



### Charter School Renewal Recommendation

Charter School	<b>Hmong American Peace Academy (HAPA)</b>
Mission	HAPA provides students with rigorous academics, character development, and Hmong cultural values, preparing them to excel in colleges, universities and careers.
Vision	HAPA students enjoy college and career success, value Hmong cultural heritage, and exhibit responsible and peaceful leadership in local and global communities.
Date of Site Visit	November 2, 2022

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

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

### Charter School Review Team Renewal Recommendation

<b>X</b>	<b>Full-Term</b> Term of 5 Years	To be eligible, schools must be in the last year of the contract term and have achieved the following: <b><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></b> <u>Guidelines for Recommending Five-Year Renewal:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Team determines that a school primarily merits <i>Met the Standard</i> ratings in the performance areas.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
	<b>Short-Term</b> Term of 3 Years	To be eligible, schools must be in the last year of the contract term and have achieved the following: <b><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></b> <u>Guidelines for Recommending Three-Year Renewal:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Team determines that a school primarily merits <i>Met the Standard</i> ratings or demonstrates continuous and meaningful improvement in the performance areas.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>
	<b>Non-Renewal / Revocation</b>	<b><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></b> <u>Guidelines for Recommending Non-Renewal / Revocation:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school receives a <i>Did Not Meet the Standard</i> in all three areas of performance.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>

#### Summary Comments:

HAPA is a high-quality charter school, on the northwest side of Milwaukee, who is successfully serving a growing population of students. HAPA opened a new high school facility at the main campus in fall 2021 that incorporates college and career educational needs for students. They value and pride themselves in cultural values as well as high academic standards.

HAPA is both a high-performing and award-winning school. HAPA has exceeded expectations on the state report card during the term of its contract. It has been nationally recognized by *US News and World Report* in the past years ranking as one of the “Best High Schools” with a bronze medal and continues to be recognized, nationally, as a high performing school. HAPA maintained a 94% graduation rate and nearly 100% of students who have graduated have been accepted to a college. The school has increased the amount of scholarships awarded each year to now \$2.4 million dollars.

HAPA is a school that builds pride, self-esteem, ownership, and dignity which challenges students to reach their highest potential. The school is aesthetically pleasing with displays and artifacts of both the Hmong and American culture throughout the building. Students are respectful and are challenged in the coursework through high expectations from leadership, staff, and parents. All stakeholders take pride in the organization and are clearly invested in the school and its students.

The students and parents provided consistent testimony into what makes this program successful and why families continue to choose HAPA. They cited safety, a focus on maintaining cultural practices and high academic standards as the main reasons for HAPA’s success. The students were very passionate about their experiences at HAPA which are preparing them for college and beyond. Their testimony sent a clear message that the preparation modeled at HAPA have helped develop their abilities to self-assess and become life-long, self-directed learners. The testimony provided by the parents showed the lifelong commitment to HAPA and the investment that they have to the school and to their children.

HAPA has consistently demonstrated solid academic, financial, and organizational performance. HAPA has a strong structure in place that provides student-centered, rigorous, engaging, and authentic learning opportunities to students. HAPA uses data to inform decisions and involves its parents and students in the process. HAPA has invested in its students and continues to grow based on the diverse needs. HAPA values its teachers by providing meaningful professional development centered on Hmong culture, peace education, and academic instruction. Based on student and parent testimonies, it is evident that HAPA is a pillar in the community.

It is with reasons listed above that the Charter Review Team is recommending a full-term, five-year renewal for Hmong American Peace Academy (HAPA).

## Charter School Performance Summary

Rating:	Met the Standard	Did Not Meet the Standard
<b>Educational Performance</b>	<b>X</b>	
<b>Financial Performance</b>	<b>X</b>	
<b>Organizational Performance</b>	<b>X</b>	

### Summary Comments:

#### **Educational Performance:**

Hmong American Peace Academy (HAPA) has continued to meet 100% of its contract measures over the term of the contract. The school has exceeded the district in the percentage of students who are proficient on all Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) tests for the duration of the contract term.

#### **Financial Performance:**

HAPA has had unmodified audits over the contract term. The school has no budget deficits and is financially secure.

#### **Organizational Performance:**

HAPA continues to be organizationally sound. They have a diverse governing body that strategically supports the needs of the school. HAPA prides itself in parent involvement as parents are the foundation for student achievement. HAPA’s school events are well attended by the families with nearly 100% participation.

## 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"> <li>X Included ample evidence of increased student achievement or shown continuous improvement;</li> <li>X Provided credible examples and documented evidence of its financial performance; and</li> <li>X Illustrated sufficiently and convincingly that it is organizationally sound.</li> <li>X The school's plans for continued success are clearly and effectively outlined with full details, descriptions, and explanations.</li> </ul>	<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"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient evidence of increased student achievement or continuous improvement;</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Unclear examples and evidence of its financial performance; and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate evidence that it is organizationally sound.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The school's plans for continued success are unclear and not fully described or developed.</li> </ul>
<b>HAPA has met all components of its application for renewal based on the above criteria.</b>	

### Summary Comments:

HAPA has demonstrated in its application for renewal that it is educationally, financially, and organizationally sound based on the clear, concise, and compelling information that was provided in the respective areas.

HAPA has faithfully implemented its educational program as outlined in its Appendix A. HAPA continues to grow and expand as a high-performing and award-winning school and is committed to advancing HAPA's mission, vision and goals of a rigorous educational program, cultural strengths, and peace for all. HAPA continues to be one of Milwaukee's highest performing schools, with nearly 100% attendance rate, test scores exceeding the district average, and nearly every student who graduates is accepted to a college or university. HAPA has exceeded expectations on the state report card over the term of its contract.

HAPA has successfully designed and implemented a curriculum founded on three main components that center on standards-based academics, cultural strengths and peace education. HAPA offers Hmong language, culture, and history programming beginning at K4 and further developed in high school through a partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UW-M). This offers students the opportunity to fully value their personal backgrounds while also becoming active participants in their larger, mainstream communities. A key component to HAPA's culture and climate is the Peace Builders program. HAPA fosters attitudes that serve and transform learners into citizens of the world, promote students to think and act critically, strive for global mindset, and solve problems peacefully. The program instills lifelong skills for students to build peace at home, school and in the community. Students learn to trust, respect, and communicate through authentic relationships with staff.

HAPA provided credible examples and documented evidence of its financial performance over time. HAPA has received unmodified audits for each year of operation, indicative of proper accounting, management and financial stability.

HAPA sufficiently illustrated that it is organizationally sound. HAPA honors tradition and explores new and innovative ideas. HAPA's organizational structure of its Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief of Staff (CoS), Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Chief Academic Officer (CAO) are executed in a seamless manner that supports the vitality, growth, and sustainability of the school. HAPA has four instructional leaders that are supported by instructional coaches and arranged by grade bands (grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12). Through its model, teachers are supported and provided feedback on an on-going basis to support the instruction and developmental levels of students. HAPA also provides opportunities for career advancement within its organization.

HAPA has shown a steady increase in enrollment over the term of its contract. Since the last contract renewal, HAPA has purchased the parcel located at 4601 North 84<sup>th</sup> Street, its Main Campus, and houses grades K4 through 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>. HAPA opened the new high school facility at the main campus in fall 2021 that

incorporates 21<sup>st</sup> century college and career educational needs for students. HAPA has continued plans for future development of this location to house its growing population and to have all grade levels on one campus.

HAPA has a strong governing body made of a diverse group of individuals with knowledge and expertise to support its strategic plan aligned to HAPA's mission. The governing body is invested in the students that attend HAPA and support the executive director and school community in the decision-making process.

HAPA continues to grow its partnerships within the community. HAPA is focused on increasing both the quality and size of its K-12 education program and in partnership with parents and other community organizations, offering an array of services to strengthen the HAPA community. HAPA has partnered with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Mount Mary University to allow students the opportunity to earn dual credits. HAPA's continued partnerships with The Medical College of Wisconsin and Northwestern Mutual have provided opportunities for students to explore professions in various fields including the medical field, Information Technology, and financial careers.

The school has included ample evidence of increased student achievement and has clearly and effectively outlined the school's plan for continued success. HAPA plans to focus on the four areas of College and Career Readiness, Connection to Hmong Heritage, Community Leadership, and Commitment to Wellness and Joy. HAPA's graduates of the Hmong American Peace Academy will embody the following: possess the mindsets, skills, content knowledge, and variety of learning experiences needed to pursue college level study and the career of their choosing. HAPA graduates will hold comprehensive knowledge of Hmong culture, values, and language. Students model compassion, moral character, and peaceful action. Students will graduate HAPA with skills to maintain healthy habits of mind, body, and spirit.

## 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> <p>X School presentations clearly and effectively communicated information from its Application for Renewal.</p> <p>X School sufficiently addressed any issues/concerns raised by the MPS Charter School Contract Review Team members.</p> <p>X School (if appropriate) provided sufficient supplementary information to further clarify performance results and ratings.</p> <p>X Samples of student work and classroom visits reflect strongly and positively the school's teaching and learning practices.</p>	<p>Charter school site visit did not provide compelling evidence that the school is meeting performance standards.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School presentations insufficiently communicated information from its Application for Renewal.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School did not adequately address issues/concerns raised by the MPS Charter School Contract Review Team members.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> School did not provide ample supplementary information to clarify performance results and ratings.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Samples of student work and classroom visits did not necessarily positively reflect the school's teaching and learning practices.</p>
<b>HAPA has met all components of its site visit based on the above criteria.</b>	

### Summary Comments:

The site visit to HAPA provided further evidence that the school is meeting its performance standards. The school clearly and effectively communicated information from its application, sufficiently answered any questions by the Review Team, provided supplementary information to further clarify performance results, and the classroom visits reflect strongly and positively the school's teaching and learning practices.

HAPA provided insight into the history of the school, from its inception to the present configuration and plans for the future. It was evident that the school prides itself in excellence for all students and believe that developing the whole child with Hmong roots and high-quality education will give its students the greatest opportunities. It was also evident through its presentation that all members of its Board have a vested interest to see its students grow and to stay within the community. Through high performing school visits, student listening sessions, and parent focus groups, the Portrait of a HAPA graduate emerged. What mattered most throughout the community was the importance of academic readiness (life after high school), connection to Hmong heritage, community leadership and that the students are well and happy.

HAPA has increased its dual enrollment opportunities for students over the term of its contract. There are 22 students enrolled at Mount Mary and the tuition is subsidized by HAPA. The school also has 234 students enrolled through UW-Milwaukee taking courses such as Hmong 265 (culture and history), Hmong 107-108 and English 101. In addition to dual enrollment, HAPA offers a variety of Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

HAPA provides opportunities for teachers and staff to have a voice and grow to leadership positions. The school maintains a 92% retention rate of its teachers. HAPA provides professional development to their staff members that focuses on continuous improvement. New staff members are introduced to the Hmong culture and provided Peace Builder training, which supports the key components in the mission of the school.

The Team observed a variety of classrooms at each of the grade levels including the high school level. Some of these classes included: College English 2, AP Language, Hmong Language, Chemistry, College Writing 12, Hmong History/Culture (dual enrollment), Street Law/Mock Trial, and Spanish 1. There was evidence of implementation of the educational program as demonstrated by the rich print classrooms, high level questioning, student engagement, student-centered classrooms, and Hmong culture. There was consistency throughout all of the classrooms and students prided themselves in their work and their engagement in the content.

During the student focus group, the Team was able to hear from a variety of students in grades 11 and 12 and their experiences at HAPA. The majority of students in the focus group have been with HAPA since K4. Students mentioned that HAPA is welcoming and that they feel comfortable. Other students talked about HAPA being inclusive and progressive, meaning that HAPA has several of the events and clubs that students want which makes it enjoyable to be in school. Below are some of the student testimonies:

- *Coming to HAPA made me happy. Something changed inside of me. I wanted to say good morning to everyone. Mr. Patnoid and I developed a hand shake. This all helped to replenish my mental state.*
- *HAPA has always given me a lot of opportunities in my career path (physical therapy) and they teach us that we Hmong people are able to prosper and that I am somebody that they can rely on.*
- *HAPA has helped me to be prepared academically and as a person. I became more confident as a person. Going to these other schools I have learned to be proud of being Hmong. HAPA has helped me with my leadership and communication skills. HAPA has truly impacted me.*

All of the students stated that they felt supported. HAPA has guidance counselors that help students with college applications, financial literacy and more. Students feel comfortable with having conversations with teachers and students know that teachers are always available to them. Through student voice, there were additions of more clubs (GSA, student government, chess, track, cross country), spirit weeks, and a dodgeball tournament.

Through the parent focus group, parents appreciated the rich Hmong culture, and the strong academics. The parents appreciate the experiences that HAPA provides their children. One parent stated that he came to Milwaukee in 2004 as a refugee. He has 7 children who have graduated from HAPA and he has 6 children who are currently attending HAPA. One of his daughters graduated as valedictorian from HAPA, then graduated from UW-La Crosse with the highest marks, and is now in her 2<sup>nd</sup> year as a medical student. His second daughter is in her 3<sup>rd</sup> year as a pharmacy student. He spoke with passion and stated that “HAPA represents the opportunities for his children”. Parents value the Hmong heritage and cultural values provided to all students. The parents did acknowledge that they would like to see an opportunity for a PTA/PTO.

## MPS Charter School Review Team Members

Tangela Anderson	MPS Finance
Mickell Daniels	Community Volunteer
Patricia Ellis	MPS Director of Equity, Access and Inclusion
Director Garcia	MPS Board of Directors
Director Leonard	MPS Board of Directors
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Signature: Bridget Schock Date: November 10, 2022  
Bridget Schock, Director, Contracted School Services