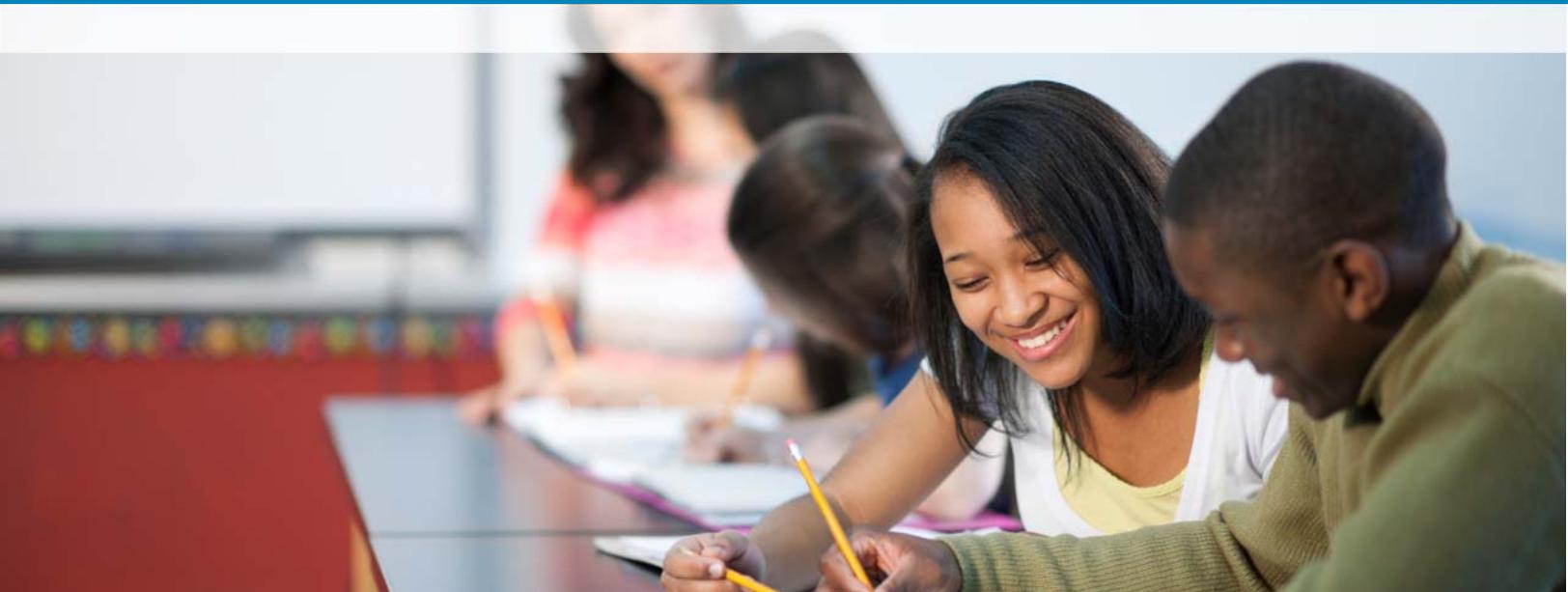


# 2015–2016 Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

Report Date: October 2016



Escuela Verde

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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**  
**2015–16**

This is the fourth 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 SUMMARY<sup>1</sup>**

Escuela Verde has met all but one of the educational provisions in its contract with the City of Milwaukee and the subsequent requirements of the CSRC. One provision was partially met: 20 (83.3%) of 24 eleventh- and twelfth-grade students completed the ACT this year; the requirement is all students.

**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 (IEP) 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 92 students enrolled for the entire year who completed the fall and spring STAR reading tests; 47.8% of those students showed progress from fall to spring. The school’s goal was 60%.
- A total of 92 students who were enrolled for the entire school year completed the fall and spring STAR math tests; 41.3% of those students showed progress from fall to spring. The school’s goal was 60%.
- A total of 95 middle and high school students who were enrolled for the entire school year had spring writing samples assessed. Most (93.7%) students scored a 21 or higher; the school’s goal was 90%.

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

## 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**

EV administered all required standardized tests noted in its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

- Year-to-year progress for seventh- to eighth-grade students: Data regarding year-to-year academic achievement on the DPI standardized tests for seventh- and eighth-grade students are not available this year because this was the first year that schools administered the Wisconsin Forward Exam.
- 2015 Aspire to 2016 Aspire:
  - » There were too few students at or above the benchmark on any subtest or the composite score in 2015 to report results this year.
  - » Between 46.2% and 66.7% of students below benchmark progressed on Aspire subtests and on the composite score between 2015 and 2016.
- Aspire to ACT: Progress from Aspire to ACT, as defined by the CSRC expectations set for progress from PLAN to ACT, cannot be validly measured at this time. Therefore, progress from tenth to eleventh grade was not measured this year.

### **C. CSRC School Scorecard**

The school scored 77.7% on its 2015–16 high school scorecard. Due to the small number of students enrolled in seventh and eighth grade, a middle school scorecard and an overall weighted score could not be calculated this year.

### III. SURVEY/INTERVIEW RESULTS

Every other year, CRC conducts interviews or surveys with parents, board members, and teachers to obtain feedback on their perceptions about the school. Some key results include the following.

- Of 100 Escuela Verde families, 54 (54.0%) responded to the survey. Of these:
  - » Most (94.6%) parents would recommend this school to other parents.
  - » Nearly all (96.5%) parents rated the school’s overall contribution to their child’s learning as excellent or good.
- Thirteen board members participated in interviews.
  - » All 13 members rated the school as excellent or good overall.
  - » Themes that emerged when board members were asked what they like most about the school included its environmental focus, project-based learning model, dedicated advisors and administrators, class size, school atmosphere, and community ties.
- A total of 10 advisors and other staff participated in interviews. Of these:
  - » Eight (80.0%) listed the school’s progress toward becoming a high-performing school as excellent or good and two (20.0%) rated the school’s progress as fair.
  - » Eight (80.0%) rated the students’ academic progress as excellent or good.
- The 12 eleventh- and twelfth-grade students in attendance the day of the survey participated.
  - » Most (91.7%) students indicated that they had improved in English/writing and all students said they had improved in math at the school.
  - » Eleven of the 12 students said that adults in their school help them understand what they need to do to succeed.
  - » Half of the students plan to enroll in a postsecondary institution after graduation.

### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The following recommendations were jointly identified by the school leadership and CRC. To continue a focused school improvement plan, it is recommended that the following activities be undertaken for the 2016–17 school year.

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

## **V. RECOMMENDATION FOR ONGOING MONITORING**

This is Escuela Verde's fourth year as a City of Milwaukee charter school. The school met all but one provision in its contract with the City of Milwaukee, and that one provision was partially met. The high school obtained a score of 77.7% on its CSRC scorecard, which compares to 75.9% for the 2014–15 school year.<sup>2</sup> Due to the small number of students in the middle school this year, neither a middle school nor an overall weighted scorecard score was created.

Due to the school's status as a fourth-year school, its contract compliance status, and its scorecard rating, CRC recommends that the school continue regular, annual monitoring and reporting. Further, CRC recommends that Escuela Verde and its umbrella organization, TransCenter for Youth, Inc., be granted a new contract for an additional five years of operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school.

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<sup>2</sup> The high school's scorecard score was 70.3% in 2013–14.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth 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).<sup>3</sup>

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

- An initial site visit was conducted, during which CRC conducted structured interviews with advisors working with students at both the middle and high school levels; reviewed critical documents; and obtained copies of these documents for CRC files.
- CRC staff assisted the school in developing outcome measures for a learning memorandum that contained desired outcomes for students at both the middle and high school levels.
- 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 the chair of the CSRC, attended a meeting of the board of directors of this school to improve communications regarding the roles of the CSRC and CRC, as the educational monitor, as well as the expectations regarding board member involvement.
- At the end of the school year, CRC conducted structured interviews with the middle and high school leadership teams.
- CRC staff conducted interviews with all advisors and other Escuela Verde staff,<sup>4</sup> as well as all members of the school's board of directors who responded to a request for an interview.
- CRC conducted a survey of parents of all eleventh- and twelfth-grade students in the building on the day the survey was administered.
- The school provided electronic data to CRC, which CRC compiled and analyzed.

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<sup>3</sup> CRC is a nonprofit social science research organization and a center of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD).

<sup>4</sup> Since Escuela Verde had only five advisors, CRC interviewed other staff at the school to increase the number of individuals providing the CSRC with feedback on their perceptions of the school. The interviewees were advisor assistants, a community outreach, a facility sustainability coordinator, etc.

## II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

Escuela Verde  
3628 W. Pierce St.<sup>5</sup>  
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

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. 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.”<sup>6</sup> This is Escuela Verde’s fourth year as a school chartered by the City of Milwaukee.

### **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, which includes:

- Graduating high school students prepared to live happy, healthy, meaningful lives;

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<sup>5</sup> Escuela Verde moved into this new building in the Layton Boulevard West neighborhood prior to the start of the 2015–16 school year. This rehabilitated site enabled them to serve more students.

<sup>6</sup> This quote and the material that follows were taken from *Escuela Verde: Growing Our Home in the Heart of the City*, a 2014 publication of TransCenter for Youth.

- Collaborating with the community to create a strong sense of place and skills to flourish without harm;
- Providing staff who model the vision and embrace education as liberation;
- Engaging urban youth by adhering to an ecopedagogical praxis;
- Developing biliteracy and honoring linguistic and cultural identities by engaging in translanguaging practices; and
- Offering immersion opportunities for those interested in transformative education.<sup>7</sup>

The school believes “that empowering students to create a better world around them will lead to overall improved health and wellness of person, community, and natural environment. Because of that belief, we embrace the Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education’s Standards for Sustainability, and we view these standards as complementary to the Common Core State Standards for academic education. All students will be asked to incorporate these standards into every project they complete.

The Standards of Sustainability are:

- Multiple Perspectives: Cultural Preservation and Transformation
- Responsible Local and Global Citizenship
- Systems Thinking
- Empathy, Gratitude, and Hope
- Natural Laws and Ecological Principles
- Inventing and Affecting the Future: Locus of Control and Consequential Thinking
- Social Justice and Fair Distribution
- Sense of Place and Healthy Commons<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The school’s vision and mission statements were taken from updated school brochures and its website.

<sup>8</sup> This information was taken from Escuela Verde’s *Student Handbook* for 2015–16. The same information can be found on the school’s website, [www.escuelaverde.org](http://www.escuelaverde.org).

## 2. Instructional Design

Escuela Verde's learning practices are grounded in the EdVisions project-based learning model.<sup>9</sup> EdVisions schools are expected to incorporate four "design essentials" into their operations.

- Small learning communities
- Self-directed, project-based learning
- Authentic assessment
- Teacher ownership/democratic governance

At Escuela Verde, students engage in rigorous research in order to answer a complex question, problem, or challenge. With the guidance of an advisor, students self-select the state-approved educational standards they will address with each of their projects. Through many one-on-one consultations with their advisors, students assess and reassess their learning until they are satisfied with their projects. At the end of each completed project, students make presentations describing the steps undertaken to complete the project, the skills acquired during the process, and the value of the product to the student and the overall community. This presentation is made to the original team that approved the project proposal. This team, in collaboration with the presenting student, renders the final assessment of the project and determines how many and what category of credit hours (rather than grades) will be awarded for this project. The team's decision is based on time spent, skills/competencies acquired, and the quality of the product.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Additional details about the EdVisions model can be obtained on their website, [www.edvisions.com](http://www.edvisions.com).

<sup>10</sup> This description is taken from the Escuela Verde *Student Handbook* for the 2015–16 school year.

## **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. For 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, and nine others serving as members of the community at large. Board members represented a variety of organizations and professions, including several local businesses that contributed their expertise in administrative and fiscal management; there was also a parent representative. TransCenter board member experience included educational curriculum and instruction, nonprofit leadership and management, law, technology, insurance, and marketing.

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

Twelve of the 13 board members interviewed reported that they participated in strategic planning. Twelve board members attended a presentation on the school's annual academic performance, all 13 received and approved the school's annual budget, and 12 reviewed a copy of the annual financial audit. When asked what they like most about the school, board members cited things such as the environmental focus, project-based learning model, dedicated and experienced advisors

and administrators, class size, the school atmosphere, and community ties. The most commonly noted dislikes were financial challenges, lack of understanding regarding the model, using standardized tests to measure student success, and lack of advisor diversity. The main suggestions for improving the school were to increase financial support, increase community collaboration, revise management structure, and have someone on staff to help students with non-school-related issues. See Appendix H for additional results from interviews with board members.

## 2. Areas of Instruction

Escuela Verde is a student-driven, project-based, democratically run school for students in grades seven through twelve. The school operates in an open-concept space to encourage a sense of community, belongingness, and collaboration. Because of a strong commitment to the use of technology in learning, Escuela Verde allows students to work on their own iPads in the space most comfortable to them throughout the school building. Students work under the guidance of an advisor, with a student-advisor ratio of no more than 16:1.

Projects at Escuela Verde take a variety of forms, but every project has many common components. A project generally lasts four to six weeks, and students are expected to document approximately 100 hours of work time for project credit. Students began each project by completing a project proposal form on Project Foundry, the school's online project management system.<sup>11</sup> Each proposal was presented to a three-person team, consisting of two advisors and one other student. As part of the proposal, students created a project checklist, which outlined all of the phases that were part of completing a specific 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

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<sup>11</sup> Project Foundry is an online project-based learning management system. For more information about Project Foundry, visit [www.projectfoundry.org](http://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 that was spent on a project and the number of skills acquired. A specific rubric was also selected to assist with this evaluation process.<sup>12</sup>

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 middle school credit hours per year. The accumulation of 1,000 credit hours enables students to graduate into the high school program. The credit hours needed to graduate from eighth grade include:

- English: 200 credit hours
- Mathematics: 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:

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

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<sup>12</sup> Information for this section was extracted from the 2015–16 student handbook.

High school students are required to acquire credits as follows:

- English/language arts: 4 credits
- Mathematics: 3 credits
- Social studies: 3 credits
- Science: 3 credits
- Senior/junior projects: 3.5 credits
- Postsecondary preparation: 2 credits
- World languages: 2 credits
- Physical education: 1.5 credits
- Community service: 0.5 credits
- Fine arts: 1 credit
- Health and wellness: 0.5 credits

During the interview and survey process, board members and staff were asked about the school's program of instruction. All 13 board members agreed or strongly agreed that the program of instruction is consistent with the school's mission, and 90.0% of staff members rated the program of instruction as excellent or good.

### 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.<sup>13</sup>

The Escuela Verde teaching team was composed of five advisors at the beginning of the 2015–16 school year.<sup>14</sup> The teaching team was assisted by a part-time administrator/advisor.<sup>15</sup> These full-time teaching staff had expertise in English, math, science, social studies, and special education. All five advisors who started the 2015–16 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 2014–15 school year. One advisor was not eligible to return, but the four other advisors returned to the school in 2015–16; Escuela Verde therefore also had a 100.0% advisor return rate.<sup>16</sup>

The advisors contracted with the Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) for technical assistance in meeting special education students' needs. There were other staff and interns employed at Escuela Verde who acted as assistants and had expertise in social media, math, psychology, and community outreach. They also received support from a building maintenance worker and TransCenter administrative staff.

During the interview process, staff were asked about the advisor assessment process. Nearly three quarters (70.0%) agreed or strongly agreed that the school has a clear advisor assessment process, and 80.0% were satisfied with the advisor assessment criteria. Half (50.0%) of the staff members agreed or strongly agreed that student academic performance is an important part of advisor assessment. See Appendix E for additional information from interviews with staff.

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<sup>13</sup> This information was taken from the Escuela Verde website.

<sup>14</sup> All advisors held a DPI license.

<sup>15</sup> It should be noted that this person was a full-time advisor for two years and retired at the end of the 2014–15 school year, but continued as an honorary advisor.

<sup>16</sup> Several of these advisors were working on advanced degrees, either a master's degree or a doctorate in the field. One of the advisors moved out of town to be with his wife and was not eligible to return for the 2015–16 school year.

#### 4. Hours of Instruction/School Calendar

The first day of school for all Escuela Verde students was August 3, 2015, and the school year ended on June 30, 2016. The school operates on a 39-week school year, composed of four quarters ranging from seven to 12 weeks. Most of the projects undertaken by students are planned to be completed within a quarter. At the end of the 2014–15 academic school year, Escuela Verde provided CRC with its school calendar for the upcoming year, indicating the 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 35-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 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 PE/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 morning, 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),<sup>17</sup> 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. Additional opportunities for involvement included attendance at conferences, presentation nights, and community nights. At the very minimum, *all* parents/guardians must attend:

- 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 their child's advisor.
- Four meetings of Families Engaged in Education (FEE)
- One presentation night
- One community night

Depending upon their talents, availability, and schedules, parents could choose to participate in one or more of the following ways:

- Participate in student-parent-advisor consultations for planning and evaluation
- Learn the project process along with the student in order to support and assist him/her
- Provide input/feedback to advisors
- Share with people in the community the goals and philosophy of Escuela Verde
- Participate in carpools to and from school events and learning experiences
- Chaperone student events

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<sup>17</sup> 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.

- Offer themselves to Escuela Verde students as resources in their areas of expertise
- Share knowledge of community resources with students and advisors
- Provide onsite assistance to students and advisors
- Provide administrative assistance from school or home (e.g., mailings, phone calls, promotions)
- Organize community events
- Be active on an Escuela Verde committee
- Support the students' interests and efforts<sup>18</sup>

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

Staff were asked about parental involvement. Six (60.0%) of 10 staff members rated parental involvement as good; four rated it as fair.

## 6. Waiting List

During the 2015–16 school year, Escuela Verde had an extensive waiting list of students seeking admission. As the school year ended, staff contacted students to ascertain their continued interest in enrolling in Escuela Verde for the 2016–17 school year; some students were still interested and shadowed existing students for a day before deciding to enroll for the next school year.

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<sup>18</sup> The expectations and opportunities for parental involvement described here are taken from the student handbook for the 2015–16 school year.

## 7. Discipline Policy

Escuela Verde's discipline policy is driven by a restorative justice mindset. Restorative justice is a process to involve 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 put right the wrongs.<sup>19</sup>

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 the handbook indicates that such behavior is potential 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 eligibility for disciplinary action of suspension or expulsion. Suspension is used only for severe cases, and is handled on a student-by-

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<sup>19</sup> This material is adapted from the student handbook and Zehr, H. (2002). *The little book of restorative justice*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

student basis. Parents were notified of any suspension. As a last resort, expulsions are used; per policy, expulsion occurs immediately for:

- 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

This year, staff, parents, and students were asked about the discipline policy (rules) at Escuela Verde.

- *Staff:*
  - » All (100.0%) staff members considered the discipline at the school as a very important or somewhat important reason for continuing to teach there.
  - » Most (90.0%) staff members rated the school's adherence to its discipline policy as excellent or good; one rated it as fair.
- *Parents:* More than three quarters (78.6%) of parents are comfortable with how the staff handle discipline.
- *Students:* Just over half (58.3%) of the students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that the school rules are enforced fairly.

## 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 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 to the graduation-planning activities carried out by each individual student and his/her parents, advisors took students on six 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 assist them in the preparation of 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.

Nine (90.0%) graduating students were accepted into a postsecondary institution. Five students were enrolled in the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), one in UW–Stevens Point, one in UW-Milwaukee, one in a nursing school in California, and one was accepted to and deciding between MATC and Alverno.

### **C. Student Population**

Escuela Verde started the school year on August 3, 2015. As of September 18, 2015, 113 students were enrolled in seventh through twelfth grades.<sup>20</sup> During the year, seven students enrolled in the school and 20 students withdrew.<sup>21</sup> Students withdrew for a variety of reasons: 12 students transferred to other schools, six were withdrawn due to nonattendance, and two moved out of state.

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<sup>20</sup> There were 11 students in middle school (seventh and eighth grades) and 102 students in high school (ninth through twelfth grades).

<sup>21</sup> No students enrolled and three withdrew from middle school; seven enrolled and 17 withdrew from high school.

At the end of the year, there were 100 students enrolled. As of the end of the 2015–16 school year, demographics of the Escuela Verde student body were as follows:

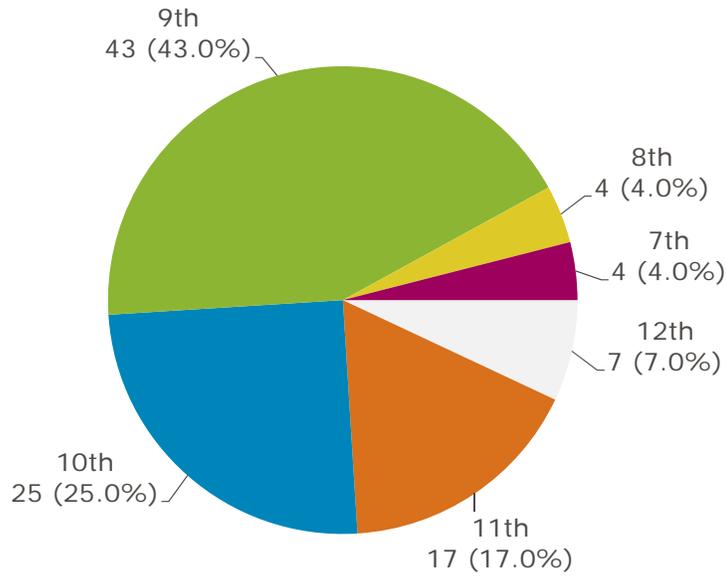
- There were eight students in seventh and eighth grades and 92 students in high school (ninth through twelfth grades); refer to Figure 1.<sup>22</sup>
- There were 44 girls (representing 44.0% of the student body) and 56 (56.0%) boys.
- There were 81 Latino students (representing 81.0% of the student body), nine (9.0%) African American students, seven (7.0%) White students, two (2.0%) Native American students, and one (1.0%) Asian student.
- There were 23 students with special education needs. Ten of those students had other health impairments (OHI), eight had specific learning disabilities (SLD), one had an emotional behavioral disability (EBD), one had EBD with OHI, one had EBD with a traumatic brain injury, one had OHI and autism, and one had OHI with vision impairment.
- There were 79 (79.0%) students eligible for free/reduced lunch.

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<sup>22</sup> 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\* 2015–16



N = 100

\*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 113 students enrolled on the third Friday of September, 97 were still enrolled at the end of the year.<sup>23</sup> This represents a retention rate of 85.8%. Of the 102 high school students who were enrolled on the third Friday of September, 89 (87.3%) remained enrolled for the year. Of the 11 middle school students enrolled at the beginning of the school year, eight (72.7%) were still enrolled at the end.

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<sup>23</sup> Students who withdraw during the school year are not always the same students who were there at the beginning of the year. Therefore, the school year retention rate cannot be calculated by subtracting the number of students who withdrew from the number of students who were enrolled at the beginning.

A total of 49 students who were enrolled at the end of the 2014–15 school year were eligible to return to the school in 2015–16, i.e., they did not graduate from the high school. Forty-four of those students were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2015, representing a return rate of 89.8%.<sup>24</sup>

A total of 12 eleventh and twelfth graders who were in attendance the day of the survey participated. Almost all (91.7%) said that they improved in English/reading and writing and all (100.0%) said they had improved in math. Most (91.7%) of the students surveyed reported that they felt safe in school. Three quarters (75.0%) strongly agreed or agreed that advisors at the school respect students, and 75.0% agreed or strongly agreed that advisors at the school respect students' different points of view. Over four fifths (83.3%) said that they liked being in school. When asked what they liked best about the school, students most frequently mentioned the atmosphere, the freedom and independence they have, and the support and help provided by staff. When asked what they liked least, some students said the attitudes of some students and the need for more specialized attention for some students. See Appendix G for additional information from student interviews.

#### **D. Activities for Continuous School Improvement**

During the year, Escuela Verde responded to all of the recommendations in the 2014–15 programmatic profile and educational performance report. Below is a description of each recommendation and Escuela Verde's corresponding response.

- **Recommendation:** Increase the rigor in students' projects and place a greater emphasis on interdependent learning.  
**Response:** Staff revised the PLP format and the rubric used for approving and evaluating student projects. Orientation and training sessions were held and considerable attention was given to the importance of project work being concise and intentional. The evaluation of projects was also strengthened by requiring each project's final product to represent clear and required learning outcomes.

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<sup>24</sup> Of the 42 students enrolled in ninth through eleventh grades at the end of 2014–15, 37 (88.1%) returned in 2015–16.

- Recommendation: Continue to focus on practices that will contribute to the students' enhanced achievement of competencies in reading and math.

Response: More structure was used to focus group activities related to reading, and advisers promoted higher-level reading materials and books. Students also participated in literature circles to encourage comprehensive discussion of themes and other facets of a particular book.

- Recommendation: Revisit restorative justice practices and revitalize the consistency of staff's actions in this area.

Response: All staff participated in a second orientation and professional development session on restorative justice and practices related to a consistent implementation of the model. As part of this process, specific procedures were documented and staff committed to utilizing these steps throughout the school year. Other sessions on issues related to problems that arose with consistent implementation of restorative justice were held during the school year. These sessions were used to problem-solve and make procedural revisions as required.

- Recommendation: Assist staff in more effectively managing their time and prioritizing strategies that will maximize their academic growth and advising expertise.

Response: Teams were created to support advisers in more effectively managing their time and responsibilities. Efforts were made to relieve staff of administrative responsibilities and to use partnerships to ease potential burdens related to these tasks. All staff were expected to create and implement a professional development plan to increase their teaching and advising skills.

### **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.

This year, local assessment measures included student progress in literacy, mathematics, and writing, as well as individualized education program (IEP) goals for special education students. The

standardized assessment measures used were the ACT Aspire (Aspire), the Wisconsin Forward Exam, and the ACT Plus Writing. Results for measures of academic progress are presented for high school students and for middle school and high school students combined. In order to protect student identity, CRC does not report results for fewer than 10 students; because there were only seven middle school students enrolled at any given time during the school year, middle school results could not be reported separately.

### **A. Attendance**

At the beginning of the 2015–16 academic year, the school established a goal of maintaining an average attendance rate of 90.0%. A student was considered present if he/she was 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 93.5% of the time.<sup>25</sup> The school has therefore met its internal attendance goal.<sup>26</sup> When excused absences were included, the attendance rate rose to 97.8%.

Note that 20 students were suspended from school at least once during the year. These students spent, on average, 2.2 days out of school due to suspensions.

### **B. Student-Parent-Advisor Conferences**

At the beginning of the school year, the school set a goal of having the 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

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<sup>25</sup> High school students attended, on average, 93.3% of the time; middle school students attended 94.8% of the time.

<sup>26</sup> Attendance data were provided for 119 students enrolled at any point during the school year. Attendance was calculated for each student by dividing the number of days attended by the number of days expected, then averaging all of the students' attendance rates.

formal conference periods, so the school also provided the total number of parent contacts that occurred during the year. Parents of all 97 students who were enrolled all year attended at least one formal conference, and parents of most (99.0%) students attended both conferences. The school therefore exceeded its goal for parent participation.

### **C. Special Education Student Records**

This year, the school established a goal of developing and maintaining records for all special education students. At the end of the year, there were 23 students with special education records. All 23 students had an initial IEP or an IEP review this year.

In addition to examining the special education data provided by the school, CRC conducted a review of 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 at the school. 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 mathematics, science, and social studies; two credits in physical education/health; two credits in

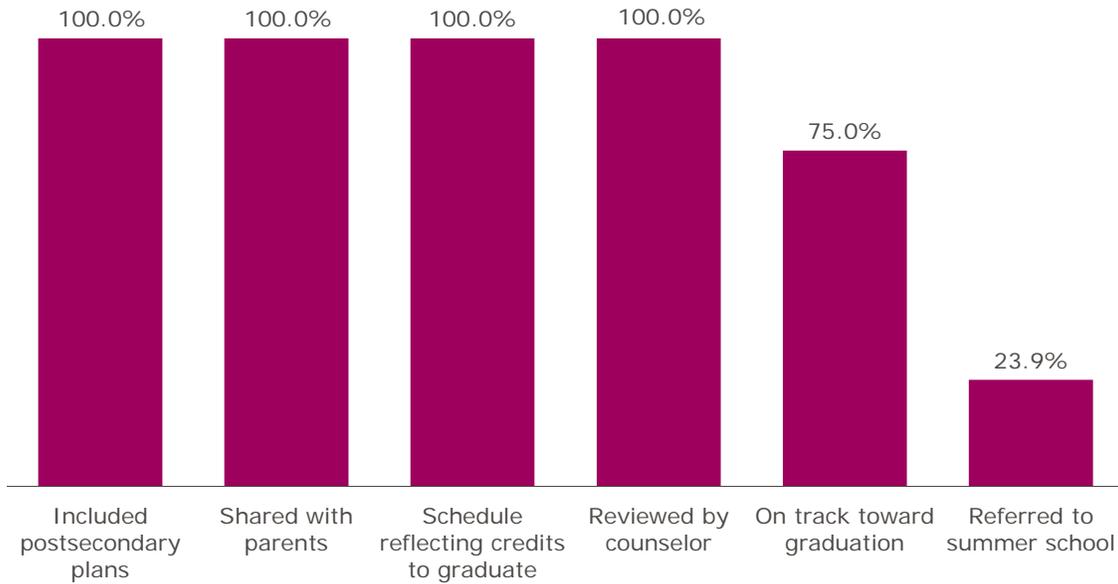
postsecondary preparation; one credit in fine arts; and four credits in a combination of junior/senior projects and community service.<sup>27</sup>

This year, plans were completed for all 92 (100.0%) high school students enrolled at the end of the year. Of these 92 plans, 100.0% included information on the student's postsecondary plans, 100.0% were submitted to parents for review, and 100.0% included a schedule reflecting the number of credits needed to graduate. Counselors were required to review each student's plan at least once during the year. Part of the reason for this review was to ensure that students were on track to graduate, and part was to determine whether a student should be referred for summer school. Counselors reviewed plans for 100.0% of the students. This year, 69 (75.0%) of the 92 students for whom graduation plan information was reported were on track to graduate. Twenty-two (23.9%) students were referred to summer school (Figure 2).

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<sup>27</sup> Evidence of involvement is reflected by whether the school provided each student's parent with a copy of the plan. Parents were also encouraged to review the plan as part of scheduled parent-advisor conferences.

Figure 2  
**Escuela Verde  
 High School Graduation Plans  
 2015–16**



N = 92

2. High School Graduation Requirements

As part of Escuela Verde’s high school graduation requirements, the school set a goal that all ninth graders who earned at least 5.5 credits would be promoted to tenth grade, all tenth graders who accumulated at least 11.0 credits would be promoted to eleventh grade, all eleventh graders who accumulated at least 16.5 credits would be promoted to twelfth grade, and all twelfth graders who had earned 22.0 or more credits would graduate.

Information about credits earned and grade-level promotion was provided for all 92 high school students who finished the school year at Escuela Verde. Seventy-two (78.3%) students were promoted to the next grade or, in the case of some eleventh and twelfth graders, graduated from high school (Table 1).

<b>Table 1</b> <b>Escuela Verde</b> <b>High School Graduation Requirements</b> <b>2015–16</b> <b>(N = 92)</b>					
Grade <sup>28</sup>	n	Minimum Number of Credits Required	Average Credits Earned/ Accumulated	Promoted/Graduated	
				n	%
9th	43	5.5	6.3	31	72.1%
10th	25	11.0	11.8	19	76.0%
11th	17	16.5	19.6	15	88.2%
12th	7	22.0	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size		
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	—	—	<b>72</b>	<b>78.3%</b>

#### 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.

At the beginning of the school year, Escuela Verde designated four areas in which students’ competencies would be measured: literacy, mathematics, writing, and special education goals.

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<sup>28</sup> Grade levels reflect the grade in which each student was classified for most of the school year; four of the eleventh-grade students earned enough credits to graduate by the end of June 2016. Overall, 10 eleventh- and twelfth-grade students graduated at the end of the year.

1. Literacy: STAR Reading<sup>29</sup>

The school set a goal that at least 60% of students who completed both 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 92 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 83 tested at or below grade level. By the time of the spring test, 44 (47.8%) students showed progress (i.e., they maintained their above-grade-level progress or improved by 0.9 GLE or more); refer to Table 2.

The school has therefore not met its internal literacy goal for this school year.

<b>Table 2</b>			
<b>Escuela Verde</b>			
<b>Reading Progress: STAR Reading Assessment</b>			
<b>Fall 2015 to Spring 2016</b>			
<b>(N = 92)</b>			
<b>School</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Students Who Progressed*</b>	
		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Middle School	8	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
High School	84	41	48.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>47.8%</b>

\*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.

<sup>29</sup> All new high school students who enrolled and remained at the school for at least 60 days were tested within 60 days of enrollment.

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 92 students who completed both tests, 44 (47.8%) met the projected spring GLE (data not shown).

2. Mathematics: STAR Math<sup>30</sup>

The school set a goal that at least 60% 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.

There were 92 middle and high school students enrolled for the entire school year who completed the fall and spring STAR math tests; 11 of those students tested above their grade level at the time of the fall test and 81 tested at or below grade level. Thirty-eight (41.3%) of the students who completed both assessments showed progress from fall to spring (i.e., maintained their above-grade-level status or improved by at least 0.9 GLE); refer to Table 3. The school has therefore not met its internal math goal for this school year.

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<sup>30</sup> All new high school students who remained at the school for at least 60 days were tested within 60 days of enrollment.

<b>Table 3</b>			
<b>Escuela Verde</b>			
<b>Reading Progress: STAR Math Assessment</b>			
<b>Fall 2015 to Spring 2016</b>			
<b>(N = 92)</b>			
<b>School</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Students Who Progressed*</b>	
		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
Middle School	8	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
High School	84	36	42.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>41.3%</b>

\*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 92 students enrolled all year who completed both tests, 35 (38.0%) 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. A score of 21 or more indicated the student had at least “developing” writing skills. The school’s goal was that by the end of the final marking period, at least 90% of students who were enrolled for the entire year would have a score of 21 or higher.

Writing scores were available for 95 of the 97 students who were enrolled for the entire school year. Most (93.7%) students received a final writing score of 21 or higher, exceeding the school’s goal (Table 4).

<b>Table 4</b>				
<b>Escuela Verde</b>				
<b>Writing Skills for 7th Through 12th Grades (Based on Advisor Assessment)</b>				
<b>2015–16</b>				
<b>(N = 95)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>Writing Score Average</b>	<b>Met Goal*</b>	
Middle school	8	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size		
High school	87	26.4	81	93.1%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>95</b>	—	<b>89</b>	<b>93.7%</b>

\*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% of special education students would meet one or more goals defined on their IEPs. There were 23 special education students enrolled at the end of the year. Fourteen of those students were either new to Escuela Verde or had an initial IEP completed during the 2015–16 school year; only nine students who were enrolled in special education at Escuela Verde during the previous school year continued with special education services this year. Due to the small number of students in this cohort, IEP goal progress is not included in this report.

**F. External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance**

The CSRC requires that the Wisconsin Forward Exam English/language arts and math assessments be administered to all seventh- and eighth-grade students, the Wisconsin Forward Exam science assessment to eighth-grade students, and the Wisconsin Forward Exam science and social

studies assessments to eighth- and tenth-grade students, in the timeframe established by DPI.<sup>31</sup> Ninth- and tenth-grade students are required to take all subtests of the ACT Aspire (Aspire) in the spring of the school year; eleventh-grade students are required to take the ACT Plus Writing and the ACT WorkKeys in the spring of the school year.<sup>32</sup> The CSRC requires that twelfth-grade students take the ACT or ACT Plus Writing in the fall of the school year (note that this is not a DPI requirement).

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 5.<sup>33</sup>

<b>Table 5</b>			
<b>ACT College Readiness Benchmarks for the Aspire and ACT</b>			
<b>Subtest</b>	<b>9th-Grade Aspire</b>	<b>10th-Grade Aspire</b>	<b>11th-Grade ACT</b>
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. Results presented here reflect student achievement on the Aspire and ACT during the current school year.

<sup>31</sup> Per its contract with the CSRC, the school will administer all tests required by DPI within the timeframe specified by DPI. The timeframe for the Forward Exam was March 28 to May 20, 2016.

<sup>32</sup> The assessment window for the Aspire was April 25 through May 27, 2016. The ACT Plus Writing test date for eleventh-grade students was March 1, 2016; March 15 was the make-up day. The test date for the eleventh grade ACT WorkKeys was March 2, 2016; the make-up date was March 16.

<sup>33</sup> 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](http://www.act.org)).

1. Wisconsin Forward Exam for Seventh, Eighth, and Tenth Graders

In the spring of 2016, the Wisconsin Forward Exam replaced the Badger Exam and the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination as the state's standardized test for English/language arts and math for students in third through eighth grades, science for students in fourth and eighth grades, and social studies for students in fourth, eighth, and tenth grades. The Forward Exam was administered in the spring of the school year. The test is computerized but not adaptive, i.e., the version of the test the student sees does not vary based on his/her responses. The Forward Exam was developed and administered by the Data Recognition Center (DRC), a Minnesota-based company with a local office in Madison, Wisconsin. DRC will also be responsible for reporting results.

The Forward Exam is a summative assessment that provides information about what students know in each content area. Each student receives a score based on his/her performance in each subject being tested. Scores are translated into one of four levels: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic.

In order to protect student identity, CRC does not report results for fewer than 10 students; too few seventh and eighth graders completed the English/language arts and math assessments and too few eighth graders completed the science assessment to include results this year. Twenty-seven eighth- and tenth-grade students completed the social studies assessment; 14.8% of those students were proficient or advanced in social studies at the time of the spring 2016 assessment (data not shown).

2. ACT Aspire for Ninth and Tenth Graders

The Aspire was administered in April and May 2016. Ninth- and tenth-grade students enrolled during those time periods completed the tests, meeting the CSRC expectation that students be tested.

A total of 45 ninth and 23 tenth graders (68 of 70, or 97.1%) who were enrolled in the spring of 2016 completed the Aspire (Table 6).

Table 6				
Escuela Verde				
Aspire for 9th and 10th Graders				
Number of Students at or Above Benchmark on Subtests and Composite Scores				
Spring 2016				
Test Section	9th Grade (N = 45)		10th Grade (N = 23)	
	n	%	n	%
English	13	28.9%	7	30.4%
Math	0	0.0%	1	4.3%
Reading	4	8.9%	3	13.0%
Science	1	2.2%	1	4.3%
Composite*	3	6.7%	2	8.7%

\*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.

### 3. ACT for Eleventh and Twelfth Graders

The final CSRC expectation was that all eleventh and twelfth graders would take the ACT during the year. Eleventh graders were required to take the ACT Plus Writing and the ACT WorkKeys in the spring of the school year. Twelfth graders took the ACT or ACT Plus Writing in the fall of the school year. There were 24 students enrolled in eleventh or twelfth grade at the end of the school year.<sup>34</sup> Twenty (83.3%) of those students completed the ACT at least once during the year (five twelfth graders and 15 eleventh graders). This partially met the CSRC expectation that all eleventh and twelfth graders take the ACT or ACT Plus Writing.

Among eleventh graders, composite ACT scores ranged from 11 to 23, with an average of 14.7 (data not shown). There were too few twelfth graders and too few graduates to include results for those groups this year. The average composite score for all 20 eleventh and twelfth graders combined was 14.5.

<sup>34</sup> Grade level may shift during the year; this count was based on the grade level at which each student was classified for the majority of the school year.

## **G. Multiple-Year Student Progress**

Year-to-year progress is measured by comparing scores on standardized tests from one year to the next. Prior to 2014–15, the WKCE was used to measure year-to-year progress for students in grades seven and eight. Because this is the first year the Forward Exam was administered, the 2015–16 results will be used as baseline data to measure student progress from 2015–16 to 2016–17.

Progress toward college readiness from ninth to tenth grade is assessed using benchmarks from the Aspire.<sup>35</sup> Progress from tenth to eleventh grade is assessed using benchmarks and scale score improvement from the Aspire to the ACT. Due to the change from PLAN to 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 cannot be reported this year.

The CSRC required that multiple-year progress from EXPLORE to PLAN and PLAN to ACT be reported for students who met proficiency-level expectations (i.e., scored at benchmark or above), as well as for those students who did not meet benchmark expectations (i.e., tested below benchmark) in the 2014–15 school year. The expectation was that at least 75.0% of students at or above the 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. Due to the change from EXPLORE and PLAN to the Aspire, these expectations cannot be applied to the year-to-year progress measures for high school students this year. Progress from 2014–15 to 2015–16 on the Aspire will be used as baseline data to set new expectations during subsequent years.

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<sup>35</sup> Prior to 2014–15, schools used the EXPLORE for ninth graders, the PLAN for tenth graders, and the ACT for eleventh and twelfth graders; beginning in 2014–15, ninth and tenth graders began taking the Aspire instead of the EXPLORE or the PLAN. 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

This is the first year that the Forward Exam was administered. Year-to-year results will not be available until the next school year.

2. Progress From the Spring 2015 Aspire to the Spring 2016 Aspire

Students in ninth grade at Escuela Verde during the 2014–15 school year took the Aspire in the spring semester. The same ninth graders, if they were enrolled as tenth graders at Escuela Verde during 2015–16, took the Aspire in the spring of 2016.

Using the minimum benchmark scores for each grade level and subject area (see Table 5) on the Aspire, CRC examined student progress from ninth to tenth grade. There were 15 Escuela Verde students who took the Aspire in the spring of 2015 as ninth graders and in the spring of 2016 as tenth graders. Of those students, at the time of the spring 2015 test, three were at or above the English benchmark; no students were at or above the benchmark in math; two were at or above the benchmark for reading; and no students were at or above the benchmark for science. One student met the CRC-calculated composite score benchmark. The following sections describe progress for students who were at or above the 2015 benchmark for each test, as well as for students who were below the benchmark at the time of the 2015 test.

a. *Students at or Above Benchmark on the Spring 2015 Aspire Subtests*

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 subtests and the composite score, CRC could not include results in this report (Table 7).

<b>Table 7</b>				
<b>Escuela Verde</b>				
<b>Year-to-Year Student Progress on the Aspire</b>				
<b>Spring 2015 to Spring 2016</b>				
<b>(N = 15)</b>				
<b>Subtest</b>	<b>Students at or Above Benchmark on the Spring 2015 Aspire</b>		<b>Students Who Remained at or Above Benchmark on the Spring 2016 Aspire</b>	
	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
English	3	20.0%	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Math	0	0.0%	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Reading	2	13.3%	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Science	0	0.0%	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
Composite*	1	6.7%	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 on the Spring 2015 Aspire Subtests*

Between 46.2% and 66.7% of students progressed on each of the subtests and the composite score (Table 8). 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).

<b>Table 8</b> <b>Escuela Verde</b> <b>Year-to-Year Student Progress on the Aspire</b> <b>Spring 2015 to Spring 2016</b> <b>(N = 15)</b>								
Subtest	Number of Students Below Benchmark in Spring 2015		Number of Students Below Benchmark in Spring 2015 Who Achieved Benchmark in Spring 2016		Number of Students Below Benchmark in Spring 2015 Who Improved By at Least One Point in Spring 2016		Overall Progress of Students Below Benchmark on the Spring 2015 Aspire	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
English	12	80.0%	2	16.7%	5	41.7%	<b>7</b>	<b>58.3%</b>
Math	15	100.0%	0	0.0%	10	66.7%	<b>10</b>	<b>66.7%</b>
Reading	13	86.7%	1	7.7%	5	38.5%	<b>6</b>	<b>46.2%</b>
Science	15	100.0%	0	0.0%	7	46.7%	<b>7</b>	<b>46.7%</b>
Composite*	14	93.3%	0	0.0%	8	57.1%	<b>8</b>	<b>57.1%</b>

\*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 2015 Aspire to the Spring 2016 ACT

Tenth graders at Escuela Verde during the 2014–15 school year took the Aspire in the spring semester. Those same tenth graders who were enrolled as eleventh graders at Escuela Verde during 2015–16 took the ACT during the spring of 2016. 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 scorecard for each school that 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. The scorecard includes multiple measures of student academic progress, such as performance on standardized tests and local measures. It also includes point-in-time academic achievement and engagement elements, such as attendance and student and teacher retention and return. The score provides a summary indicator of school performance. The summary score is then translated into a school status rating.

In 2014, the CSRC approved a new scoring system in order to make the scorecard percentages more meaningful and provide schools with greater opportunities to exhibit improvement. The new scoring system is based on the following scale.

A	93.4% – 100.0%	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 still translated into a school status level as in previous years, with small changes to the status-level cut scores. The previous and newly adopted cut scores are shown in Table 9.

<b>Table 9</b>		
<b>City of Milwaukee</b>		
<b>Educational Performance Rating Scale for Charter Schools</b>		
<b>School Status</b>	<b>Scorecard Total Percentage</b>	
	<b>Previous</b>	<b>Scale Adopted 8/12/14</b>
High Performing/Exemplary	100% – 85%	83.3% – 100.0% (B to A)
Promising/Good	84% – 70%	70.0% – 83.2% (C– to B–)
Problematic/Struggling	69% – 55%	60.0% – 69.9% (D– to D+)
Poor/Failing	54% or less	0.0% – 59.9% (F)

The CSRC uses 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 under its current contract. The CSRC’s expectation is that schools will achieve a rating of 70.0% (promising/good) or better; if a school falls below 70.0%, the CSRC will carefully review the school’s performance and determine whether a probationary plan should be developed.

There were only eight students enrolled in the middle school at the end of the school year. Due to the small number of students, academic and engagement measures for the middle school could not be reported. As a result, a middle school scorecard was not completed this year.

The school scored 77.7% on the high school scorecard. This compares to 75.9% on the school’s 2014–15 high school scorecard. See Appendix D for school scorecard information.

Additionally, for schools that have both students in kindergarten through eighth grade and students in high school, CRC typically 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 is not available.

#### **IV. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This report covers the fourth year of Escuela Verde's operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school. The school has met all but one provision of its contract with the City of Milwaukee and the subsequent CSRC requirements, and that one provision was partially met. The high school scored 77.7% on the 2015–16 CSRC scorecard; there were too few middle school students this year to complete a middle school scorecard. Due to the unavailability of a middle school scorecard, there is no weighted overall score for the 2015–16 school year. Based on the school's status as a fourth-year school, its contract compliance status, and its scorecard rating, CRC recommends that the school continue regular, annual monitoring and reporting. Additionally, CRC recommends that TransCenter for Youth, Inc., be awarded another five-year contract with the City of Milwaukee to operate Escuela Verde as a charter school.

## **Appendix A**

### **Contract Compliance Chart**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Table A</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Escuela Verde</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Overview of Compliance With Education-Related Contract Provisions</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>2015–16</b></p>			
<b>Section of Contract</b>	<b>Education-Related Contract Provision</b>	<b>Report Reference Page(s)</b>	<b>Contract Provision Met or Not Met?</b>
Section I, B	Description of educational program; student population served.	pp. 2–4 and 15–18	Met
Section I, V	The school will provide a copy of the calendar prior to the end of the preceding school year.	p. 10	Met
Section I, C	Educational methods.	pp. 2–4	Met
Section I, D	Administration of required standardized tests.		
	a. 1st – 8th grades	a. pp. 28–30	a. Met
	b. 9th – 12th grades	b. pp. 28–31	b. Partially met <sup>36</sup>
Section I, D	All new high school students tested within 60 days of first day of attendance in reading and math.	pp. 25 and 26	Met
Section I, D	Written annual plan for graduation.	pp. 21–23	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. 24–28	Met
Section I, D	<u>Academic criterion #2</u> : Year-to-year achievement measure for 1st through 12th grades.		
	Progress for middle school students at or above benchmark was not available this year.	N/A	N/A
	a. 9th-grade students at or above benchmark on the EXPLORE: At least 75.0% will maintain benchmark on the PLAN the following spring.	a. N/A	a. N/A <sup>37</sup>
	b. 10th-grade students at or above benchmark on the PLAN: At least 75.0% will maintain benchmark on the ACT.	b. N/A	b. N/A <sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Four (16.7%) of 24 eleventh- and twelfth-grade students did not complete the ACT.

<sup>37</sup> Due to the change from EXPLORE/PLAN to Aspire in 2014–15, progress from the EXPLORE to the PLAN could not be measured this year.

<sup>38</sup> Progress from PLAN to ACT could not be measured this year.

**Table A**  
**Escuela Verde**  
**Overview of Compliance With Education-Related Contract Provisions**  
**2015–16**

Section of Contract	Education-Related Contract Provision	Report Reference Page(s)	Contract Provision Met or Not Met?
Section I, D	<u>Academic criterion #3</u> : Year-to-year achievement measure for 1st through 12th grades.		
	a. Progress for middle school students below grade level or proficiency level was not available this year.	a. N/A	a. N/A
	b. 9th-grade students below benchmark on the EXPLORE: At least 60.0% of students below benchmark on any EXPLORE subtest or the composite score will reach benchmark or gain at least one point on the same subtest or composite score on the PLAN the following spring.	b. N/A	b. N/A <sup>39</sup>
	c. 10th-grade students below benchmark on the Aspire: At least 60.0% of students below benchmark on any PLAN subtest or the composite score will reach benchmark or gain at least one point on the same subtest or composite score on the ACT.	c. N/A	c. N/A <sup>40</sup>
Section I, E	Parental involvement.	pp. 11–12	Met
Section I, F	Instructional staff hold a DPI license or permit to teach.	p. 9	Met
Section I, I	Pupil database information, including information on students with special education needs.	pp. 15–18	Met
Section I, K	Discipline procedures.	pp. 13–14	Met

<sup>39</sup> Due to the change from EXPLORE/PLAN to Aspire in 2014–15, progress from the EXPLORE to the PLAN could not be measured this year.

<sup>40</sup> 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 2015–16 Academic Year  
**Date:** September 11, 2015

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 8, 2016.

### **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 postsecondary 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 Requirements<sup>41</sup>**

- All ninth graders who earn at least 5.5 credits will be promoted to tenth grade.
- All tenth graders who earn at least 11 credits will be promoted to eleventh grade.
- All eleventh graders who earn at least 16.5 credits will be promoted to twelfth grade.
- All twelfth graders who earn at least 22 credits, including the required courses, will graduate.

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<sup>41</sup> 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.

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 fourth tests; measures will be determined by comparing grade equivalent (GE) scores from the end of August and the end of the school year. 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 third test, they remain above grade level in reading.

CRC also will examine whether students meet their projected scale score on the spring assessment based on the scale 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.<sup>42</sup>

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

#### 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 fourth tests; measures will be determined by comparing grade equivalent (GE) scores from the end of August and the end of the school year. 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 third test, they remain above grade level in math.

CRC also will examine whether students meet their projected scale score on the spring assessment based on the scale 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.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> CRC also will report the GE score for all students at the time of their initial assessments.

<sup>43</sup> CRC also will report the GE score for all students at the time of their initial assessment.

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.

## **Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures**

### DPI-Required Assessment for Seventh- and Eighth-Grade Students

A standardized assessment required by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) will be administered to third through eighth graders on an annual basis within the timeframe specified by DPI. This standardized assessment will produce an English/language arts and/or reading score and a math score. Once an assessment has been identified for the 2015–16 school year, the data elements related to this outcome will be added to the Data Requirements section and sent to the school in an updated version of the learning memo.

### DPI-Required Science and Social Studies Assessment for Eighth- and Tenth-Grade Students

All fourth, eighth, and tenth graders are required to complete science and social studies assessments in the timeframe(s) specified by DPI. At the time of this memo, DPI was in the process of selecting science and social studies assessments. Once a final decision is made, a revised learning memo including those updates will be completed.

### ACT Aspire for Ninth- and Tenth-Grade Students

All ninth- and tenth-grade students are required to take all subtests<sup>44</sup> of the ACT Aspire, the pre-ACT test that identifies students not ready for the ACT,<sup>45</sup> 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 2015. 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 DPI-required standardized assessment. Data from 2015–16 will serve as baseline data for subsequent years. If possible, beginning in the 2016–17 school year, CRC also will report year-to-year progress for students who complete the assessment in consecutive school years at the same school. When year-to-year data are available, CSRC will set its expectations for student progress; these expectations will be effective for all subsequent years.
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 2015–16 will be used as baseline data for subsequent years.
3. CRC will examine year-to-year progress for students who complete the ACT Aspire as tenth graders and the ACT Plus Writing the subsequent year as eleventh graders. Benchmark status will be reported for students who are at or above the benchmark for any subtest or the composite score on ACT Aspire. If possible, CRC will also report progress for students who were below benchmark in tenth grade.<sup>46</sup>

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

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<sup>44</sup> English, mathematics, reading, and science; and writing test.

<sup>45</sup> 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.

<sup>46</sup> The former year-to-year measure for students below benchmark requires calculating a difference between the tenth-grade scale score and the eleventh-grade scale score for each subtest and the composite score. Because the ACT Aspire scale scores are three digits and the ACT scale scores are two digits, it is no longer possible to calculate that difference. CRC is working to determine whether other valid ways to examine progress for students who are below benchmark exist.

## **Appendix C**

### **Trend Information**

<b>Table C1</b>					
<b>Escuela Verde Enrollment</b>					
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number Enrolled at Start of School Year</b>	<b>Number Enrolled During School Year</b>	<b>Number Withdrawn</b>	<b>Number at End of School Year</b>	<b>Number/Percentage Enrolled for Entire School Year</b>
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%)

<b>Table C2</b>	
<b>Escuela Verde Student Return Rates</b>	
<b>Year</b>	<b>Rate</b>
2013-14	73.9%
2014-15	83.0%
2015-16	89.8%

Figure C1

### Escuela Verde Student Attendance Rates

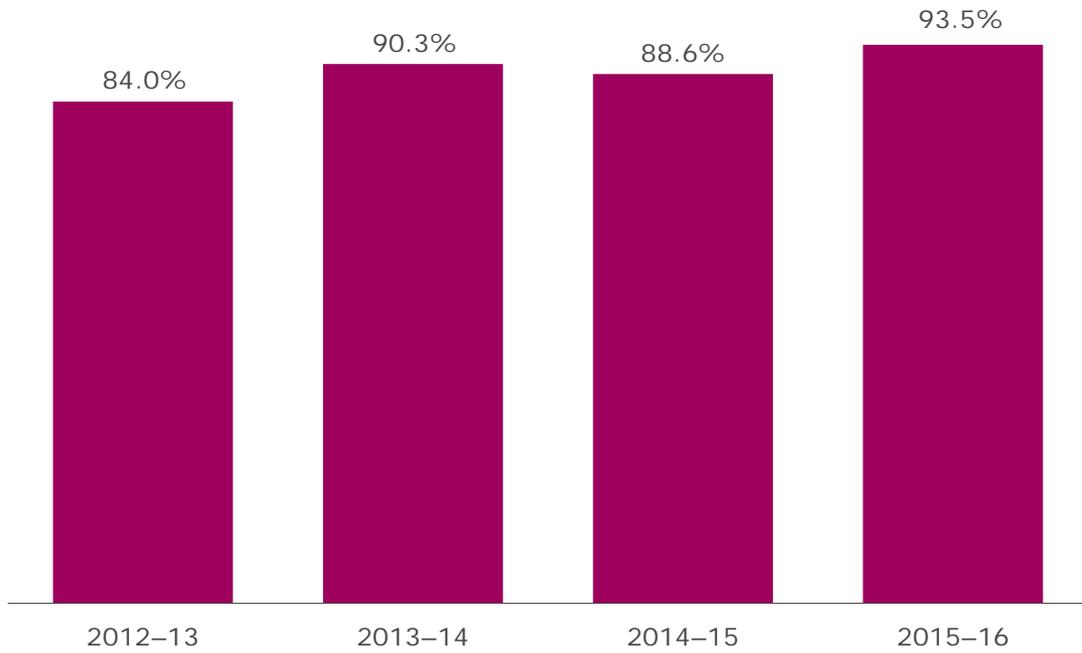
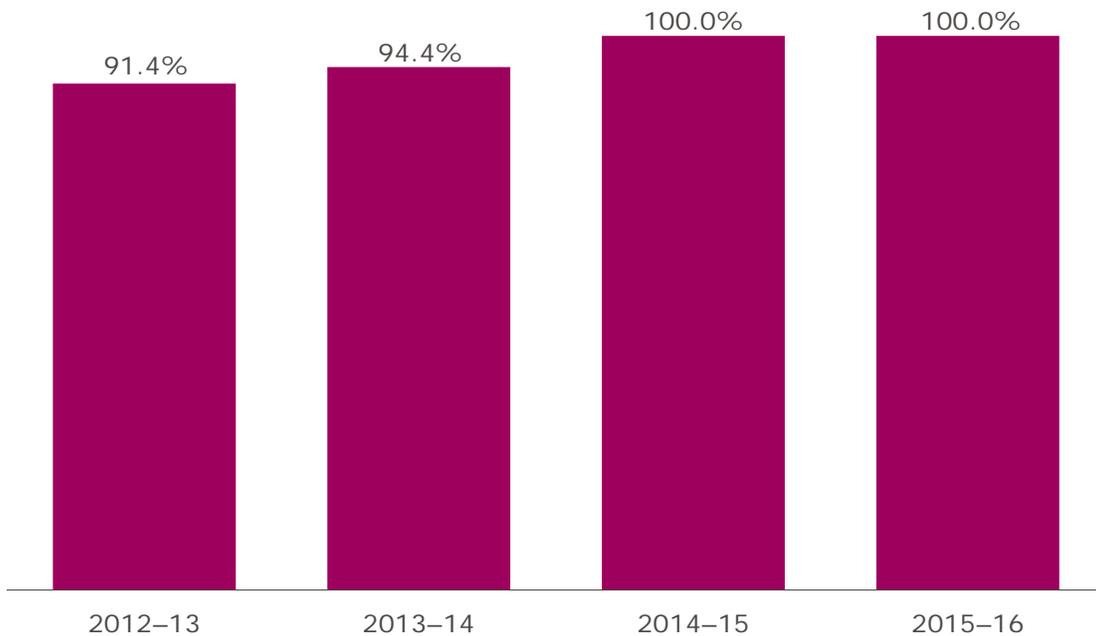


Figure C2

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



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

<b>Table C3</b>					
<b>Escuela Verde Advisor Retention Rate</b>					
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number at Beginning of School Year</b>	<b>Number Who Started After School Year Began</b>	<b>Number Who Terminated Employment During the Year</b>	<b>Number at End of School Year</b>	<b>Advisor Retention Rate: Percentage Employed at School for Entire School Year</b>
2012-13	5	0	0	5	100.0%
2013-14	5	0	0	5	100.0%
2014-15	5	0	0	5	100.0%
2015-16	5	0	0	5	100.0%

<b>Table C4</b>			
<b>Escuela Verde Advisor Return Rate*</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Number at End of Prior School Year</b>	<b>Number Who Returned at Beginning of Current School Year</b>	<b>Advisor Return Rate</b>
2013-14	4	4	100.0%
2014-15	6	5	83.3%
2015-16	4	4	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.

<b>Table C5</b>			
<b>Escuela Verde CSRC Scorecard Score</b>			
<b>School Year</b>	<b>Middle School</b>	<b>High School</b>	<b>Weighted Overall</b>
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*

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

## **Appendix D**

### **CSRC 2015–16 School Scorecard**

**City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee  
School Scorecard**

r: 4/11

**K5-8TH GRADE**

<b>STUDENT READING READINESS: GRADES 1-2</b>		
• PALS—% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	(5.0)	<b>10.0%</b>
• PALS—% 2nd graders who maintained spring summed score benchmark two consecutive years	(5.0)	
<b>STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 3-8</b>		
• WKCE reading—% maintained proficient and advanced	(7.5)	<b>35.0%</b>
• WKCE math—% maintained proficient and advanced	(7.5)	
• WKCE reading—% below proficient who progressed	(10.0)	
• WKCE math—% below proficient who progressed	(10.0)	
<b>LOCAL MEASURES</b>		
• % met reading	(3.75)	<b>15.0%</b>
• % met math	(3.75)	
• % met writing	(3.75)	
• % met special education	(3.75)	
<b>STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADES 3-8</b>		
• WKCE reading—% proficient or advanced	(7.5)	<b>15.0%</b>
• WKCE math—% proficient or advanced	(7.5)	
<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>		
• Student attendance	(5.0)	<b>25.0%</b>
• Student reenrollment	(5.0)	
• Student retention	(5.0)	
• Teacher retention	(5.0)	
• Teacher return*	(5.0)	

**HIGH SCHOOL**

<b>STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 9, 10, AND 12</b>		
• EXPLORE to PLAN—Composite score at or above benchmark on EXPLORE and at or above benchmark on PLAN	(5.0)	<b>30.0%</b>
• EXPLORE to ACT PLAN—Composite score below benchmark on EXPLORE but increased 1 or more on PLAN	(10.0)	
• 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)	
<b>POSTSECONDARY READINESS: GRADES 11 AND 12</b>		
• Postsecondary acceptance for graduates (college, university, technical school, military)	(10.0)	<b>15.0%</b>
• % of 11th/12th graders tested	(2.5)	
• % of graduates with ACT composite score of 21.25 or more	(2.5)	
<b>LOCAL MEASURES</b>		
• % met reading	(3.75)	<b>15.0%</b>
• % met math	(3.75)	
• % met writing	(3.75)	
• % met special education	(3.75)	
<b>STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADE 10</b>		
• WKCE reading—% proficient and advanced	(7.5)	<b>15.0%</b>
• WKCE math—% proficient and advanced	(7.5)	
<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>		
• Student attendance	(5.0)	<b>25.0%</b>
• Student reenrollment	(5.0)	
• Student retention	(5.0)	
• Teacher retention	(5.0)	
• Teacher return*	(5.0)	

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

Note: If a school has fewer than 10 students in any cell on this scorecard, CRC does not report these data. This practice was adopted to protect student identity. Therefore, these cells will be reported as not available (N/A) on the scorecard. The total score will be calculated to reflect each school's denominator.

There were fewer than 10 students enrolled in the middle school at the end of the school year; in order to protect student identity, CRC does not report results for cohorts that contain fewer than 10 students. Therefore, a middle school scorecard was not created this year. Results of the high school scorecard are shown in Table D.

<b>Table D</b> <b>Escuela Verde (9th–12th Grades)</b> <b>Charter School Review Committee Scorecard</b> <b>2015–16 School Year</b>					
Area	Measure	Max. Points	% Total Score	Performance	Points Earned
<b>Student Academic Progress</b>  <b>9th – 10th Grade</b> <b>10th – 11th Grade</b> <b>12th Grade</b>	EXPLORE to PLAN: Composite score at or above benchmark on EXPLORE and at or above benchmark on PLAN	5.0	<b>30.0%</b>	N/A <sup>47</sup>	N/A
	EXPLORE to PLAN: Composite score below benchmark on EXPLORE but increased 1 or more on PLAN	10.0		N/A	N/A
	Adequate credits to move from 9th to 10th grade	5.0		72.1%	3.6
	Adequate credits to move from 10th to 11th grade	5.0		76.0%	3.8
	Graduation rate (DPI) <sup>48</sup>	5.0		52.2%	2.6
<b>Post-Secondary Readiness: 11th and 12th Grades</b>	Postsecondary acceptance for graduates (college, university, technical school, military)	10.0	<b>15.0%</b>	90.0%	9.0
	% of 11th/12th graders tested	2.5		83.3%	2.1
	% of graduates with ACT composite score of 21 or more	2.5		0.0% <sup>49</sup>	0.0
<b>Local Measures</b>	% met reading	3.75	<b>15.0%</b>	48.8%	1.8
	% met math	3.75		42.9%	1.6
	% met writing	3.75		93.1%	3.5
	% met special education	3.75		N/A <sup>50</sup>	N/A

<sup>47</sup> In 2014–15 the ACT Aspire replaced the EXPLORE and the PLAN; therefore, EXPLORE to PLAN results cannot be calculated.

<sup>48</sup> The DPI graduation rate for the current school year is not available until the subsequent fall; therefore, this four-year rate is based on data from 2014–15.

<sup>49</sup> Includes students who were in eleventh grade for a majority of the year but earned enough credits to graduate.

<sup>50</sup> Because there were fewer than 10 students who had been enrolled in special education services at Escuela Verde for at least a full school year, results for this measure cannot be reported this year.

<b>Table D</b>					
<b>Escuela Verde (9th–12th Grades)</b>					
<b>Charter School Review Committee Scorecard</b>					
<b>2015–16 School Year</b>					
<b>Area</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Max. Points</b>	<b>% Total Score</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Points Earned</b>
<b>Student Academic Achievement: 10th Grade</b> <sup>51</sup>	WKCE reading: % proficient and advanced	7.5	<b>15.0%</b>	N/A	N/A
	WKCE math: % proficient and advanced	7.5		N/A	N/A
<b>Engagement</b> *	Student attendance	5.0	<b>25.0%</b>	93.3% <sup>52</sup>	4.7
	Student reenrollment	5.0		88.1%	4.4
	Student retention rate	5.0		87.3%	4.4
	Advisor retention rate	5.0		100.0%	5.0
	Advisor return rate	5.0		100.0%	5.0
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b> <sup>53</sup>		<b>66.25</b>			<b>51.5</b>
<b>HIGH SCHOOL SCORECARD PERCENTAGE</b>					<b>77.7%</b>

\*Teacher retention and return rates reflect all eligible instructional staff (classroom teachers plus other staff).

<sup>51</sup> The WKCE reading and math assessments were discontinued beginning with the 2014–15 school year. Therefore, results are not available.

<sup>52</sup> Escuela Verde’s attendance rate was 97.8% when excused absences were included.

<sup>53</sup> Points for measures that were not available this year were subtracted from the total possible points. This year, the total number of possible points for Escuela Verde High School was 66.25 out of 100. The scorecard percentage was calculated by dividing the number of points earned by the modified denominator.

## **Appendix E**

### **Advisor Interview Results**

In the spring of 2016, CRC interviewed 10 advisors and other staff members regarding their reasons for teaching/working at Escuela Verde and their overall satisfaction with the school. Interviewees included advisors, coordinators, and administrative support staff.

Staff members who were interviewed had been working at Escuela Verde for an average of two years, with a minimum of one year and a maximum of four years.

Four staff members rated the school's overall progress in contributing to students' academic progress as excellent, five rated the school's progress as good, and one staff member did not respond to that question.

Seven of 10 staff members interviewed agreed or strongly agreed that the school has clear advisor performance assessment processes, and eight were satisfied with the performance assessment criteria (Table E1).

<b>Table E1</b>						
<b>Escuela Verde</b>						
<b>Advisor Performance Assessment</b>						
<b>2015–16</b>						
<b>(N = 10)</b>						
<b>Question</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Response</b>
The school has a clear advisor performance assessment process	2	5	3	0	0	0
I am satisfied with my school's advisor performance assessment criteria	3	5	0	2	0	0
Student academic performance is an important part of advisor assessment	2	3	3	1	0	1

All staff members agreed or strongly agreed that adults in the school respect students and their points of view and that staff typically work well with one another (Table E2).

<b>Table E2</b>						
<b>Escuela Verde School Climate 2015–16 (N = 10)</b>						
<b>Question</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Response</b>
Adults who work in this school respect students and their different points of view	9	1	0	0	0	0
Staff at this school typically work well with one another	7	3	0	0	0	0
Staff at this school encourage all families to become involved in school activities	7	2	0	0	0	1

When asked to rate the importance of various reasons for continuing to teach at the school, all advisors rated educational methodology, discipline, general atmosphere, and students as somewhat important or very important reasons for continuing to work at this school (Table E3).

<b>Table E3</b>				
<b>Reasons for Continuing to Teach at Escuela Verde 2015–16 (N = 10)</b>				
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Importance</b>			
	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Unimportant</b>	<b>Not at All Important</b>
Financial considerations	1	4	4	1
Educational methodology/ curriculum approach	9	1	0	0
Age/grade level of students	3	2	3	2
Discipline	6	4	0	0
General atmosphere	10	0	0	0
Class size	6	3	1	0
Administrative leadership	6	3	1	0
Colleagues	8	1	1	0
Students	8	2	0	0

CRC asked advisors to rate the school’s performance related to class size, materials, and equipment; its plan for student assessment; its shared leadership, professional support, and development; and the school’s progress toward becoming a high-performing school. Advisors most often rated class size/student ratio, parent/advisor relationships, and administrative staff performance as excellent or good. Other areas that were frequently rated excellent or good included program of instruction, professional support, adherence to discipline policy, instructional support, and advisor collaboration (Table E4).

<b>Table E4</b>				
<b>Escuela Verde</b>				
<b>School Performance Rating</b>				
<b>2015–16</b>				
<b>(N = 10)</b>				
<b>Area</b>	<b>Rating</b>			
	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Class size/student-advisor ratio	8	2	0	0
Program of instruction	4	5	1	0
Shared leadership, decision making, and accountability	3	4	3	0
Professional support	5	4	1	0
Progress toward becoming a high-performing school	3	5	2	0
Your students’ academic progress	2	6	2	0
Adherence to discipline policy	1	8	1	0
Instructional support	1	8	1	0
Parent/advisor relationships	5	5	0	0
Advisor collaboration to plan learning experiences	6	3	1	0
Parent involvement	0	6	4	0
Your performance as an advisor	1	6	3	0
Administrative staff’s performance	2	8	0	0

When asked to name two things they liked most about the school, advisors noted:

- The school’s mission, vision, and philosophy
- The way staff view and treat students as individuals and are able to respond to individual needs
- The students and learning from students

Things advisors liked least about the school include:

- Funding challenges
- Challenges of being administrators and teachers
- Unclear written guidelines for staff and inconsistencies in the staff evaluation system

Advisors identified the following barriers that could affect their decision to remain at the school:

- Financial considerations/salary
- If freedom of curriculum were restricted

## **Appendix F**

### **Parent Survey Results**

Parent opinions are qualitative in nature and provide a valuable measurement of school performance. To determine parents' levels of satisfaction with the school, parental involvement with the school, and an overall evaluation of the school, each school distributed English and Spanish versions of paper surveys during spring parent-advisor conferences; CRC offered online versions of both the English and Spanish parent survey as well. CRC made at least two follow-up phone calls to parents who had not completed a survey; if these parents were available and willing, CRC completed the survey with them over the telephone. Fifty-six surveys, representing 54 (54.0%) of 100 Escuela Verde families were completed and submitted to CRC.<sup>54</sup>

Most parents either agreed or strongly agreed that they are comfortable talking with staff (98.2%), that they are kept informed about their child's academic performance (98.2%), and are satisfied with the overall performance of staff (94.6%; Table F1).

<b>Table F1</b>												
<b>Escuela Verde</b>												
<b>Parent Satisfaction With School</b>												
<b>2015–16</b>												
<b>(N = 56)</b>												
<b>Factor</b>	<b>Response</b>											
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>		<b>Agree</b>		<b>Neutral</b>		<b>Disagree</b>		<b>Strongly Disagree</b>		<b>No Response</b>	
	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
I am comfortable talking with the staff	36	64.3%	19	33.9%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
The staff keep me informed about my child's academic performance	31	55.4%	24	42.9%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
I am comfortable with how the staff handles discipline	22	39.3%	22	39.3%	10	17.9%	2	3.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
I am satisfied with the overall performance of the staff	30	53.6%	23	41.1%	1	1.8%	2	3.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
The staff recognize my child's strengths and weaknesses	29	51.8%	24	42.9%	3	5.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
I feel welcome at my child's school	38	67.9%	15	26.8%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	2	3.6%
The staff respond to my worries and concerns	35	62.5%	18	32.1%	2	3.6%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
My child and I clearly understand the school's academic expectations	22	39.3%	29	51.8%	5	8.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

<sup>54</sup> In some families, both parents completed a survey; when this occurred, responses from both parents were included.

Table F1													
Escuela Verde													
Parent Satisfaction With School													
2015–16													
(N = 56)													
Factor	Response												
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Response		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
My child is learning what is needed to succeed in later grades or after high school graduation	22	39.3%	26	46.4%	5	8.9%	3	5.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
My child is safe in school	26	46.4%	23	41.1%	5	8.9%	1	1.8%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	
People in this school treat each other with respect	26	46.4%	26	46.4%	3	5.4%	0	0.0%	1	1.8%	0	0.0%	
The school offers a variety of courses and afterschool activities to keep my child interested	24	42.9%	25	44.6%	7	12.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	

Parents of high school students were also asked to rate the school on two measures related to progress toward graduation and school assistance in helping the family understand and plan for life after high school.<sup>55</sup> Most (81.6%) parents rated their child’s progress toward graduation as excellent or good, and even more (85.7%) parents rated the school’s assistance in helping them plan for education after high school as excellent or good (Table F2).

<sup>55</sup> Parents of seventh and eighth graders were also asked additional questions regarding how often they engage in educational activities at home; there were not enough surveys completed by middle school parents to include results this year.

<p align="center"><b>Table F2</b></p> <p align="center"><b>Escuela Verde</b></p> <p align="center"><b>School Ratings by Parents of High School Students</b></p> <p align="center"><b>2015–16</b></p> <p align="center"><b>(N = 49)</b></p>								
Item	Rating							
	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Your child's progress toward graduation	21	42.9%	19	38.8%	8	16.3%	1	2.0%
School assistance in helping me and my child understand and plan for education after high school	23	46.9%	19	38.8%	6	12.2%	1	2.0%

Parental satisfaction was also evident in the following results.

- Most (94.6%) parents would recommend this school to other parents.
- Most (78.6%) parents will send their child to the school next year. Seven (12.5%) parents said they will not send their child to the school next year, and four (7.1%) were not sure. The remaining 1.8% did not respond to the question.
- When asked to rate the school's overall contribution to their child's learning, most (96.5%) parents rated the school's overall contribution to their child's learning as excellent or good.

When asked what they liked most about the school, responses frequently included:

- The advisors and how they respect the students
- Individual attention for students
- Freedom for students to express themselves and learn in their own way
- Inclusiveness and diversity

When asked what they like least about the school, responses included:

- Lack of transportation assistance
- The increasing advisor/student ratio as the school grows
- Advisors doing too much
- Lack of homework

## **Appendix G**

### **Student Survey Results**

At the end of the school year, the 12 eleventh- and twelfth-grade students in attendance on the day the survey was administered responded to several questions about their school.

- Most (91.7%) students said they had improved their English/writing skills, and all students said that their math skills had improved.
- All students agreed or strongly agreed that their advisors expect them to continue their education after high school.
- Half (50.0%) the students surveyed indicated that they planned to attend a postsecondary institution after high school (Table G).

Question	Answer					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
I like my school	7	4	1	0	0	0
My English/writing skills have improved	6	5	1	0	0	0
My math skills have improved	3	9	0	0	0	0
I regularly use computers/tablets in my school work	7	4	1	0	0	0
The school rules are fair/discipline enforced fairly	2	5	4	1	0	0
I like being in school	5	5	2	0	0	0
I feel safe in school	6	5	1	0	0	0
The grades I get on classwork, homework, and report cards are fair	5	5	2	0	0	0
My school has enough classes/afterschool activities	6	4	1	1	0	0
Adults at my school help me understand what I need to do in order to succeed	8	3	1	0	0	0
Adults at my school help me develop goals that challenge me academically	6	4	1	1	0	0
Advisors at my school respect students	6	3	3	0	0	0
Advisors at my school respect students' different points of view	5	4	3	0	0	0
My school has helped me develop a high school graduation plan	4	6	1	0	0	1

<b>Table G</b>						
<b>Escuela Verde Student Survey 2015–16 (N = 12)</b>						
<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>					
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Response</b>
My advisors expect that I will continue my education after high school graduation	6	6	0	0	0	0
I plan to enroll in a postsecondary program after high school	4	2	6	0	0	0

When asked what they liked best about the school, more than one student mentioned:

- The atmosphere
- The freedom and independence
- The support and help provided by staff

When asked what they liked least, many students replied that there was nothing they strongly disliked. A couple of things noted include:

- Some students' attitudes
- The need for specialized attention to some student needs

## **Appendix H**

### **Board Interview Results**

Board member opinions are qualitative in nature and provide valuable, although subjective, insight regarding school performance and organizational competency. Thirteen (100.0%) members of the board of directors participated in interviews this year.

The board members have served on the TransCenter board for an average of 10 years. (Escuela Verde, one of the TransCenter schools, has only been open for four years.) Board members' backgrounds include development, marketing, politics, financial, business, education, juvenile justice, management, and the law.

Nine of 13 board members said they participate in strategic planning for the school. Twelve attended a presentation on the school's annual academic performance, all 13 received and approved the school's annual budget, and 12 reviewed the school's annual financial audit.

All 13 members reported that the board uses data to make decisions regarding the school; and, on a scale of poor to excellent, all 13 board members rated the school as good or excellent overall.

<b>Table H</b>					
<b>Escuela Verde</b>					
<b>Board Member Interview Results</b>					
<b>2015-16</b>					
<b>(N = 13)</b>					
<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Response</b>				
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
Advisor-student ratio/class size at this school is appropriate	8	5	0	0	0
Program of instruction (includes curriculum, equipment, and building) is consistent with the school's mission	10	3	0	0	0
Students make significant academic progress at this school	7	6	0	0	0
The administrator's financial management is transparent and efficient	6	5	2	0	0
This school is making progress toward becoming a high-performing school	9	4	0	0	0
This school has strong linkages to the community, including businesses	9	3	0	1	0
The administrative staff's performance meets the board's expectations	10	3	0	0	0
The majority of the board of directors take their varied responsibilities seriously	10	3	0	0	0
This school has the financial resources to fulfill its mission	1	9	3	0	0
The environment of this school ensures the safety of its students and staff	6	6	1	0	0

When asked what they liked most about the school, board members mentioned the following items:

- Environmental focus
- Project-based learning model
- Dedicated and experienced advisors and administrators
- Class size and student/advisor ratio
- School atmosphere
- Community ties

Regarding things they like least, the board members mentioned:

- Financial challenges and lack of resources
- Project-based learning model is not understood by all
- Measuring student success with the standardized testing model
- Classroom and management structure
- Lack of advisor diversity

When asked for one suggestion for improving the school, board members said:

- Increased financial support
- Have a staff member who can help students with non-school-related issues
- Increased community collaboration
- Revise management structure to be more typical

Additional comments:

- The restorative justice system helps children mature and learn to manage their behaviors.
- The school is engaged in best practices.
- The board is very pleased with how the school has functioned.