



Charter School Renewal Recommendation	
Charter School	Next Door Charter School
Date of Site Visit	October 27, 2020

The renewal recommendation is based on a thorough review and analysis of information and data from the following:

- Charter School Performance Summary
- Application for Renewal
- School Site Visit

Charter School Performance Summary		
Rating:	Met the Standard	Did Not Meet the Standard
Educational Performance		X
Financial Performance	X	
Organizational Performance	X	
Summary Comments:		
<p>Next Door’s core mission is to support the intellectual, physical, spiritual, and emotional development of children so they become self-sufficient, contributing members of the community. Next Door Charter School is connected to a larger organization Next Door Foundation, and as such is able to offer additional wrap-around services and opportunities for its students and families. The Charter School serves grades K4 and K5 students and the organization serves families and children starting at birth.</p> <p>Educational Performance: As an early childhood program, Next Door does not administer the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) to its students in English Language Arts, math, social studies and science. Instead, they administer the PALS assessment, which is the early literacy screener for students in grades kindergarten and the data is compared to the district. In addition, Next Door has chosen to include a number of local measures in its contract. The data and measures are outlined in the Preliminary Performance Summary. The results indicate that Next Door has struggled to meet several of these local measures; however, they have shown some growth on a few of the measures. It should be noted that Next Door did set a relatively high bar for achievement as to their local measures.</p> <p>For the 2019-20 school year, all federal and state requirements to administer academic assessments were suspended, as a result of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver granted by the Department of Education on March 23, 2020 and the Wisconsin Act 185 enacted on April 15, 2020. There were no WSAS assessments this year, this included the PALs assessment.</p> <p>Although Next Door did not meet all of the measures it set for itself, in achieving 85% proficiency in academic areas, it is demonstrating progress. The school has met the measure related to mobility and it received promising results on the fall 2019 to winter 2020 assessments that they administer. Next Door has provided in its application and site visit presentation the steps they are taking for continued improvement.</p> <p>In order to continue to address the academic improvement, a new curriculum, the Lucy Caukins Units</p>		

of Study, was implemented to increase student achievement and engagement. There were some indications of the curriculum having an impact early on. Implementing this revised curriculum will potentially show favorable results to sustainable student achievement in the coming years.

Next Door has not met the attendance measures over the term of the contract when comparing the school to the district in grades K4 and K5. However, in order to educate the families on the importance of early childhood attendance and the impact it has on the success of students in school, Next Door has created a position within the agency to work with families.

Financial Performance:

Next Door has consistently met 100% of its financial performance measures. Next Door has maintained a balanced budget with no budget deficits or material weaknesses to its financial audit. Next Door has had an unmodified opinion throughout its contract term. The agency is fiscally sound due to its careful management of funding.

The declining enrollment in early childhood programs across the city, due to the ongoing pandemic, may have short-term or long-term implications for Next Door. The Next Door team has been addressing this proactively based on the ongoing communication and outreach to families. However, the overall financial performance is commendable. The budget is supporting family outreach and meeting students' digital and social emotional needs.

Organizational Performance:

Next Door is a sound and strong organization and they have consistently met 90% of its organizational measures throughout the contract term. The only measure that was not met was immunizations, however they have adjusted their data collection processes to support this effort. Next Door has a Children's Hospital Clinic on site at the 29th Street location where all families have access to these resources.

Next Door retains its staff and has provided professional development to teachers. All teachers have an instructional coach that works closely on analyzing data and making instructional decisions to increase student academic performance. The professional development aligns with its goals, checking to ensure the instructional initiatives are effective. Next Door has systems in place to provide continuous support to its staff. The instructional coaches use a "student centered" approach and work with teachers to improve student outcomes. Next Door has established collaborative curriculum meetings that are conducted on a frequent basis.

Next Door has demonstrated high parental involvement and strong community partnerships. The partnerships are strategically planned to benefit the social and emotional well-being of students and its families. The families provided additional information related to the survey results that Next Door is a program that they rely on for their families and they appreciate the services directly in the community.

Next Door provides a much-needed service to students and families within the communities they are located in. Next Door provides wrap-around services to the families, some of these services include; food, housing, and job support. Next Door has a hotline staffed by a mental health team to assist families around the clock. They have a full health services department that includes screening for COVID-19 for any student that is receiving face-to-face instruction. Next Door provides a service for families, beginning at birth.

Application for Renewal

Met the Standard	Did Not Meet the Standard
<p>The Application for Renewal provides <i>clear, concise and compelling information</i> in the areas of Educational, Financial and Organizational Performance. The school has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Included ample evidence of increased student achievement or shown continuous improvement; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provided credible examples and documented evidence of its financial performance; and <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrated sufficiently and convincingly that it is organizationally sound. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The school's plans for continued success are clearly and effectively outlined with full details, descriptions, and explanations. 	<p>The Application for Renewal <i>does not provide clear, concise and compelling information</i> in the areas of Educational, Financial and Organizational Performance. The school did not satisfactorily address application components. Responses lack details. Descriptions and/or examples are underdeveloped. The school provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient evidence of increased student achievement or continuous improvement; <input type="checkbox"/> Unclear examples and evidence of its financial performance; and <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate evidence that it is organizationally sound. <input type="checkbox"/> The school's plans for continued success are unclear and not fully described or developed.
<p style="text-align: center;">Next Door has met all components of its application for renewal based on the above criteria.</p>	

Summary Comments:

Next Door was established as a non-instrumentality charter school in fall 2004. Next Door's approach seeks to strengthen children's reciprocal relationships with other children, families, teachers, society and the school environment, and to ultimately close the persistent achievement gap experienced by minority, urban students across the nation. Next Door offers full-day K4 and K5 classes for its charter school. In addition, they offer early head start programs with a birth-to-school continuum to ensure school readiness. Next Door develops the whole child and is a family-centered organization.

Next Door has included evidence of continuous improvement. Next Door has implemented a new curriculum in fall 2019. Even from its early implementation, the results were promising based on the fall 2019 data compared to the winter 2020 data. Unfortunately, the assessments for the spring 2020 did not take place due to the school closures in March 2020. It is evident that the school has developed and implemented measurable action steps to ensure academic achievement for its young people.

Next Door has plans in place to continue to build upon what has been developed in recent years to support increased student achievement aligned to standards.

The application for renewal provided sufficient information relating to financial and organizational soundness. The school's governance and staff are diverse in backgrounds and committed to the school's mission and vision. The school has demonstrated that is financially sound and has a solid plan moving forward.

Each child is screened using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. This survey identifies students who are at risk for developmental and mental health concerns. Next Door uses the results of this survey to coordinate mental health services, classroom support and teacher coaching. Next Door uses the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children, this is a conceptual framework of evidence-based practices developed by two national, federally-funded research and training centers, which builds upon the well-established field of mental health consultation. Next Door has a family advocate assigned to each family that continues to develop the connection within the family and the social-emotional development of young children.

Next Door has a number of community partners that wraps services around the family. Some of these partnerships include: Next Step Clinic to provide mental health services for children and families;

Children’s of Wisconsin to provide clinical services, on-site, at the 29th Street location; Literacy Lab provides classroom support in literacy through trained tutors; Marquette University provides dental services along with Dentamed for families through a mobile dental unit; Mobile Legal clinic provides legal services to families; and New Threads of Hope provides new clothing and books to distribute to families. In addition to these community resources, Next Door offers an extended education program to families as parents can receive a GED through this program. They provide multiple opportunities for family engagement through various education activities that take place.

School Site Visit

Met the Standard	Did Not Meet the Standard
<p>Charter school site visit provided excellent further evidence that the school is meeting performance standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School presentations clearly and effectively communicated information from its Application for Renewal. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School sufficiently addressed any issues/concerns raised by the MPS Charter School Contract Review Team members. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School (if appropriate) provided sufficient supplementary information to further clarify performance results and ratings. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Samples of student work and classroom visits reflect strongly and positively the school’s teaching and learning practices. 	<p>Charter school site visit did not provide compelling evidence that the school is meeting performance standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School presentations insufficiently communicated information from its Application for Renewal. <input type="checkbox"/> School did not adequately address issues/concerns raised by the MPS Charter School Contract Review Team members. <input type="checkbox"/> School did not provide ample supplementary information to clarify performance results and ratings. <input type="checkbox"/> Samples of student work and classroom visits did not necessarily positively reflect the school’s teaching and learning practices.
<p>Next Door met the standards in its school site visit as noted above.</p>	

Summary Comments:

Next Door’s virtual site visit included testimony from the school leader, an on-site teacher, site directors, a virtual classroom teacher, the director of family services along with parents and student focus groups. There were also virtual visits of both onsite and virtual classrooms conducted.

The presentation adequately communicated information from its application for renewal. More importantly, the presentation and supplemental information proved to the team addressed issues and concerns, particularly as they relate to areas such as educational performance, immunizations, special education, attendance and enrollment. The presentation indicated that there was more intentional use of data in driving instruction and improvement, and a greater collaboration with partners for improvement relating to concerns regarding immunizations. The presentation also demonstrated that the school saw that changes needed to be made and they were making intentional and substantive changes in three areas of reform; instructional leadership, creating a culture of continuous learning, and professional development.

It was clear that leadership, staff, and families have all committed to improvement. Although, technology issues and the age of students did make classroom visits a little more difficult, the Review Team was able to see that students were being engaged, there was use of technology, and small group instruction. It was evident that the teachers were working hard in this very difficult environment.

Next Door is committed to developing its staff and establishing a family-centered environment. Next Door provides additional support and resources to families, and offered increased support during the pandemic. The organization is navigating through a small group of face-to-face learners as well as a full virtual option for families. During this time, they have developed systems and processes to continue to provide solid support, including rethinking physical space, to meet the needs of all of its students.

The testimony of parents and students reflected a great love for the school. The parents feel that their children are safe, cared for, and prepared for school (including moving to the first grade). The sentiments of the parents indicated that they feel like a family and wish that Next Door would offer additional grade levels. When asked if there was anything that the parents would improve about the school, all parents indicated that there would be nothing to change. Below are some parent testimonies:

The leadership are always there to greet the families and they know us all by name. The staff are always helping with homework and they make you want to send your child to school every day. The kids always have smiles on their faces.

At Next Door, we feel part of a family. The teachers build meaningful relationships and they are always there to check on your well-being.

My child is not at first grade yet, but being in K5, my child is on track for first grade. She knows how to tie her shoes. She knows how to read, she knows her letters and sounds. Next Door family is there, it's the family away from family.

Next Door provides a number of books and materials for students to develop their reading and readiness for school. For example, they provided as many as 100 books to students by the time they graduate in K5. They have strong community partnerships that have a positive impact on the families in Milwaukee.

Charter School Review Team Renewal Recommendation

	Full-Term Term of 5 Years	<p>To be eligible, schools must be in the last year of the contract term and have achieved the following: <i>There is a strong and compelling record of evidence that the school met or exceeded the performance standards in the areas of Educational Performance, Financial Performance, and Organizational Performance.</i></p> <p><u>Guidelines for Recommending Five-Year Renewal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Team determines that a school primarily merits <i>Met the Standard</i> ratings in the performance areas. • A school that receives mixed ratings may be recommended for a full five-year renewal term if sufficient additional evidence obtained from the school's Application for Renewal and School Site Visit make this a credible recommendation.
X	Short-Term Term of 3 Years	<p>To be eligible, schools must be in the last year of the contract term and have achieved the following: <i>There is a strong and compelling record of evidence that the school met or exceeded a considerable number of the performance standards in the areas of Educational Performance, Financial Performance, and Organizational Performance and/or shows continuous, meaningful improvement toward meeting the performance standards.</i></p> <p><u>Guidelines for Recommending Three-Year Renewal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Team determines that a school primarily merits <i>Met the Standard</i> ratings or demonstrates continuous and meaningful improvement in the performance areas. • A school that receives mixed ratings may be recommended for a three-year renewal term if evidence obtained from the school's Application for Renewal and School Site Visit make this a credible recommendation.
	Non-Renewal / Revocation	<p><i>The school does not apply for renewal or the school's educational, financial, and/or organizational performance results do not meet defined standards and are deemed unsatisfactory. This would result in a recommendation for non-renewal/revocation.</i></p> <p><u>Guidelines for Recommending Non-Renewal / Revocation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school receives a <i>Did Not Meet the Standard</i> in all three areas of performance. • A school that receives mixed ratings may be recommended for non-renewal/revocation if evidence obtained from the school's Performance Summary, Application for Renewal, and School Site Visit make this a credible recommendation.

Summary Comments:

The Charter School Review Team recommends a short-term, three-year, charter contract renewal for Next Door Charter School. The school did not meet the academic criteria; however, it shows promise, that in time, it will meet those measures with the new systems and instructional resources that have been put in place. Next Door has a solid financial and organizational position and a number of community partners that provide meaningful resources to families.

Next Door is a long-term partner with Milwaukee Public Schools and provides programming for some of our most vulnerable youth in the heart of the city. Next Door is committed to providing a sound educational program that engages the whole child and family on its journey. The unique birth to K5 program and the community resources directly in its facilities will develop students academically as well as social-emotionally so that they begin first grade school ready.

The parents indicated the strong admiration for Next Door and appreciate how they support them in times of need. More importantly, they trust Next Door with their child's education and helping them grow. It is clear that parents appreciate Next Door and wish that they could increase the grades served in the organization. However, Next Door proudly accepts and acknowledges that educating the younger children is what they are good at and as such it remains their focus and commitment.

It is clear that Next Door has set lofty goals for itself as it relates to educational and academic performance and they have had some difficulty meeting some of the measures they have set. However, Next Door recognizes this and has established systems to address the academic performance of its students.

Next Door is a strong community organization, with support from many community leaders and other non-profit organizations, and a well-established history in Milwaukee. The charter school is one part of this broader organization. Next Door is a welcoming environment and they provides many wrap-around services and they school sends many of its students to MPS schools. The Team recommends that the school track the success of students after they leave Next Door to determine the greater impact they are having on the students.

MPS Charter School Review Team Members

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Signature: *Bridget Schock* Date: October 27, 2020
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