



**MILWAUKEE**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## MPS Charter School Contract Review Team Comments and Renewal Recommendation

Name of Charter School: **Carmen Middle/High School of Science and Technology** Date: **December 5, 2016**

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

- Charter School Performance Summary – Educational, Financial, and Organizational Standards
- Application for Renewal
- School Site Visit

Charter School Performance Summary		
Standards	Met the Standard	Did Not Meet the Standard
<b>Educational Performance Rating</b>	X	
<b>Financial Performance Rating</b>	X	
<b>Organizational Performance Rating</b>	X	
<b>Summary Comments on Performance Ratings:</b>		
<p><b>Educational Performance:</b> The educational performance of Carmen School of Science and Technology is based on three core components: college preparatory curriculum; multiple intervention opportunities to support students who are two or more years behind in literacy and math; college and career readiness which include Alverno's 8 Abilities, character education, and advisory program. The interventions offered at Carmen include extended school day and year, inter-session, after school academic support, blended learning, student internships, and summer school. Based on the performance summary, Carmen Northwest has met or exceeded a considerable number of the performance standards in the areas of Educational Performance. With a goal of producing students who are ready for college and success after graduation, Carmen Northwest is in the initial stages of their development towards a high performing school. Their first class of graduating students will finish school this spring, and early indications suggest they are on their way to meeting the goal of the program. In order to know if the program will be able to build upon the initial success they've seen with their first cohort of student on the south side, more time will be needed to analyze the graduating classes from Carmen Northwest. The school's plan for continued success was clearly outlined with full details, descriptions, and explanations. Carmen has replicated the model that was originated from the south campus on the northwest side which includes the addition of a middle school. Based on the academic data provided, the Carmen middle school students are coming better prepared for high school at Carmen Northwest. Carmen requires that each student apply to at least five colleges, for the first senior class of Carmen Northwest, 95% have applied to colleges and 66% of those have been accepted to a four-year college as of December. Carmen offers intercession courses for those students that are not passing a course with a C or better and offer electives for students that are on track. All students are required to take an intercession course. Carmen does not pass students based on social promotion, but requires students to engage in rigorous coursework with high expectations.</p>		

**Financial Performance:**

Carmen Middle/High School of Science and Technology has met the financial standards, maintained a healthy budget, and accrued carryover funds.

**Organizational Performance:**

Students have a high awareness of expectations, school vision, and protocols. Students communicated the importance of personal development and life skills. The culture of the school is safe and supportive. Classrooms, materials, and resources support student engagement. Carmen Northwest has a partnership with the Silver Spring Neighborhood in developing a birth to 12<sup>th</sup> grade program for young people. The school engages parents in academic success by communicating through the student information system, advisory, parent teacher conferences, school governance, and workshops hosted by the school. The single gender advisory cohorts prepare students for college and career readiness, learning style inventories, and goal setting. Students will have opportunities to participate in an internship in the healthcare profession, which is possible through community partnerships. Carmen currently offers a student and parent program through Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) to earn credits towards a technical career.

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>• Included ample evidence of increased student achievement or shown continuous improvement;</li> <li>• Provided credible examples and documented evidence of its financial performance;</li> <li>• Illustrated sufficiently and convincingly that it is organizationally sound; and</li> <li>• 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 the application components. Responses lack details. Descriptions and/or examples are underdeveloped. The school provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient evidence of increased student achievement or continuous improvement;</li> <li>• Unclear examples and evidence of its financial performance;</li> <li>• Inadequate evidence that it is organizationally sound; and</li> <li>• The school’s plans for continued success are unclear and not fully described or developed.</li> </ul>
<b>X</b>	

**Summary Comments on the Application for Renewal:**

The application for renewal for Carmen Northwest provided clear, concise, and compelling information in the areas of educational, financial, and organizational performance. Carmen Northwest included evidence of increased student achievement and shows continuous improvement by reflecting on data regularly. The team provided examples and documented evidence of its financial performance; and illustrated sufficiently that it is organizationally sound. The school’s plan for continued success was clearly and effectively outlined with full details, descriptions, and explanations.

Carmen Northwest employs best practices to prepare students for college. They demonstrate a commitment to continue Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) focused college-prep and intervention opportunities that promote student achievement. Additionally, students participate in twenty hours of community service per year. Student have opportunities for internships and career-based apprenticeships at local corporations and non-profits organizations.

Not only does Carmen offer students a variety of courses that lead to the STEM focus, but a number of opportunities for interventions. The STEM focused college prep elements include: rigorous academics, grade C or better to earn credit, dual enrollment for college credit, engineering electives, AP courses, and career and technical education program. The intervention opportunities include: blended learning using online programs, after school academic support, intersession, summer school, English Language Arts and math courses for ninth graders, and extended school day and year. Carmen’s third focus in college and career readiness includes: advisory program, freshmen bridge program, character education, 8 Abilities, student internship program, and community services.

The goal of Carmen Northwest is to show that the success of Carmen South could be replicated and expanded into middle school. They have been reflective in the process and have realized the challenges over the course of the years. The 2016-2017 school year will be the first graduating class at Carmen Northwest and the first class of middle school students to enter high school. In order to ensure that there is equitable opportunities across all campuses, Carmen ensures that a founding member of the South campus is placed at one of the replicated schools. They provide training across all campuses and use common assessments and lessons in courses. The challenge has been the addition of a middle school that the school has recognized and addressed. For example, the school has a separate principal for the middle and high school. They have vertical planning meetings by content to ensure that students are receiving coherent curriculum. The leadership acknowledges the obstacles and have learned from them in growing a school that is larger than the founding school. The data lends itself to show that they are having an impact on students. The middle school students from Carmen are coming to the high school more prepared as demonstrated on the Pre-ACT assessment. They are able to offer Advanced Placement (AP) courses where students can start as early as grade ten.

<b>School Site Visit</b>	
<b>Met the Standard</b>	<b>Did Not Meet the Standard</b>
Charter school site visit provided excellent further evidence that the school is meeting performance standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School presentations clearly and effectively communicated information from its Application for Renewal;</li> <li>• School sufficiently addressed any issues/concerns raised by the MPS Charter School Contract Review Team members;</li> <li>• School (if appropriate) provided sufficient supplementary information to further clarify performance results and ratings; and</li> <li>• Samples of student work and classroom visits reflect strongly and positively the school’s teaching and learning practices.</li> </ul>	Charter school site visit did not provide compelling evidence that the school is meeting performance standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School presentations insufficiently communicated information from its Application for Renewal;</li> <li>• School did not adequately address issues/concerns raised by the MPS Charter School Contract Review Team members;</li> <li>• School did not provide ample supplementary information to clarify performance results and ratings; and</li> <li>• Samples of student work and classroom visits did not necessarily positively reflect the school’s teaching and learning practices.</li> </ul>
<b>X</b>	
<b>Summary Comments on the School Site Visit:</b>	
The Carmen Northwest site visit provided evidence that the school is meeting performance standards. Carmen Northwest’s presentation clearly and effectively communicated information from its application for renewal. The attention to details regarding the school culture, climate, academic rigor, and performance stated by the parents who have trusted other systems to provide educational opportunities and have selected to move to Carmen, was evident from their personal testimonies. The details supporting growth in core academics as measured on benchmarks and classroom based assessments from staff and administration answered questions around equity and access and the level of support from the teacher leaders and community partners.	

The student’s advisory team and “Founders” clearly articulated the respect and rapport they have with their teachers, parents, administrators, and peers. The students were passionate and honest explaining the opportunities to travel abroad and see universities and colleges and job-shadowing within their community was a huge factor in preparing them early for college and career. Their testimony sent a clear message that the preparation models Carmen implements has helped develop their abilities to self-assess and become life-long, self-directed learners. Although students indicated that the school work is very challenging, they felt confident knowing that Carmen was preparing them for the real world and providing excellent resources including: advisory, community services, college boot camp, and work with transition coaches.

Over the next five years, Carmen staff and administrators will continue to provide opportunities that infuse additional technology courses to enhance the learning. Samples of student work and classroom visits in both middle and high school reflect strongly and positively the school’s teaching and learning practices.

Carmen’s leadership team did an excellent job of describing the program at Northwest, identifying obstacles they have endured over the last few years, and providing plans for how they want to continue to grow and develop the program in the future. Cohort data from the middle grades into ninth grade support the notion that they are increasing academic achievement with their students over time. While some perceived differences at the Northwest campus were noted by the review team, it is evident that they are striving to achieve consistent practices across all three campuses, with a particular focus on Northwest due to a larger student and staff population. Overall, the initial returns on the investment in Carmen Northwest are positive and more time is needed to determine how successful the school can become.

There is a high degree of respect and rapport between both teacher-student and student-student. Classrooms and hallways displayed work that showed evidence of critical thinking as demonstrated by student choice, differentiation, and collaborative group work. Visitors were greeted by the class ambassador in each classroom who explained what they were learning for the day.

**Renewal Recommendation by MPS Charter School Contract Review Team**

The renewal recommendation for <b>Carmen Middle/High School of Science and Technology</b> is:		
<b>Full-term Renewal Term of Five Years</b>	<b>Short-term Renewal Term of Three Years</b>	<b>Non-Renewal/ Revocation</b>
X		

**Renewal Recommendation Rationale:**

The mission of Carmen is to graduate all students as critical thinkers and self-directed learners who are prepared for success in college, meaningful careers, community involvement, and family life. Carmen offers a rigorous academic program that prepares students for college and career. Students are taught Alverno’s 8 Abilities of communication, analysis, problem-solving, valuing decision making, social interaction, developing global perspective, effective citizenship, and aesthetic engagement. Carmen educates the whole child through high expectations and the 8 Abilities that are integrated into the curriculum. Carmen Northwest was established in 2013 with grades six and nine. Each year they have added a grade, respectively, and will graduate their first class in spring. In this short time, they have maintained an attendance rate of 95.4% and have obtained the educational goals as outlined in their contract.

In the four years since Carmen Northwest has been founded, they are having impact on the young people in grades six through twelve as demonstrated by the growth in academic performance. The school focuses on

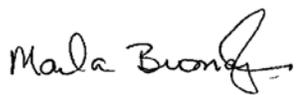
educating the whole child through character building and academics. The high expectations Carmen has for young people has had impact on the students.

Students indicated that Carmen Northwest was amazing, challenging, preparing, worth-it, and rigorous. These accolades from students were common throughout all Carmen campuses. Students clearly articulated how Carmen has benefited them and their growth. Students appreciated the relationships with their teachers and the ability to grow from the feedback they receive from their teachers. The internship and community service opportunities have been especially valuable to the students.

Carmen is having an impact on our young people in Milwaukee and have successfully replicated a program that was founded on the south side of the city on the north side. The school is reflective in their practices and have acknowledged some of the struggles they've encountered in the replication on the north side. They are using data and parent and student voice to help develop a strong program at Carmen Northwest. The MPS Charter School Review Team recommended five years based on the solid academic performance in obtaining the educational goals. The school has demonstrated a sound financial and organizational performance and have a long-term plan to maintain the viability of the program.

**MPS Charter School Review Team Members:**

<b>Name of Team Member</b>	<b>Affiliation of Team Member</b>
Buck, Nuntiata	MPS Curriculum Specialist
Campbell, Gene	MPS Specialized Services
Feaster, Lauren	Community Member
Harris, Wendell	Board Director
Hill, Dorneesha	Community Member
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Kawala, Jill	Office of Board Governance
Latterman, Robert	MPS Assessment
Mahan, Gayle	MPS RtI and PBIS
Muriuki, Andrew	MPS Research
Schock, Bridget	MPS Contracted School Services
Woodward, Annie	Board Director



**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** December 6, 2016

Marla Bronaugh, Director Office of Contracted School Services