum.
- CRC staff made additional scheduled and unscheduled site visits to observe classroom activities, student-advisor interactions, parent-staff exchanges, and overall school operations, including the collection of data for this report. CRC staff also reviewed a representative sample of special education files.
- CRC staff, along with a CSRC representative, attended a meeting of the board of directors to improve communications regarding the roles of the CSRC and CRC and expectations regarding board member involvement.
- At the end of the school year, CRC conducted structured interviews with the middle school and high school leadership teams.
- CRC compiled and analyzed electronic data the school provided.

II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

Escuela Verde
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Milwaukee, WI 53215

Telephone: (414) 383-4767

Website: <http://www.escuelaverde.org>

Escuela Verde's Advisory Team:

- Cynthia Gonzalez
- Evan McDoniels
- Walter Sams
- Bethany Vannest
- Joey Zocher
- Zaynab Baalbaki

Escuela Verde is located on the near south side of Milwaukee. The school opened its doors in September 2012 to seventh- through twelfth-grade students. It operates as a TransCenter for Youth (TransCenter) school, and TransCenter is a nonprofit organization registered with the State of Wisconsin. Its current mission is to "provide high-quality educational programs that allow 'at-risk' youth and others to become productive adults and responsible community members."²

A. Description and Philosophy of Educational Methodology

1. Mission and Philosophy

Escuela Verde envisions "a community that is participatory, just, sustainable, and peaceful." The school staff and students live their vision with a clear mission. The school

² This quote and the material that follows were taken from *Escuela Verde: Growing Our Home in the Heart of the City*, published in 2014 by TransCenter for Youth.

graduates high school students prepared to live happy, healthy, meaningful lives; engages urban youth by adhering to an ecopedagogical praxis; collaborates with the community to create a strong sense of place and skills to flourish without harm; provides staff who model the vision and embrace education as liberation; and offers immersion opportunities for those interested in transformative education.³

Escuela Verde believes when students embrace education as the key to liberation, they will forge their own path to a happy, healthy, meaningful life, and the school facilitates this by providing students with opportunities to grow academically, socially, and emotionally.⁴

2. Instructional Design

Escuela Verde's learning practices are grounded in the EdVisions project-based learning model. EdVisions schools must incorporate four design essentials into their operations: small learning communities, self-directed, project-based learning, authentic assessment, and teacher ownership/democratic governance.

Students engage in rigorous research to answer a complex question, problem, or challenge. With an advisor, students self-select the state-approved educational standards they will address with each project. Through many one-on-one consultations with advisors, students assess and re-assess their learning until they are satisfied with their projects. When projects are complete, students describe the steps involved, the skills acquired, and the product's value to the student and the overall community. Students present to the original team that approved the

³ The school's vision and mission statements were taken from updated school brochures and its website.

⁴ This information was taken from Escuela Verde's website, www.escuelaverde.org

project proposal, and this team, in collaboration with the student, renders the final assessment and determines how many and what category of credit hours (rather than grades) will be awarded. The team's decision is based on time spent, skills/competencies acquired, and the quality of the product.⁵

B. School Structure

1. Board of Directors

Escuela Verde is governed by the TransCenter board of directors, which has ultimate responsibility for the success of the school and is accountable directly to the City of Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to ensure that all charter terms are met. The board sets overall policy for the school and was responsible for hiring TransCenter's executive director. The executive director, in turn, hired the school staff for its first year of operation. This year, the school staff was hired by the advising team in consultation with the TransCenter executive director. The board has regular meetings at which issues are discussed, policy is set, and school business is conducted. Some board work is conducted by committees that meet with greater frequency than the full board.

This year, the board was composed of 13 members: a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, eight others serving as members of the community at large, and the Executive Director serving as an ex officio member. Board members represented a variety of organizations and professions, including several local businesses that contributed their expertise in administrative and fiscal management. TransCenter board member experience included

⁵ This description is taken from the Escuela Verde's student handbook for the 2016–17 school year.

educational curriculum and instruction, nonprofit leadership and management, law, technology, insurance, and marketing.

In addition to its regular board members, TransCenter has eight honorary directors, and the executive director serves as an ex officio member of the board.

2. Areas of Instruction

Escuela Verde is a student-driven, project-based, democratically run school for seventh-through twelfth-grade students. The school operates in an open-concept space to encourage a sense of community, belonging, and collaboration. Because of a strong commitment to technology in learning, Escuela Verde allows students to work on iPads wherever is most comfortable in school building. Students work under the guidance of an advisor, with a student-advisor ratio of no more than 18:1.

Projects at Escuela Verde take a variety of forms, but every project has common components. A project generally lasts four to six weeks, and students are expected to document approximately 100 hours of work time for credit. To begin projects, students completed proposal forms on Project Foundry, the school's online project management system.⁶ Each proposal was presented to a three-person team (i.e., two advisors and one other student). Part of the proposal was creating a project checklist, which outlined all phases of completing the project. Once a project was approved, students charted the completion of each project phase. They regularly reviewed and discussed the completed tasks with an advisor. Students collaborated with advisors to identify additional resources required to address emerging

⁶ For more information about Project Foundry, visit www.projectfoundry.org

problem areas and to ensure that each project incorporated strategies the student needed to acquire the necessary academic competencies and curriculum standards.

Once a student completed the project checklist, the finished work was submitted to the proposal team for an evaluation of the project's quality and the determination of whether to grant credit. When reviewing a project, the proposal team used the data documented in Project Foundry to assess the amount of time spent on a project and the number of skills acquired. A specific rubric was also selected to assist with this evaluation process.⁷

Students at Escuela Verde do not receive letter grades for their project work, so they do not have a grade point average. Middle school students are expected to earn a minimum of 500 credit hours per year, and 1,000 credit hours enable students to graduate into the high school. The credit hours needed to graduate from eighth grade include:

- *English*: 200 credit hours
- *Math*: 200 credit hours
- *Social studies*: 100 credit hours
- *Science*: 200 credit hours
- *Physical education/health*: 100 credit hours
- *Fine arts*: 100 credit hours
- *Service learning*: 50 credit hours
- *Postsecondary preparation*: 50 credit hours

Students in the high school program are required to accumulate 22 credits to graduate. However, students are able to earn as many as 40 credits during four years of high school. The expectations for grade promotion are:

⁷ Information for this section was extracted from the 2016–17 student handbook.

- Ninth to tenth grade: 5.5 credits
- Tenth to eleventh grade: 11 credits
- Eleventh to twelfth grade: 16.5 credits

High school students are required to acquire credits as follows:

- English/language arts: 4 credits
- Math: 3 credits
- Social studies: 3 credits
- Science: 3 credits
- Senior/junior projects: 3.5 credits
- World languages: 2 credits
- Physical education/health: 2 credits
- Community service: 0.5 credits
- Fine arts: 1 credit

3. Advisor Information

Escuela Verde operates with “teachers as owners” in a democratic learning community.

Advisors are expected to model ownership and demonstrate democratic leadership. It is Escuela Verde’s belief that this practice has been demonstrated to inspire students, parents, and the community to take ownership and actively engage in decision making. Advisors demonstrate democratic leadership by supporting advisor evaluations by peers, students, and parents; participating in autonomous school management with control over budget and staffing, and accepting individual responsibility and accountability for the school’s financial and educational success.⁸

⁸ This information was taken from the Escuela Verde website.

The Escuela Verde teaching team was composed of six advisors at the beginning of the 2016–17 school year.⁹ The teaching team was assisted by an administrative coordinator, a facility manager, several volunteer assistants, and a part-time administrator/advisor. These full-time teaching staff had expertise in English, math, science, social studies, and special education. All six advisors who started the 2016–17 school year remained at the school for the entire school year, resulting in a retention rate of 100.0%.

There were five advisors at the end of the 2015–16 school year. All five advisors returned to the school in 2016–17; Escuela Verde, therefore, also had a 100.0% advisor return rate.

4. Hours of Instruction/School Calendar

The first day of school for all Escuela Verde students was August 1, 2016, and the school year ended on June 29, 2017. The school operates on a 39-week school year, composed of four quarters. Most of the projects undertaken by students are planned to be completed within a quarter. At the end of the 2015–16 academic school year, Escuela Verde provided CRC with its school calendar for the upcoming year, indicating student attendance days, break schedules, presentation nights, and other major school events. CRC was also provided with the school's daily instructional schedule.

The school day began at 9:00 a.m. and ended at 3:45 p.m. Students started and ended the day (Tuesday through Friday) with a 10- to 45-minute wellness and/or advisory session. Specific times were allocated within the daily student schedule to focus attention on the acquisition of skills in English/reading (45 minutes) and math (60 minutes). The majority of the

⁹ All advisors held a DPI license.

school day was dedicated to quiet and active project time (140 minutes). In the middle of the day, students were given 25 minutes for lunch and participated in a 30-minute physical education/health session. Escuela Verde was a closed campus for lunch, so students either brought a bag lunch or shared in the meal brought into the building.

Every Monday afternoon, students were given 180 minutes for independent and/or interdependent project work. Escuela Verde staff acknowledge that learning happens everywhere, so students were allowed to participate in out-of-school learning experiences, such as community service work, field experiences, advisor-led field trips, field research, and internships. These learning experiences occurred during regular school hours, or at other times if approved by the student's advisor and parents. Students were encouraged to engage with a variety of community groups for afterschool activities and were expected to participate in all scheduled community night events.

5. Parental Involvement

Escuela Verde recognizes parental involvement as a critical component of student success. A parent's involvement at the school starts with his/her participation in developing the student's personal learning plan (PLP), along with the student and the advisor. Parents were expected to provide further support through school involvement, organization of community events, and participation in mentoring and apprenticeship programs.¹⁰ Additional opportunities

¹⁰ Upon enrollment, every student creates a PLP, which incorporates a personal mission statement, identifies the student's strengths and challenges, enables the student to monitor his/her skill acquisition, summarizes his/her resume-building experiences, and embodies his/her life vision.

for involvement included attendance at conferences, presentation nights, and community nights.

At the very minimum, *all* parents/guardians must attend the following.

- Two scheduled parent-student-advisor conferences. If parents/guardians are unable to attend the conferences, they must make arrangements for an alternative date/time with the student's advisor.
- Four meetings of Families Engaged in Education, one presentation night, and one community night.

Depending upon their talents, availability, and schedules, parents participated in one or more of the following ways.

- Consulting with students and advisors on planning and evaluation, providing onsite assistance to students and advisors, and/or providing feedback to advisors;
- Learning the project process with students to support and assist them;
- Sharing Escuela Verde's goals and philosophy with people in the community;
- Chaperoning student events or helping with carpools to and from school events and learning experiences;
- Serving as resources to students in their areas of expertise or sharing knowledge of community resources with students and advisors;
- Providing administrative assistance from school or home (e.g., mailings, phone calls, promotions); or
- Organizing community events, being active on an Escuela Verde committee, and/or supporting students' interests and efforts.¹¹

¹¹ The expectations and opportunities for parental involvement described here are taken from the student handbook for the 2016–17 school year.

Parents were expected to enter into a contract with Escuela Verde indicating that they understood and agreed to support all expectations described in the student handbook. This contract was also signed by students at the beginning of the school year.

6. Waiting List

During the 2016–17 school year, Escuela Verde had an extensive waiting list of students seeking admission. During the school year, staff contacted students to ascertain their interest in enrolling in Escuela Verde for the 2017–18 school year; some students were still interested and shadowed existing students for a day before deciding to enroll for the next school year.

7. Discipline Policy

Escuela Verde’s discipline policy is driven by a restorative justice mindset, which centers on engaging those who have a stake in a specific offense or violation of a school rule. The involved parties are expected to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations in order to hear all of the issues at hand and to put things as right as possible. This mindset relies on five key principles:

1. Focus on the harms and consequent needs of the victims, as well as the needs of the communities and the offenders.
2. Address the obligations that result from those harms.
3. Use an inclusive, collaborative process.
4. Involve those with a legitimate stake in the situation, including victims, offenders, community members, and society.

5. Seek to right the wrongs.¹²

Students at Escuela Verde are expected to treat the building, themselves, and everyone in the community with dignity and respect. The school has detailed and explicit policies around several topics, including acceptable ways to use technology both on and off campus. Theft is not tolerated at the school and can be grounds for removal. Everyone at the school is expected to keep the learning environment clean, tidy, and safe. While the school does not require uniforms, clothing is expected to be appropriate and not offensive to other members of the community. Tobacco, drugs/alcohol, weapons, harassment, and violence are not allowed at the school and are described in the handbook as grounds for the disciplinary actions of suspension or expulsion. Suspension is used only for severe cases and is handled on a student-by-student basis. Parents were notified of any suspension. As a last resort, expulsions are used; per policy, expulsion occurs immediately for the following.

- Possessing a gun or other dangerous weapon in school
- Possessing or having the intent to distribute drugs or alcohol
- Extreme harassment or physical violence
- A total of 10 consecutive unexcused absences
- Other criminal offenses

8. Graduation Information

Students at Escuela Verde started preparing for graduation from either eighth or twelfth grade by initiating a PLP, which was complemented by project proposals. The plans were

¹² This material is adapted from the student handbook and Howard Zehr's *The Little Book of Restorative Justice* (published by Good Books in 2002).

created for each student to track his/her progress, on a quarterly basis, toward accumulation of credits required for graduation and acquisition of reading and math skills. A mid-year review also defined what the student and advisor needed to do to ensure that the student stayed on track to achieve end-of-year goals. All of these tools were completed by the students with advisor assistance.

In addition, advisors took students on five university/college tours, several college representatives visited the school, some students participated in the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Knowledge is Power program, and students engaged in Lead to Succeed and Portfolio of Life to assist with identification of career opportunities and resume preparation.

Finally, the Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation held several group sessions with the eleventh- and twelfth-grade students to help them prepare for their college applications and financial aid forms, and staff also provided students with one-on-one assistance with financial aid issues. A more comprehensive session was also held for all students to discuss how they could best prepare themselves for successful entrance into and completion of college. All students have to visit at least three colleges and complete three applications to colleges before graduation.

Eight (80.0%) graduating students were accepted into a postsecondary institution. Four students were enrolled at the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), one at UW-Milwaukee, one at Alverno, one at Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design, and one at Mount Mary. Two graduates chose to enter the workforce.

C. Student Population

Escuela Verde started the school year on August 1, 2016. As of September 16, 2016, 117 students were enrolled in seventh through twelfth grades.¹³ During the year, eight students enrolled in the school and 19 students withdrew.¹⁴ Students withdrew for a variety of reasons: 14 students transferred to other schools, two were withdrawn due to non-attendance, two moved out of state, and one student was expelled for behavioral reasons. At the end of the year, 106 students were enrolled.

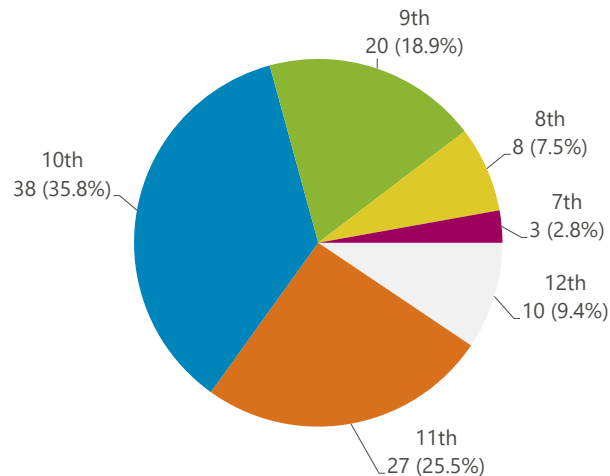
- There were 11 students in middle school and 95 students in high school (Figure 1).¹⁵
- There were 50 girls (47.2%) and 56 (52.8%) boys.
- There were 84 Latino students (79.2%), 10 (9.4%) African American students, eight (7.5%) White students, two (1.9%) Native American students, one (0.9%) Asian student, and one (0.9%) multiracial student.
- There were 19 students with special education needs. Nine had other health impairments (OHI), four had specific learning disabilities (SLD), one had an emotional behavioral disability (EBD), one had an EBD with OHI, one had an EBD with OHI and a vision impairment, one had an OHI and autism, one had an intellectual disability with speech and language (SPL), and one had an SLD with SPL.
- There were 93 (87.7%) students eligible for free/reduced lunch.
- More than half (56.6%) of students were bilingual.

¹³ There were 14 students in middle school (seventh and eighth grades) and 103 students in high school (ninth through twelfth grades).

¹⁴ One student enrolled and four withdrew from middle school; seven enrolled and 15 withdrew from high school.

¹⁵ Student grade levels may shift during the year. The grade level reported reflects the grade level each student was classified in for a majority of the school year.

Figure 1
Escuela Verde
Enrollment by Student Grade Level*
2016–17



N = 106

*Grade levels may shift during the year; grade levels shown reflect the grade level each student was classified in for a majority of the school year.

Of the 117 students enrolled on the third Friday of September, 98 were still enrolled at the end of the year. This represents a retention rate of 83.8%. Of the 103 high school students who were enrolled on the third Friday of September, 88 (85.4%) remained enrolled for the year. Of the 14 middle school students enrolled at the beginning of the school year, 10 (71.4%) were still enrolled at the end.

A total of 85 students who were enrolled at the end of the 2015–16 school year were eligible to return to the school in 2016–17 (i.e., they did not graduate from eighth grade or high school). Seventy-two of those students were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2016, representing a return rate of 84.7%.¹⁶

¹⁶ Of the 81 students enrolled in ninth through eleventh grades and who did not graduate at the end of 2016–17, 68 (84.0%) returned in 2016–17.

D. Activities for Continuous School Improvement

During the year, Escuela Verde responded to all of the recommendations in the 2015–16 programmatic profile and educational performance report. The following describes each recommendation and Escuela Verde’s corresponding response.

- Recommendation: Adopt strategies to improve students’ motivation to enhance their competencies in reading and math. Advisors need to regularly monitor students’ progress in these two critical skill areas.

Response: Rather than relying on independent reading, students were required to spend more time in reading groups. A reading specialist was hired mid-year to assist the students with the greatest needs in both group and individual sessions. ACT preparation groups were also used to better prepare students for success with concepts measured by Aspire and ACT tests.

Similar strategies were adopted to assist students with the acquisition of math competencies. Students were assigned to math groups based on their skill levels. Tutors came to the school four days per week to assist advisors to better meet the individual needs of students.

- Recommendation: Improve the cohesion of staff practices in project direction, acquisition of competencies by students in reading and math, and creation of a positive school climate that stimulates student learning and acquisition of essential 21st-century skills.

Response: Advisors spent an increased amount of time during their Monday planning sessions discussing ways to strengthen the cohesion of staff’s approaches to projects. Efforts were made to increase advisory collaboration for learning experiences, and staff more regularly gathered over lunch to discuss positive and negative outcomes of any new practices.

Advisors also structured their advisory project time to focus on concepts related to the implementation of a strong research model. Advisors were expected to model strategies and then critique students’ adoption of similar practices. The emphasis throughout this process was on increasing the rigor of the process employed by students in the completion of every project.

- Recommendation: Implement a fundraising plan that increases resources for student travel and engagement in experiences related to more challenging student projects.

Response: The school held a green tie gala to raise resources to support project work and student travel. This major fundraiser was supplemented by several smaller efforts such as hosting a spaghetti dinner and selling pizza. One outcome of these efforts is that a student group visited Costa Rica and focused on projects related to their experiences in that environment.

III. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

To monitor performance as it relates to the CSRC contract, Escuela Verde collected a variety of qualitative and quantitative information at specified intervals during the academic year. This year, the school established goals for attendance, parent conferences, and special education student records. The high school also established goals for graduation plans and testing of new enrollees. In addition, Escuela Verde identified local and standardized measures of academic performance to monitor student progress.

A. Attendance

The school established a goal of maintaining an average attendance rate of 90.0%. Students were considered present if they were at the school for four of the six instructional time slots, which last an hour and 20 minutes each. This year, all students enrolled at any time during the year attended school an average of 90.1% of the time.¹⁷ The school has therefore met its internal attendance goal. When excused absences were included, the attendance rate rose to 97.2%.

¹⁷ Attendance data were reported for 119 of 125 students enrolled during the year. High school students attended, on average, 90.2% of the time; middle school students attended 89.7% of the time.

Sixteen students were suspended from school at least once during the year and spent, on average, 2.2 days out of school because of it.

B. Student-Parent-Advisor Conferences

Escuela Verde's goal was to have parents of at least 80.0% of students enrolled for the entire school year attend one of two scheduled student-parent-advisor conferences.

Additionally, advisors regularly contact parents outside of the formal conference periods, so the school also provided the total number of parent contacts occurring during the year. Parents of all 98 students who were enrolled all year attended both formal conferences, exceeding the school's goal for parent participation.

C. Special Education Student Records

This year, the school maintained records for all special education students. At the end of the year, there were 19 students with special education records. All 19 students had an initial individualized education program (IEP) or an IEP review this year.

In addition to examining the special education data provided by the school, CRC reviewed a sample of special education files. This review indicated that IEPs had been completed and reviewed in a timely manner and that several parents participated in the IEP team reviews. There was documentation related to the efforts made by the staff to engage parents in these sessions. The school has met its goal related to developing and maintaining special education records.

D. High School Graduation Plans and Grade-Level Promotion

1. High School Graduation Plans

A high school graduation plan is to be developed for each high school student by the end of his/her first semester of enrollment. The plan is to include: (1) evidence of parent/family involvement; (2) information regarding the student's postsecondary plans; and (3) a schedule reflecting plans for completing four credits in English/language arts; three credits apiece in math, science, and social studies; two credits in physical education/health; two credits in postsecondary preparation; one credit in fine arts; and four credits in a combination of junior/senior projects and community service.¹⁸

Graduation plan information was provided for 93 of 95 high school students enrolled at the end of the school year, plans were completed for all 93 (100.0%) high school students, and the status on each individual graduation plan measure is shown in Table 1.

Table 1	
Escuela Verde High School Graduation Plans 2016–17 (N = 93)	
Measure	% Plans Including Measure
Included postsecondary plans	100.0%
Shared with parents	100.0%
Credits to graduate	100.0%
Reviewed by counselor	100.0%
On track toward graduation	76.4% ¹⁹
Need to enroll in credit recovery activities	24.7%

¹⁸ Evidence of involvement is reflected by whether the school provided parents with a copy of the plan. Parents were also encouraged to review the plan as part of scheduled parent-advisor conferences.

¹⁹ Based on the number of students with graduation plans who were promoted at the end of the school year.

2. High School Graduation Requirements

The school's goal for graduation requirements was that at least 75.0% of ninth, 75.0% of tenth, 90.0% of eleventh, and 90.0% of twelfth graders would accrue enough credits to be promoted to the next grade level or to graduate at the end of the school year. Information about credits earned and grade-level promotion was provided for all 88 high school students who were enrolled in Escuela Verde for the entire school year. Seventy-three (83.0%) students were promoted to the next grade or graduated from high school (Table 2).

Table 2					
Escuela Verde High School Graduation Requirements 2016–17					
Grade	N	Minimum Number of Credits Required	Average Credits Earned/ Accumulated	Promoted/Graduated	
				n	%
9th	18	5.5	5.5	12	66.7%
10th	38	11.0	12.4	32	84.2%
11th	22	16.5	18.0	19	86.4%
12th	10	22.0	27.1	10	100.0%
Total	88	—	—	83	83.0%

E. **Local Measures of Educational Performance**

Charter schools, by their definition and nature, are autonomous schools with curricula that reflect each school's individual philosophy, mission, and goals. In addition to administering standardized tests, each charter school is responsible for describing the goals and expectations for its students in the context of that school's unique approach to education. These goals and expectations are established by each City of Milwaukee-chartered school at the beginning of the

academic year to measure the educational performance of its students. These local measures are useful for monitoring and reporting progress, guiding and improving instruction, clearly expressing expectations for the quality of student work, and providing evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks.

Escuela Verde designated four areas in which students' competencies would be measured: literacy, math, writing, and special education goals.

1. Literacy: STAR Reading²⁰

The school set a goal that at least 60.0% of students who completed the fall and spring STAR reading assessments would show progress from fall to spring. Students who were above grade level at the time of the fall test were less likely to show the same improvement in grade-level expectation (GLE) as students who were at or below grade level in the fall. Therefore, students who were above grade level in the fall were considered to have made progress if they maintained their above-grade-level status in the spring. Students who were at or below grade level in the fall were expected to increase their scores by at least 0.9 GLE.

There were 98 students who were enrolled for the entire school year and completed the fall and spring STAR reading tests; nine of those students tested above their GLE at the time of the fall test and 89 tested at or below grade level. By the time of the spring test, 64 (65.3%) students showed progress (Table 3). Therefore, the school met its internal literacy goal for this school year.

²⁰ All but three new high school students who enrolled and remained at the school for at least 60 days were tested within 60 days of enrollment.

<p>Table 3</p> <p>Escuela Verde</p> <p>Reading Progress: STAR Reading Assessment</p> <p>Fall 2016 to Spring 2017</p>			
School	N	Students Who Progressed*	
		n	%
Middle School	10	7	70.0%
High School	88	57	64.8%
Total	98	64	65.3%

*For students above grade-level expectation in the fall, progress was defined as maintaining their above-grade-level status in the spring; for students at or below grade-level expectation in the fall, progress was defined as improving by at least 0.9 GLE, or one month for each month of instruction.

The school also elected to examine whether students with both fall and spring STAR reading assessments met their projected spring GLE scores based on their fall assessments. Of the 98 students who completed both tests, 59 (60.2%) met the projected spring GLE (data not shown).

2. Math: STAR Math²¹

The school set a goal that at least 60.0% of students who completed both STAR math assessments would show progress from fall to spring. Students who were above grade level at the time of the fall test were less likely to show the same GLE improvement as students who were at or below grade level in the fall. Therefore, students who were above grade level in the fall were considered to have made progress if they maintained their above-grade-level status in the spring. Students who were at or below grade level in the fall were expected to increase their scores by at least 0.9 GLE.

²¹ *Ibid.*

There were 98 middle and high school students enrolled for the entire school year who completed the fall and spring STAR math tests; 13 of those students tested above their grade level at the time of the fall test and 85 tested at or below grade level. Fifty-three (54.1%) of the students who completed both assessments showed progress from fall to spring (Table 4). The school has therefore not met its internal math goal for this school year.

Table 4 Escuela Verde Reading Progress: STAR Math Assessment Fall 2016 to Spring 2017			
School	N	Students Who Progressed*	
		n	%
Middle School	10	7	70.0%
High School	88	46	52.3%
Total	98	53	54.1%

*For students above grade level expectation in the fall, progress was defined as maintaining their above-grade-level status in the spring; for students at or below grade-level expectation in the fall, progress was defined as improving by at least 0.9 GLE, or one month for each month of instruction.

The school also elected to examine whether students with both fall and spring STAR math assessments met their projected spring GLE scores based on their fall assessments. Of the 98 students enrolled all year who completed both tests, 51 (52.0%) met the projected spring GLE (data not shown).

3. Writing

To assess student skills in writing, advisors judged student writing samples at the end of the school year and assigned a score to each student. Student writing skills were assessed in seven domains, based on grade level or IEP expectations: purpose and focus, organization and

coherence, development of content, sentence fluency, word choice, grammar, and presentation. Each domain was assigned one of six possible scores: 1 = beginning, 2 = emerging, 3 = developing, 4 = capable, 5 = experienced, or 6 = exceptional. Scores from each domain were totaled. The school's goal was that by the end of the final marking period, at least 90.0% of students who were enrolled for the entire year score 21 (i.e., developing) or higher.

Writing scores were available for 97 of the 98 students who were enrolled for the entire school year. Only 84.5% students received a final writing score of 21 or higher, falling just short of the school's goal (Table 5).

Table 5 Escuela Verde Writing Skills for Seventh Through Twelfth Grades (Based on Advisor Assessment) 2016–17			
Grade	N	Met Goal*	
		n	%
Middle school	10	8	80.0%
High school	87	74	85.1%
Overall	97	82	84.5%

*Received a total score of 21 or higher.

4. IEP Goals for Special Education Students

This year, the school's goal was that more than 50.0% of special education students would meet one or more goals defined on their IEPs. There were 19 special education students enrolled at the end of the year. Seven of those students were either new to Escuela Verde or had an initial evaluation completed during the 2016–17 school year. All 12 (100.0%) of the students who were continuing special education students at Escuela Verde this year met one or more of

the goals on their IEPs, and all 12 were at the high school.

F. External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance

DPI requires all schools to administer the Wisconsin Forward Exam to students in third through eighth grades. Ninth and tenth graders are required to take the ACT Aspire and eleventh graders must complete the ACT Plus Writing in the spring of the school year. Additionally, the CSRC required that high schools administer the ACT to twelfth-grade students in the fall of the school year. These tests and results are described in the following report sections.

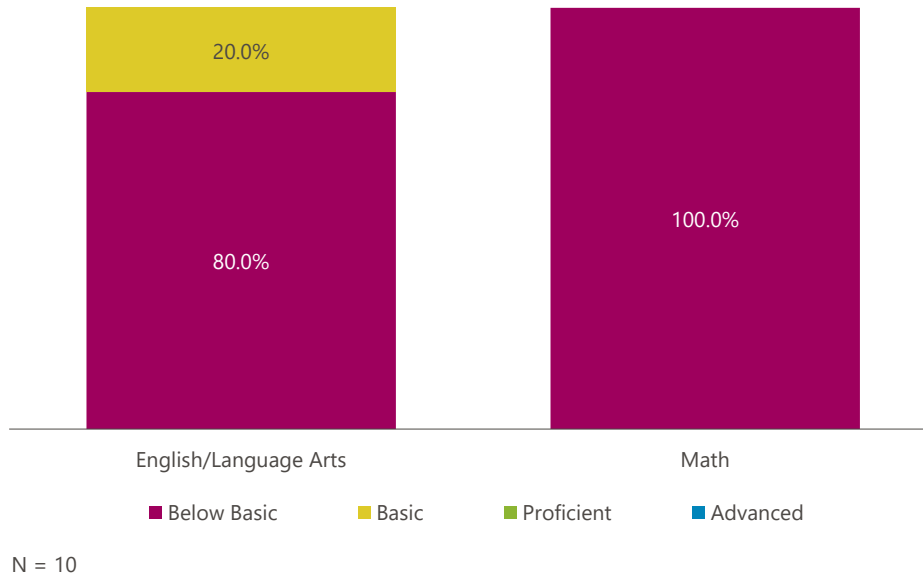
1. Wisconsin Forward Exam²²

In the spring of 2016, the Wisconsin Forward Exam was implemented as the state's standardized test for English/language arts and math for third through eighth graders, science for fourth and eighth graders, and social studies for fourth, eighth, and tenth graders. The Forward Exam is a summative assessment that provides information about what students know in each content area at students' grade levels. Each student receives a score based on his/her performance in each area. Scores are translated into one of four levels: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic. The Forward Exam is administered in the spring of each school year.

Ten seventh and eighth graders completed the English/language arts and math assessments (Figure 2).

²² Information taken from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction website and the Wisconsin Forward Exam family brochure: <http://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward> and <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/assessment/pdf/Forward%20brochure%20for%20families%202016-17.pdf>

Figure 2
Escuela Verde
Forward Exam English/Language Arts and Math Assessment
2016–17



To protect student identity, CRC does not report results for fewer than 10 students; there were too few eighth-grade students who completed the science and social studies assessments to include results. Thirty-five tenth graders completed the social studies assessment; five (14.3%) of those students were proficient or advanced (data not shown).

2. ACT Aspire and ACT Plus Writing

ACT has set college readiness benchmarks for the subject-specific subtests of both the Aspire and the ACT. The most recent benchmarks (published in 2013) for each grade level and test are shown in Table 6.²³

²³ For more information about ACT Aspire and ACT Plus writing benchmarks, see the ACT Aspire website (<https://www.discoveractaspire.org>) and the ACT website (www.act.org).

Table 6			
ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores for the Aspire and ACT			
Subtest	Ninth-Grade Aspire	Tenth-Grade Aspire	Eleventh-Grade ACT
English	426	428	18
Math	428	432	22
Reading	425	428	22
Science	430	432	23
Composite*	427	430	21

*ACT does not publish composite benchmark scores for the Aspire or the ACT. CRC created composite benchmark scores by averaging each grade level's benchmark scores from the four subtests, as published by ACT.

Student progress on these tests is based on year-to-year results, which are included in a separate section of this report. The results presented in the tables that follow reflect student achievement on the Aspire and ACT during the current school year.

a. ACT Aspire for Ninth and Tenth Graders

The Aspire was administered in April and May 2017. Ninth- and tenth-grade students enrolled during those time periods completed the tests, meeting the CSRC expectation that students be tested. A total of 19 ninth and 34 tenth graders who were enrolled in the spring of 2017 completed the Aspire (Table 7).

<p>Table 7</p> <p>Escuela Verde</p> <p>Aspire for Ninth and Tenth Graders</p> <p>Number of Students at or Above Benchmark on Subtests and Composite Scores</p> <p>Spring 2017</p>				
Test Section	9th Grade (N = 19)		10th Grade (N = 34)	
	n	%	n	%
English	4	21.1%	8	23.5%
Math	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Reading	2	10.5%	3	8.8%
Science	2	10.5%	2	5.9%
Composite*	2	10.5%	1	2.9%

*ACT does not publish a benchmark for the Aspire composite score; CRC calculated an Aspire composite score benchmark—equal to 427 for ninth graders and 430 for tenth graders—by averaging the benchmark scores from the four subtests.

b. ACT for Eleventh and Twelfth Graders

The final CSRC expectation was that all eleventh graders take the ACT Plus Writing and the ACT WorkKeys in the time frame required by DPI (spring semester) and that twelfth graders take the ACT or ACT Plus Writing in the fall semester. All 27 eleventh graders and nine of 10 twelfth graders enrolled at the end of the school year completed the ACT as required, for an overall completion rate of 97.3%

Composite ACT scores for eleventh graders ranged from 12 to 31, with an average of 17.1 (not shown). Two (7.4%) eleventh graders scored above the composite benchmark (Table 8). In order to protect student identity, CRC does not report results for fewer than 10 students. Therefore, results for twelfth-grade students could not be included.

Table 8 Escuela Verde Number of Students at or Above Benchmark for ACT Subtests and Composite Score Eleventh and Twelfth Graders 2016–17		
Subtest	n	%
11th Grade (N = 27)		
English	3	11.1%
Math	1	3.7%
Reading	3	11.1%
Science	1	3.7%
Composite	2	7.4%
12th Grade (N = 9)		
English	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Math	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Reading	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Science	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Composite	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	

G. Multiple-Year Student Progress

In 2015–16, students in third through eighth grade began taking the Forward Exam in the spring of the school year. Because this is the first year that year-to-year progress can be measured using Forward Exam results from two consecutive school years, results will be used as baseline data to set expectations in subsequent school years.

Prior to 2014–15, the CSRC required that multiple-year progress from EXPLORE to PLAN and from PLAN to ACT be reported for students who met proficiency-level expectations (i.e., scored at benchmark or above) and for those students who did not meet benchmark expectations (i.e., tested below benchmark) the previous school year. The expectation was that

at least 75.0% of students at or above benchmark the previous year would maintain benchmark the following year. For students below benchmark, the expectation was that at least 60.0% of students would either meet the benchmark the next year or improve their score by at least one point.

In the 2014–15 school year, the EXPLORE and PLAN were replaced by the ACT Aspire; schools continue to use ACT for eleventh graders. Year-to-year progress toward college readiness from ninth to tenth grade is now assessed using benchmarks from the Aspire.²⁴ Due to the change from the PLAN to the Aspire in 2014–15, progress from tenth to eleventh grade cannot be validly measured, using available data, in the same way that progress was measured from the PLAN to the ACT in previous years. Therefore, year-to-year progress from tenth to eleventh grade will not be reported.

Additionally, because the change from EXPLORE/PLAN to Aspire is relatively new, the CSRC has not yet revised its expectations for year-to-year progress measures for high school students. Results from ninth to tenth grade will be reported and CRC will make recommendations for CSRC consideration in the fall of 2017. These recommendations will be based on data from the last three school years using Aspire. Only when the CSRC makes a decision will there be new expectations for subsequent years.

²⁴ ACT created benchmarks for the Aspire subtests by concurring Aspire scores with the EXPLORE/PLAN benchmarks. These benchmarks will be used until ACT publishes updated Aspire benchmarks based on Aspire results.

1. Seventh- to Eighth-Grade Performance on the Wisconsin Forward Exam

Too few students completed the Forward Exam in consecutive years to include the results in this report.

2. Progress From the 2016 Aspire to the 2017 Aspire

Students enrolled as ninth graders in 2015–16 and as tenth graders in 2016–17 took the Aspire two consecutive years during the spring semester. Using the minimum benchmark scores for each grade level and subject area on the Aspire, CRC examined student progress from ninth to tenth grade (Table 9). There were 29 Escuela Verde students who took the Aspire in the spring of 2016 as ninth graders and in the spring of 2017 as tenth graders.

a. *Students at or Above Benchmark*

Of the 10 students at or above the English benchmark as ninth graders, 60.0% remained above benchmark as tenth graders. In order to protect student identity, CRC does not report results for cohorts with fewer than 10 students. Therefore, due to the small number of students who were at or above benchmark for all the remaining subtests and the composite score, CRC could not include results in this report.

Table 9 Escuela Verde Year-to-Year Student Progress on the Aspire Spring 2016 to Spring 2017 (N = 29)				
Subtest	Students at or Above Benchmark on the 2016 Aspire		Students Who Remained at or Above Benchmark on the 2017 Aspire	
	n	%	n	%
English	10	34.5%	6	60.0%
Math	0	0.0%	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Reading	3	10.3%	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Science	0	0.0%	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Composite*	1	3.4%	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	

*ACT does not publish a benchmark for the Aspire composite score; CRC calculated a composite benchmark score by averaging the benchmark scores from the four subtests, as published by ACT.

b. Students Below Benchmark

Between 41.4% and 57.9% of students progressed on each of the subtests and the composite score (Table 10). These results will be used by the CSRC to set future expectations related to progress for lower-achieving ninth- to tenth-grade students (i.e., those below benchmark as ninth graders).

<p>Table 10</p> <p>Escuela Verde</p> <p>Year-to-Year Student Progress on the Aspire</p> <p>Spring 2016 to Spring 2017</p> <p>(N = 29)</p>						
Subtest	Number of Students Below Benchmark in 2016		Students Below Benchmark in 2016 Who Achieved Benchmark in 2017	Students Below Benchmark in 2016 Who Improved by at Least One Point in 2017	Overall Progress of Students Below Benchmark	
	n	%			n	%
English	19	65.5%	2	9	11	57.9%
Math	29	100.0%	0	16	16	55.2%
Reading	26	89.7%	2	11	13	50.0%
Science	29	100.0%	2	10	12	41.4%
Composite*	28	96.6%	0	14	14	50.0%

*ACT does not publish a benchmark for the Aspire composite score; CRC calculated a composite benchmark by averaging the benchmark scores from the four subtests.

3. Benchmark Progress From the Spring 2016 Aspire to the Spring 2017 ACT

Tenth graders at Escuela Verde during the 2015–16 school year took the Aspire in the spring semester. Those same tenth graders who were enrolled as eleventh graders at Escuela Verde during 2016–17 took the ACT during the spring of 2017. Progress from tenth to eleventh grade, as defined by the CSRC expectations based on PLAN to ACT, cannot validly be measured using Aspire and ACT results. Therefore, progress from tenth to eleventh grade could not be measured this year.

H. **CSRC School Scorecard**

In the 2009–10 school year, the CSRC piloted a multiple-measure scorecard for the schools it charters. The pilot ran for three years and in the fall of 2012, the CSRC formally

adopted the scorecard to help monitor school performance. In 2014–15, the CSRC began a pilot of a revised scorecard that, like the original, includes multiple measures of student academic progress including performance on standardized tests and local measures; point-in-time academic achievement; and engagement elements, such as attendance and student and teacher retention and return. Revisions include:

- The reading readiness measure uses PALS results in place of the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test, which is no longer available.
- Year-to-year student academic progress and point-in-time student achievement measures are based on Forward Exam results instead of WKCE to reflect changes to the statewide assessment.
- Point values for each elementary local measure increased from 3.75 to 6.25 and for high schools, they increased to five points while point values for some standardized test results were decreased; this was done to ensure that point values for a single standardized test were the same for elementary and high schools.²⁵
- The ninth- to tenth-grade EXPLORE to PLAN measures were replaced by ninth- to tenth-grade Aspire to reflect the updated ACT tests. The score for point-in-time testing was reduced by 5 points to match the elementary scorecard for this category.

Due to recent changes to the standardized assessments, the revised scorecard was only partially piloted over the last two years. Now that the same assessment has been used for two consecutive school years, the revised scorecard will be fully piloted this year; it was accepted by the CSRC in February 2017 to replace the original scorecard as an indicator of school performance.

²⁵ A copy of the revised scorecard is located in the appendix of this report.

The score provides a summary indicator of school performance. The summary score is then translated into a school status rating using the ranges below.²⁶

A	93.4% – 100%	C	73.3% – 76.5%
A–	90.0% – 93.3%	C–	70.0% – 73.2%
B+	86.6% – 89.9%	D+	66.6% – 69.9%
B	83.3% – 86.5%	D	63.3% – 66.5%
B–	80.0% – 83.2%	D–	60.0% – 63.2%
C+	76.6% – 79.9%	F	0.0% – 59.9%

The percentage score is then translated into a school status level (Table 11).

Table 11 City of Milwaukee Educational Performance Rating Scale for Charter Schools	
School Status	Scale
High Performing/Exemplary	83.3% – 100.0% (B to A)
Promising/Good	70.0% – 83.2% (C– to B–)
Problematic/Struggling	60.0% – 69.9% (D– to D+)
Poor/Failing	0.0% – 59.9% (F)

Since implementing the scorecard in 2014–15, the CSRC has used the score and rating to guide decisions regarding whether to accept a school’s annual education performance and continue monitoring as usual and whether to recommend a school for a five-year contract renewal at the end of its fourth year of operation. The expectation for school performance under the original scorecard was that schools achieve a rating of 70.0% (Promising/Good) or more; if a

²⁶ In 2014, the CSRC approved this scoring system to make scorecard percentages more meaningful and provide schools more opportunity to exhibit improvement; it differs from the system used prior to that year.

school fell under 70.0%, the CSRC carefully reviewed the school's performance to determine whether a probationary plan should be developed.

In 2016–17, the CSRC transitioned from the original to the revised scorecard. During this transition year, it implemented an expectation for the current school year that schools achieve a rating of 70.0% or more on the revised scorecard OR, if below 70.0%, the school shall increase its scorecard percentage by at least two points from the previous year.

Due to the small number of students in the seventh and eighth grades as well as the fact that some measures on the elementary school scorecard are for students in lower grade levels, scorecard results could receive a maximum score of less than 50 possible points. Therefore, an elementary school scorecard was not completed this year. The high school received a score of 69.4% this year.

Typically, for schools that have both students in kindergarten through eighth grade and students in high school, CRC calculates a weighted overall score for the entire school (kindergarten through twelfth grade). The weighted overall score is simply a measure that takes into consideration the number of students to which it was applied. CRC assigns the weight of each individual report card's score based on the number of students enrolled in the elementary/junior academy and the high school at the end of the school year. Because a middle school scorecard was not created this year, a combined overall score for this year will not be available either.

IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is Escuela Verde's fifth year as a City of Milwaukee charter school. Due to the school's status as a fifth-year school, its contract compliance status, and its scorecard rating, CRC recommends that the school continue regular, annual monitoring and reporting. Escuela Verde increased its percent standing on the pilot scorecard by 1.5% (from 67.9% to 69.4%) and improved its performance on reading, math, and special education local measures from last school year to this school year.

Appendix A

Contract Compliance Chart

<p>Table A</p> <p>Escuela Verde</p> <p>Overview of Compliance With Education-Related Contract Provisions</p> <p>2016–17</p>			
Section of Contract	Education-Related Contract Provision	Report Reference Page(s)	Contract Provision Met or Not Met?
Section I, B	Description of educational program; student population served.	pp. 2–4 and 14–15	Met
Section I, V	The school will provide a copy of the calendar prior to the end of the preceding school year.	p. 8–9	Met
Section I, C	Educational methods.	pp. 2–4	Met
Section I, D	Administration of required standardized tests.		
	a. 1st – 8th grades	a. pp. 25–27	a. Met
	b. 9th – 12th grades	b. pp. 27–29	b. Met
Section I, D	All new high school students tested within 60 days of first day of attendance in reading and math.	pp. 21–23	Met
Section I, D	Written annual plan for graduation.	pp. 19–20	Met
Section I, D	<u>Academic criterion #1</u> : Maintain local measures showing pupil growth in demonstrating curricular goals in reading, math, writing, and special education.	pp. 20–25	Met
Section I, D	<u>Academic criterion #2</u> : Year-to-year achievement measure for 1st through 12th grades.		
	a. Progress for middle school students at or above benchmark was not available this year.	a. pp. 31	a. N/A
	b. 9th-grade students at or above benchmark on the Aspire.	b. pp. 31–32	b. N/A ²⁷
	c. 10th-grade students at or above benchmark on the Aspire.	c. N/A	c. N/A ²⁸

²⁷ The CSRC has not yet set a standard for progress on the Aspire subtests.

²⁸ Progress from PLAN to ACT could not be measured this year.

<p>Table A</p> <p>Escuela Verde</p> <p>Overview of Compliance With Education-Related Contract Provisions</p> <p>2016–17</p>			
Section of Contract	Education-Related Contract Provision	Report Reference Page(s)	Contract Provision Met or Not Met?
Section I, D	<p><u>Academic criterion #3</u>: Year-to-year achievement measure for 1st through 12th grades.</p> <p>a. Progress for students below proficient on the Forward.</p> <p>b. 9th-grade students below benchmark on the Aspire</p> <p>c. 10th-grade students below benchmark on the Aspire.</p>	<p>a. pp. 32</p> <p>b. pp. 33</p> <p>c. N/A</p>	<p>a. N/A</p> <p>b. N/A²⁹</p> <p>c. N/A³⁰</p>
Section I, E	Parental involvement.	pp. 9–11	Met
Section I, F	Instructional staff hold a DPI license or permit to teach.	pp. 8	Met
Section I, I	Pupil database information, including information on students with special education needs.	pp. 14–15	Met
Section I, K	Discipline procedures.	pp. 11–12	Met

²⁹ The CSRC has not yet set a standard for progress on the Aspire subtests.

³⁰ Progress from PLAN to ACT could not be measured this year.

Appendix B

Student Learning Memorandum

Student Learning Memorandum for Escuela Verde

To: Children's Research Center and Charter School Review Committee
From: Escuela Verde
Re: Learning Memo for the 2016–17 Academic Year
Date: September 6, 2016

Note: This memorandum of understanding includes the *minimum* measurable outcomes required by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) to monitor and report students' academic progress. These outcomes have been defined by the leadership and/or staff at the school in consultation with staff from the Children's Research Center (CRC) and the CSRC. The school will record student data in the school's database or Excel spreadsheets and provide that to CRC, the educational monitoring agent contracted by CSRC. Additionally, paper test printouts or data directly from the test publisher will be provided to CRC for all standardized tests. All required elements related to the outcomes below are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo. CRC requests electronic submission of year-end data on the fifth day following the last day of student attendance for the academic year, or July 6, 2017.

Enrollment

The school will record enrollment dates for all students. Upon each student's admission, individual student information and the actual enrollment date will be added to the school's database. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

Termination/Withdrawal

The exit date and reason for withdrawal will be determined for every student leaving the school and recorded in the school's database. Specific reasons for each expulsion are required for each student. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

Attendance

The school will maintain appropriate attendance records. Students who are present for four of the six hour-and-20-minute instructional time slots scheduled for every school day will be marked present for the day. Escuela Verde will achieve an attendance rate of at least 90%. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parents of at least 80% of students enrolled for the entire school year will participate in one of two scheduled student-parent-teacher conferences held for Escuela Verde students.

Participation will count whether the conference is held at the school, via phone, or at the student's home. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

Special Education Needs Students

The school will maintain updated records on all students who receive special education services at the school, including students who were evaluated but not eligible for services. Required data elements related to the special education outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

High School Graduation Plan

A high school graduation plan will be incorporated into each ninth- through twelfth-grade student's personal learning plan (PLP) by the end of his/her first semester of enrollment at the school. Each student will incorporate the following into his/her PLP.

- Information regarding post-secondary plans.
- A schedule reflecting plans for completing four credits in English; three credits each of college preparatory mathematics, science, and social studies; and two credits in foreign language, physical education/health, and other electives.
- Evidence of parent/family involvement. Involvement means that during the first scheduled student-parent-teacher conference, teachers/staff will review each student's graduation plan with his/her parent(s) whether the conference is held at the school, via phone, or via home visit. If a parent does not participate in this conference, Escuela Verde will have a conference with the student and submit a written report to the parent via regular mail.

Advisors will meet with each ninth- through twelfth-grade student during the first quarter to discuss the PLP. Advisors and students also will review PLPs by the end of the school year to determine whether each student is on track toward earning credits and whether the student will need to enroll in summer school.

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

High School Graduation Requirements³¹

Among students enrolled for the entire school year, at least 75% of ninth grade students will complete 5.5 or more credits; 75% of tenth graders will complete 11 or more credits; 90% of eleventh graders will complete 16.5 or more credits; and 90% of twelfth graders will complete 22 or more of the required credits by the end of the school year and will graduate.

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

Academic Achievement: Local Measures

Literacy

The reading progress of all students will be assessed four times during the school year using STAR Reading. Progress will be measured and reported for the cohort of students that completes the first and last (i.e., the fourth) tests; measures will be determined by comparing grade equivalent (GE) scores from the first and last tests. At least 60% of students who attend for the entire year and complete both assessments will meet the reading goal as described below.

- Students who are at or below grade level at the time of the first test will increase their average GE scores by at least one month for each month of instruction (i.e., 0.9 GE).
- Students who test above grade level at the time of the first test will be considered to have met the growth expectation if, at the time of the last test, they remain above grade level in reading.

CRC also will examine whether students meet their projected GE score on the last assessment in the spring based on the GE score for their initial assessment in the fall. If a student enrolls in the high school after the fall testing date, he/she will be tested within 60 calendar days of enrollment.³²

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

³¹ This item depends on both the school's high school graduation requirements and the timing of the student's coursework. Outcomes reflect what would be needed at each grade level to meet graduation requirements by the end of the fourth year.

³² CRC also will report the GE score for all students at the time of their initial assessments.

Mathematics

The math progress of all students will be assessed four times during the school year using STAR Math. Progress will be measured and reported for the cohort of students that completes the first and last (i.e., the fourth) tests; measures will be determined by comparing grade equivalent (GE) scores from the first and last tests. At least 60% of students who attend for the entire year and complete both tests will meet the goal as described below.

- Students who are at or below grade level at the time of the first test will increase their GE scores, on average, at least one month for each month of instruction (i.e., 0.9 GE).
- Students who test above their grade level on the first test will be considered to have met the growth expectation if, at the time of the last test, they remain above grade level in math.

CRC also will examine whether students meet their projected GE score on the last assessment in the spring based on the GE score for their first assessment in the fall. If a student enrolls in the high school after the fall testing date, he/she will be tested within 60 calendar days of enrollment.³³

Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

Writing

Writing samples from students in seventh through twelfth grades will be assessed using the 6+1 Trait® Writing rubric. Student writing skills will be assessed in the following seven domains based on grade level or individualized education program (IEP) expectations: purpose and focus, organization and coherence, development of content, sentence fluency, word choice, grammar, and presentation. Each domain will be assessed on the following scale: 1 = beginning, 2 = emerging, 3 = developing, 4 = capable, 5 = experienced, and 6 = exceptional. By the end of the final marking period, at least 90% of the students enrolled for the entire school year will have at least “developing” writing skills (i.e., a score of 21 or higher). Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

IEP Goals

More than 50% of the students enrolled in special education services at Escuela Verde for at least a full school year will meet one or more of the goals defined in their IEPs. Data on each special education student’s goal achievements will be recorded in an Excel spreadsheet by each student’s Wisconsin student number (WSN). Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

³³ CRC also will report the GE score for all students at the time of their initial assessment.

Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures

Wisconsin Forward Exam for Seventh-, Eighth-, and Tenth-Grade Students

The Wisconsin Forward Exam will be administered on an annual basis within the timeframe specified by DPI. This standardized assessment will produce an English/language arts and a math score for all seventh and eighth graders. Eighth-grade students will complete the science and social studies tests and tenth graders will complete the social studies test. Data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

ACT Aspire for Ninth- and Tenth-Grade Students

All ninth- and tenth-grade students are required to take all subtests³⁴ of the ACT Aspire, the pre-ACT tests that identifies students not ready for the ACT,³⁵ in the timeframe required by DPI. Specific data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

ACT for Eleventh- and Twelfth-Grade Students

All eleventh-grade students are required to take all subtests of the ACT Plus Writing and the ACT WorkKeys in the timeframe required by DPI. Specific data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

Escuela Verde will require all seniors to take the ACT or ACT Plus Writing in the fall of 2016. The ACT for twelfth graders is not required by DPI but is a requirement of the CSRC. Specific data elements related to this outcome are described in the Data Requirements section of this memo.

Year-to-Year Progress

1. CRC will report results from the 2015–16 and 2016–17 Wisconsin Forward Exams. If possible, CRC will also report year-to-year progress for students who completed the assessment in consecutive school years at the same school. When sufficient year-to-year data are available, CSRC will set its expectations for student progress, and these expectations will be effective for all subsequent years.

³⁴ English, mathematics, reading, and science; and writing test.

³⁵ The Educational Planning and Assessment System developed by the American College Testing Service (ACT) provides a longitudinal, standardized approach to educational and career planning, assessment, instructional support, and evaluation. The series includes the ACT Aspire, ACT Plus Writing, and ACT WorkKeys tests. Score ranges from all three tests are linked to *Standards for Transition* statements that describe what students have learned and what they are ready to learn next. The *Standards for Transition*, in turn, are linked to *Pathways* statements that suggest strategies to enhance students’ classroom learning. *Standards* and *Pathways* can be used by teachers to evaluate instruction and student progress and advise students on courses of study.

2. CRC will report year-to-year progress from the ninth- to tenth-grade ACT Aspire for students who complete the test two consecutive years. Progress will be reported for students at or above benchmark on any of the subtests or the composite score and for students below benchmark. Results from 2016–17 will be used as baseline data for subsequent years.

Required data elements related to year-to-year outcomes are described in the Data Requirements section.

Appendix C

Trend Information

Table C1					
Escuela Verde Enrollment					
Year	Number Enrolled at Start of School Year	Number Enrolled During School Year	Number Withdrawn	Number at End of School Year	Number/ Percentage Enrolled for Entire School Year
2012–13	62	24	37	49	35 (56.5%)
2013–14	70	12	20	62	54 (77.1%)
2014–15	80	2	16	66	65 (81.3%)
2015–16	113	7	20	100	97 (85.8%)
2016–17	117	8	19	106	98 (83.8%)

Table C2	
Escuela Verde Student Return Rates	
Year	Rate
2013–14	73.9%
2014–15	83.0%
2015–16	89.8%
2016–17	84.7%

Figure C1

Escuela Verde
Student Attendance Rates

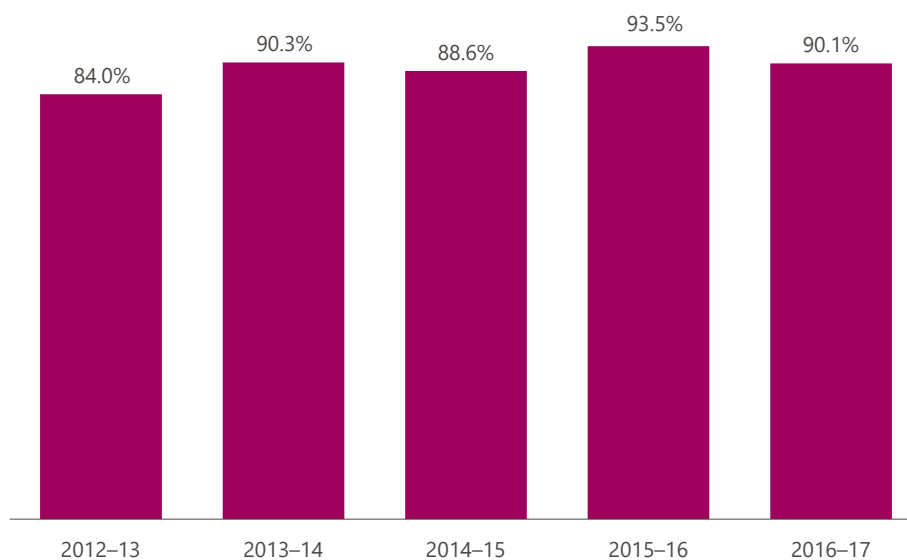
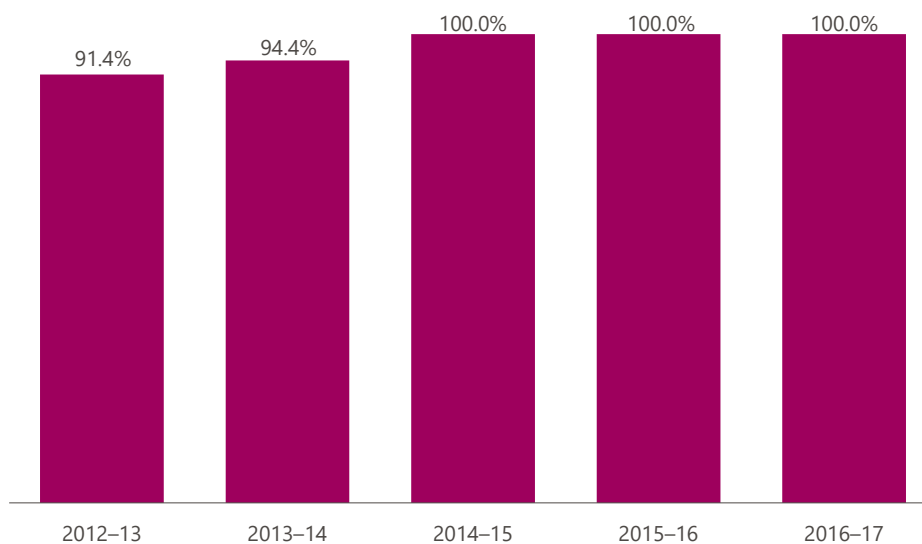


Figure C2

**Escuela Verde
Student-Parent-Advisor Conference Participation**



Note: "Participation" was defined as attending at least one of two scheduled student-parent-advisor conferences.

Table C3

**Escuela Verde
Advisor Retention Rate**

Year	Percentage Employed at School for Entire School Year
2012-13	100.0%
2013-14	100.0%
2014-15	100.0%
2015-16	100.0%
2016-17	100.0%

Table C4	
Escuela Verde Advisor Return Rate*	
Year	Return Rate
2013–14	100.0%
2014–15	83.3%
2015–16	100.0%
2016–17	100.0%

*These numbers reflect only the number of advisors, or paraprofessionals who were promoted to advisors, who were eligible to return for the next school year. It does not include advisors who were not offered contracts for the subsequent school year or advisors whose positions were eliminated.

Table C5			
Escuela Verde CSRC Scorecard Score			
School Year	Middle School	High School	Weighted Overall
2012–13	67.9%	73.9%	72.3%
2013–14	70.5%	70.3%	70.4%
2014–15	N/A*	75.9%	N/A*
2015–16	N/A*	77.7%	N/A*
2016–17**	N/A*	69.4%	N/A*

*Due to the small number of students enrolled in the middle school, a middle school scorecard was not created this year.

**Beginning in 2016–17, scores were calculated using the revised scorecard; scores are not directly comparable to previous years.

Appendix D

CSRC 2016–17 School Scorecard

City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee Pilot School Scorecard

r: 6/15

K-8TH GRADE

HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT READING READINESS: GRADES 1-2

• PALS—% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	(4.0)	
• PALS—% 2nd graders who maintained spring summed score benchmark two consecutive years	(6.0)	10.0%

STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 3-8

• Forward Exam reading—% maintained proficient	(5.0)	
• Forward Exam math—% maintained proficient	(5.0)	
• Forward Exam reading—% below proficient who progressed	(10.0)	30.0%
• Forward Exam math—% below proficient who progressed	(10.0)	

LOCAL MEASURES

• % met reading	(6.25)	
• % met math	(6.25)	
• % met writing	(6.25)	25.0%
• % met special education	(6.25)	

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADES 3-8

• Forward Exam reading—% proficient or advanced	(5.0)	
• Forward Exam math—% proficient or advanced	(5.0)	10.0%

ENGAGEMENT

• Student attendance	(5.0)	
• Student reenrollment	(5.0)	
• Student retention	(5.0)	25.0%
• Teacher retention	(5.0)	
• Teacher return*	(5.0)	

STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 9, 10, AND 12

• ACT Aspire—% 10th graders who were at or above the composite benchmark score two consecutive years	(5.0)	
• ACT Aspire—% 10th graders below the composite benchmark in 9th grade but progressed at least one point in 10th grade	(10.0)	30.0%
• Adequate credits to move from 9th to 10th grade	(5.0)	
• Adequate credits to move from 10th to 11th grade	(5.0)	
• DPI graduation rate	(5.0)	

POSTSECONDARY READINESS: GRADES 11 AND 12

• Postsecondary acceptance for graduates (college, university, technical school, military)	(10.0)	
• % of 11th/12th graders tested	(2.5)	15.0%
• % of graduates with ACT composite score of 21.25 or higher	(2.5)	

LOCAL MEASURES

• % met reading	(5.0)	
• % met math	(5.0)	
• % met writing	(5.0)	20.0%
• % met special education	(5.0)	

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADES 9 AND 10

• ACT Aspire English—% students at or above spring benchmark	(5.0)	
• ACT Aspire math—% students at or above spring benchmark	(5.0)	10.0%

ENGAGEMENT

• Student attendance	(5.0)	
• Student reenrollment	(5.0)	
• Student retention	(5.0)	25.0%
• Teacher retention	(5.0)	
• Teacher return*	(5.0)	

*Teachers not offered continuing contracts are excluded when calculating this rate.

Note: To protect student identity, CRC does not report data on scorecard items with fewer than 10 students. These cells will be reported as not available (N/A) on the scorecard and the total score will be calculated to reflect each school's denominator.

Table D					
Escuela Verde CSRC Pilot High School (Ninth Through Twelfth Grade) Scorecard 2016–17					
Area	Measure	Maximum Points	% Total Score	Performance	Points Earned
Student Academic Progress: 9th to 10th Grade 10th to 11th Grade 12th Grade	ACT Aspire—% 10th graders who were at or above the composite benchmark score two consecutive years	5.0	30.0%	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	--
	ACT Aspire—% 10th graders below the composite benchmark in 9th grade but progressed at least one point in 10th grade	10.0		50.0%	5.0
	Adequate credits to move from 9th to 10th grade	5.0		66.7%	3.3
	Adequate credits to move from 10th to 11th grade	5.0		84.2%	4.2
	Graduation rate (DPI)	5.0		42.9 ³⁶	2.1
Postsecondary Readiness: 11th and 12th Grades	Postsecondary acceptance for graduates (college, university, technical school, military)	10.0	15.0%	80.0%	8.0
	% of 11th/12th graders tested on ACT	2.5		97.3%	2.4
	% of graduates with ACT composite score of 21 or more	2.5		Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	--
Local Measures	% met reading	5.0	20.0%	64.8%	3.2
	% met math	5.0		52.3%	2.6
	% met writing	5.0		85.1%	4.3
	% met special education	5.0		100.0%	5.0
Student Academic Achievement: 9th and 10th Grades	<u>ACT Aspire English:</u> % of 9th and 10th grade students at or above benchmark	5.0	10.0%	22.6%	1.1
	<u>ACT Aspire math:</u> % of 9th and 10th grade students at or above benchmark	5.0		0.0%	0.0
Engagement	Student attendance	5.0	25.0%	90.1%	4.5
	Student reenrollment	5.0		84.0%	4.2
	Student retention	5.0		85.4%	4.3
	Teacher retention rate	5.0		100.0%	5.0
	Teacher return rate	5.0		100.0%	5.0
TOTAL		92.5			64.2
HIGH SCHOOL SCORECARD PERCENTAGE					69.4%

³⁶ Based on the 2015–16 DPI four-year graduation rate, the most recent available at the time of this report.