



Shantelle Wright
Board Chair

Michelle J. Walker-Davis, Ed.D.
Executive Director

July 22, 2025

Via Electronic Mail

Carla Bailey
Board Chair

LaTonya Henderson
Chief Executive Officer

Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School
701 Howard Road SE
Washington, DC 20020

Re: 25-Year Charter Review of Cedar Tree Public Charter School

Dear Dr. Bailey and Dr. Henderson:

As required by the D.C. School Reform Act, the DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) conducts a high-stakes review of a public charter school at least once every five years to determine whether the school's charter should be continued or revoked.¹ During the 2024 – 25 school year, DC PCSB conducted a review of Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School.

DC PCSB staff prepared a comprehensive review report assessing the school's performance against the standard set by law.² On February 25, 2025, DC PCSB shared a draft of the report and invited feedback. DC PCSB staff reviewed the school's input and, where appropriate, incorporated it into a revised report that formed the basis of a formal staff proposal to the DC PCSB Board recommending charter continuance.

At the public board meeting on March 17, 2025, the DC PCSB Board voted to continue the school's charter for the reasons outlined in the report and proposal. School representatives were present and had the opportunity to speak before the

¹ See DC Code § 38-1802.12(a)(3).

² See DC Code § 38-1802.13(a)-(b).



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Board, and members of the public were also invited to provide comment prior to the vote.

Enclosed, you will find the signed copy of the accompanying staff proposal and the full charter review report, which details the basis for the DC PCSB Board's decision.

Thank you for your continued leadership and service to the students of the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shantelle Wright".

Shantelle Wright
Board Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle J. Walker-Davis".

Michelle J. Walker-Davis, Ed.D.
Executive Director

Cc: School Leaders

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD

Charter Actions Requiring a Vote

- ☐ Approve a Charter Application (15 yrs)
- ☐ Approve a Charter Renewal (15 yrs)
- ☒ Approve Charter Continuance
- ☐ Approve a Charter Amendment Request
- ☐ Give a Charter Notice of Concern
- ☐ Lift the Charter Notice of Concern
- ☐ Commence Charter Revocation Proceedings
- ☐ Revoke a Charter
- ☐ Board Action, Other _____

Non-Voting Board Items

- ☐ Public Hearing Item
- ☐ Discussion Item
- ☐ Read into Record

Policies

- ☐ Open a New Policy or Changes to a Policy for Public Comment
- ☐ Approve a New Policy
- ☐ Approve an Amendment to an Existing Policy

PREPARED BY: Gina Lucchesi, Manager, School Performance Department

SUBJECT: Charter Review: Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School

DATE: March 17, 2025

Recommendation

District of Columbia Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) staff recommends that its Board vote to continue the charter of Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School (Cedar Tree PCS). This recommendation aligns with DC PCSB's Strategic Roadmap Priority of Excellent Schools.¹

Charter Review Findings

DC PCSB staff conducted a 25-year charter review of Cedar Tree PCS, as required by the School Reform Act (SRA).² The review includes an evaluation of the school's 1) progress toward meeting its goals and academic achievement expectations (charter goals); 2) compliance with its charter and applicable federal and local laws; and 3)

¹ DC PCSB is creating the policy and conditions to support a network of public charter schools in Washington, DC, offering families quality, equity, and diverse educational choices. See the Strategic Roadmap here: <https://bit.ly/3EVeKYg>.

² D.C. Code §§ 38-1802 *et seq.*

fiscal management. The charts below summarize DC PCSB staff's findings in these three areas over the review period.

Charter Review Findings	
Review Period	School year (SY) 2019 – 20 through SY 2023 – 24
Charter Goals	Cedar Tree PCS met its charter goals in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24.
Compliance	Cedar Tree PCS did not materially violate the law or its charter.
Finance	Cedar Tree PCS did not display a pattern of fiscal mismanagement and is economically viable.

Cedar Tree PCS adopted the Performance Management Framework (PMF) as its charter goals and committed to meeting the performance standards set by DC PCSB in the Early Childhood PMF (EC PMF).³ However, given DC PCSB's PMF revision efforts and the disruption in schooling and data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic, DC PCSB ceased producing the PMF after SY 2018 – 19 and did not assess goal attainment for school years 2019 – 20, 2020 – 21, or 2021 – 22.⁴ Consequently, for this review period, DC PCSB staff assessed Cedar Tree PCS's charter goals performance using SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24 goal attainment pathways as outlined in DC PCSB's *Charter Goals Policy*.⁵

The *Charter Goals Policy* offers multiple pathways to demonstrate goal attainment, including performance on transitional goals or a nationally normed growth assessment.⁶ Per the policy, a school need only satisfy one pathway in each school year to meet its goals.

Cedar Tree PCS met its charter goals in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24.⁷ In SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24, Cedar Tree PCS fully met the growth pathway (Pathway C) by exceeding publisher growth criteria in both reading and math on its nationally

³ See the *Elect to Adopt the PMF as Charter Goals Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/2PTj7fL>. (This policy has been superseded by the *Charter Goals Policy*, available here: <https://bit.ly/4cpui8I>.)

⁴ Per DC PCSB's *COVID-19 Impact Policy*, DC PCSB ceased collection, aggregation, and publication of academic data for SY 2019 – 20 and SY 2020 – 21 and did not produce the PMF for those years. (See the *COVID-19 Impact Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/3fy5zDo>. This policy has been superseded by the *Charter Goals Policy*.) In September 2021, DC PCSB announced its plan to revise its accountability system. Consequently, DC PCSB did not resume production of the PMF.

⁵ See the *Charter Goals Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/4cpui8I>.

⁶ "Transitional goals" refers to standard measures that DC PCSB historically collected from schools such as English language arts and math proficiency, re-enrollment, and in-seat attendance. In school years 2021 – 22, 2022 – 23, and 2023 – 24, DC PCSB collected transitional goals data from all schools to support evaluation during the COVID-19 recovery period.

⁷ See Section One of the attached report for more detail about Cedar Tree PCS's goal attainment.

normed growth assessment, the Northwest Education Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP).

Separate and apart from the school's goal attainment, results from the Qualitative Site Review (QSR) suggest that Cedar Tree PCS is performing just below proficient in the classroom environment and instruction domains.^{8, 9}

DC PCSB staff also evaluated the school's compliance with applicable federal and local laws and with its charter. DC PCSB staff determined the school did not materially violate the law or its charter.

DC PCSB staff also evaluated the school's fiscal management. DC PCSB staff determined that the school has not engaged in a pattern of nonadherence to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), has not engaged in a pattern of fiscal mismanagement, and is economically viable.

DC PCSB staff's complete findings are detailed in the school's Preliminary Charter Review Report (Attachment A), which forms the basis of staff's recommendation along with this proposal.¹⁰

Based on these findings, DC PCSB staff recommends the Board vote to continue Cedar Tree PCS's charter.

Charter Review Standard

The SRA stipulates that DC PCSB "shall review [a school's] charter at least once every [five] years."¹¹ As part of this review, DC PCSB must determine whether:

- 1) The school committed a violation of applicable law, or a material violation of the conditions, terms, standards, or procedures set forth in its charter, including violations relating to the education of children with disabilities; and/or
- 2) The school failed to meet the goals and student academic achievement expectations set forth in its charter.¹²

⁸ QSR observers rate the classroom environment and instruction on the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* scale from one to four: "1" indicates "unsatisfactory" performance, "2" indicates "basic," "3" indicates "proficient," and "4" indicates "distinguished."

⁹ See the QSR section on pages 17 – 19 of the attached report for further details about the school's QSR performance.

¹⁰ The report will be finalized following the Board's vote on the school's continuance.

¹¹ D.C. Code § 38-1802.12(a)(3).

¹² D.C. Code § 38-1802.13(a).

If DC PCSB determines that a school has committed a violation of applicable law or a material violation of the terms of its charter, or has not met its goals and academic achievement expectations, it may, at its discretion, revoke the school's charter, or grant the school a continuance.¹³

Additionally, there is a fiscal component to the charter review. DC PCSB is required by the SRA to revoke a school's charter if DC PCSB determines in its review that the school: 1) has engaged in a pattern of nonadherence to generally accepted accounting principles, 2) has engaged in a pattern of fiscal mismanagement, and/or 3) is no longer economically viable.¹⁴

Background

Originally named Howard Road Academy Public Charter School (Howard Road PCS), Cedar Tree PCS began operation in SY 2000 – 01 under authorization from the DC Board of Education (DC BOE).¹⁵ The school currently educates 387 students in grades pre-kindergarten 3 (PK3) – 2; it is approved to educate students in grades PK3 – 3 at capacity. The school operates one campus located in Ward 8.¹⁶ Cedar Tree PCS's mission is:

Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School is committed to academic excellence for all students. We will build the foundation for all students in a safe learning environment designed to enhance social and emotional growth, cognitive and creative development while preparing students to become active independent learners. – No exception, No excuses!

Notification

On January 28, 2025, DC PCSB staff notified the following Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners of the school's 25-year charter review: Tom Donohue (8A01), Anthony Foreman (8A02), Andrea Davis (8A03), Fria Moore (8A04), Jamila White (8A05), Robin McKinney (8A06), and Tomora Redman (8A07). DC PCSB staff also posted a notice for public comment on the charter review in the DC Register and on the DC PCSB website.¹⁷

Attachment to this Proposal

Attachment A: Cedar Tree PCS 25-Year Preliminary Charter Review Report

¹³ DC PCSB may impose conditions of continuance if it deems such conditions appropriate.

¹⁴ D.C. Code § 38-1802.13(b).

¹⁵ After the passage of the Public Education Reform Amendment Act in 2007, DC BOE dissolved, and DC PCSB became the school's authorizer. See the Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007 here: <https://bit.ly/3rabBPX>.

¹⁶ This enrollment figure is based on preliminary, unvalidated data as of January 6, 2025.

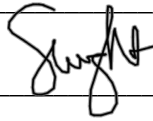
¹⁷ See the notice here: <https://bit.ly/41wj9iX>.

Date: March 17, 2025

DC PCSB Action: X Approved Approved with Changes Rejected

Changes to the Original Proposal:

Board Chair Signature: _____





2024 – 25 25-Year Charter Review Report Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School

March 17, 2025

DC Public Charter School Board
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Washington, DC 20003
(202) 328-2660
www.dcpccb.org

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Appendices: <https://bit.ly/4i91PWG>

¹ To request a text-only and/or a black-and-white version of this report, please contact communications@dcpcsb.org.

BOARD VOTE AND KEY FINDINGS

Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School (Cedar Tree PCS)²	
Review or Renewal	25-year charter review
Review Period	School year (SY) 2019 – 20 through SY 2023 – 24
Charter Goals	Cedar Tree PCS met its charter goals in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24.
Compliance	Cedar Tree PCS did not materially violate the law or its charter.
Finance	Cedar Tree PCS did not display a pattern of fiscal mismanagement and is economically viable.
Board Vote	The Board voted 6 – 0 to continue Cedar Tree PCS’s charter.

Pursuant to the School Reform Act (SRA), the DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) “shall review [a school’s] charter at least once every [five] years.”³ During SY 2024 – 25, DC PCSB conducted a 25-year charter review of Cedar Tree PCS, evaluating the school’s progress toward meeting its goals and academic achievement expectations (charter goals). DC PCSB also evaluated the school’s compliance with applicable federal and local laws, compliance with its charter, and fiscal management.

Goals and Academic Achievement Expectations (Charter Goals)

Cedar Tree PCS adopted the Performance Management Framework (PMF) as its charter goals and committed to meeting the performance standards set by DC PCSB in the Early Childhood PMF (EC PMF).^{4, 5} However, given DC PCSB’s PMF revision efforts and the disruption in schooling and data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic, DC PCSB ceased producing the PMF after SY 2018 – 19 and did not assess goal attainment for school years 2019 – 20, 2020 – 21, or 2021 – 22.⁶ Consequently, for this review period, DC PCSB assessed Cedar Tree PCS’s charter goals performance using SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24 goal attainment pathways as outlined in DC PCSB’s *Charter Goals Policy*.⁷

² See Cedar Tree PCS’s Renewal Agreement and Amendments, Appendices A1 – A3. All appendices are located here: <https://bit.ly/4i91PWC>.

³ D.C. Code § 38-1802.12(a)(3).

⁴ See the *Elect to Adopt the PMF as Charter Goals Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/2PTj7fL>. (This policy has been superseded by the *Charter Goals Policy*, available here: <https://bit.ly/4cpui81>.)

⁵ See Cedar Tree PCS’s Renewal Agreement, Appendix A1.

⁶ Per DC PCSB’s *COVID-19 Impact Policy*, DC PCSB ceased collection, aggregation, and publication of academic data for SY 2019 – 20 and SY 2020 – 21 and did not produce the PMF for those years. (See the *COVID-19 Impact Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/3fy5zDo>.) In September 2021, DC PCSB announced its plan to revise its accountability system. Consequently, DC PCSB did not resume production of the PMF.

⁷ See the *Charter Goals Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/4cpui81>.

The *Charter Goals Policy* offers multiple pathways to demonstrate goal attainment, including performance on transitional goals or a nationally normed growth assessment.⁸ Per the policy, a school need only satisfy one pathway in each school year to meet its goals.

Cedar Tree PCS met its charter goals in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24.⁹ In SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24, Cedar Tree PCS fully met the growth pathway (Pathway C) by exceeding publisher growth criteria in both reading and math on its nationally normed growth assessment, the Northwest Education Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP).¹⁰

Cedar Tree PCS demonstrated outstanding performance in reading and math growth for its students in grades Kindergarten (K) – 2. Its performance on the NWEA MAP in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24 indicates that students at Cedar Tree PCS were growing more quickly than 93 – 96% of their nationwide peers in reading and more quickly than 96 – 99% of their nationwide peers in math. These growth scores are among the highest in the sector. Cedar Tree PCS also demonstrated strong performance in all three pre-kindergarten (PK) CLASS Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) measures: Classroom Organization, Emotional Support, and Instructional Support, exceeding the state rate for all measures in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24. The school's performance in CLASS: Instructional Support is particularly noteworthy, as it exceeded the state rate by more than one full point and improved in both school years.

An area of improvement for Cedar Tree PCS is re-enrollment. The school's re-enrollment rate was approximately four percentage points lower than the state rate in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24. The rate also declined from the prior school year in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24.

Separate and apart from the school's goal attainment, during the Qualitative Site Review (QSR), observations of Cedar Tree PCS's programming rated just below proficient in the classroom environment and instruction domains.^{11,12}

⁸ "Transitional goals" refers to standard measures that DC PCSB historically collected from schools such as English language arts and math proficiency, re-enrollment, and in-seat attendance. In school years 2021 – 22, 2022 – 23, and 2023 – 24, DC PCSB collected transitional goals data from all schools to support evaluation during the COVID-19 recovery period.

⁹ See Section One of this report for more detail about Cedar Tree PCS's goal attainment.

¹⁰ See the *PMF Policy & Technical Guide* for more details about the data sources and methodology for academic measures in this report: <https://bit.ly/2D2lvgc>.

¹¹ QSR observers rate the classroom environment and instruction on the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching* scale from one to four: "1" indicates "unsatisfactory" performance, "2" indicates "basic," "3" indicates "proficient," and "4" indicates "distinguished."

¹² See the QSR section on pages 16 – 18 of this report for further details about the school's QSR performance.

Compliance

DC PCSB determined the school has not committed a material violation of law or of its charter.

Finance

DC PCSB determined the school has not engaged in a pattern of nonadherence to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), has not engaged in a pattern of fiscal mismanagement, and is economically viable.

However, Cedar Tree PCS's FY 2024 Single Audit reflected a finding related to questioned costs for the Child Nutrition Cluster Federal Program.¹³ The school's corrective action plan includes providing staff training on procedures for record-keeping and submission of reimbursable meal counts.

Board Vote

At its public meeting on March 17, 2025, the DC PCSB Board voted 6 – 0 to continue Cedar Tree PCS's charter.

The following report includes a school background section followed by analyses of the school's academic performance and goal attainment, charter and legal compliance, and fiscal management.

¹³ See the Audit Reports section on page 29 of this report.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

Cedar Tree PCS			
Year Opened	2000 – 01	Ward(s)	8
Number of Campuses	1	Year(s) of Previous Review	2006 – 07, 2011 – 12, 2014 – 15, 2019 – 20
Chartered Grade Span	Pre-kindergarten 3 (PK3) – 3	Current Enrollment Ceiling	600
Audited Enrollment and Grade Span (SY 2024 – 25)			
399, PK3 – 2			
Mission Statement			
Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School is committed to academic excellence for all students. We will build the foundation for all students in a safe learning environment designed to enhance social and emotional growth, cognitive and creative development while preparing students to become active independent learners. – No exception, No excuses!			

School Overview

Originally named Howard Road Academy Public Charter School (Howard Road PCS), Cedar Tree PCS began operation in SY 2000 – 01 under authorization from the DC Board of Education (DC BOE).¹⁴ The local education agency (LEA)¹⁵ initially served students in grades K – 5, with approval to serve up to grade 12. The LEA grew by one grade each year until it served K – 8 in SY 2003 – 04, but it never expanded to serve high schoolers.

From 2001 – 2013, the education management organization Mosaica Education, Inc. managed the school's daily operations and academic programming. In February 2008, DC PCSB approved the school to acquire two additional campuses of the former Washington Academy Public Charter School and expand its chartered grade band to include PK3 and pre-kindergarten 4 (PK4). Beginning in SY 2009 – 10, the LEA operated three campuses serving grades PK3 – 8. However, in February 2013, due to persistently low performance at two of its three campuses, the LEA amended its charter to terminate its management agreement with Mosaica Education, Inc., close the two low-performing campuses, and cease to offer grades 1 – 8. As part of that amendment, the LEA officially changed its name to Cedar Tree PCS.

In June 2019, after the LEA achieved strong academic results with its PK3 – K program, DC PCSB approved Cedar Tree PCS to expand its grade band to include grades 1 – 3. The school

¹⁴ After the passage of the Public Education Reform Amendment Act in 2007, DC BOE dissolved, and DC PCSB became the school's authorizer. See the Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007 here: <https://bit.ly/3rabBPX>.

¹⁵ An "LEA" is any individual or group of public charter schools operating under a single charter.

began serving students in grade 1 in SY 2020 – 21 and added grade 2 in SY 2021 – 22. Due to limited space at its current facility, Cedar Tree PCS does not yet offer grade 3. The school intends to add grade 3 in SY 2025 – 26 due to strong parent demand. To accommodate this growth, the school will optimize available space by condensing office and general-use areas, dedicating more space for the new third grade classrooms.

Cedar Tree PCS’s educational model is designed to promote young students’ social-emotional growth and cognitive development.¹⁶ The school’s PK3 – PK4 classrooms use a three-teacher model to increase students’ access to individualized attention. Cedar Tree PCS says it offers an age-appropriate curriculum in a nurturing environment. The school also says it provides parents with a family engagement web portal where they can access educational games and learning tools to use with their students at home. To create a positive school culture and connect with families, the school hosts open houses, new parent orientation events, and parent cafés.

Enrollment and Demographic Data

Cedar Tree PCS enrolls students from every ward in the District.¹⁷ In SY 2023 – 24, more than half of Cedar Tree PCS’s students lived in Ward 8. Most of the remaining students lived in Wards 6 and 7. The tables below show the LEA’s enrollment history.¹⁸

Enrollment Measure	School Year				
	2019 – 20	2020 – 21	2021 – 22	2022 – 23	2023 – 24
Audited Enrollment ¹⁹	362	428	482	463	428
Enrollment Projections ²⁰	360	445	500	460	425
Enrollment Ceiling ²¹	600	600	600	600	600

¹⁶ See Cedar Tree PCS’s annual report for SY 2023 – 24, Appendix B.

¹⁷ The Office for the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) provides LEA-level audited enrollment data by student home ward to DC PCSB. If the student’s address information was not submitted or submitted incorrectly, that data will not be reflected in these totals. As a result, there may be discrepancies in the data reported in each LEA’s official audited enrollment totals here: <https://bit.ly/41ospWv>.

¹⁸ The “–” symbol notes campuses that do not or did not enroll the corresponding grade(s) or student group(s).

¹⁹ OSSE conducts an annual enrollment audit to determine the number of students at each public school in the District.

²⁰ Each year, charter LEAs, DC PCSB, and the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) must project student enrollment for the following school year. The enrollment projections displayed are determined by DME and DC PCSB and may be different than the LEA’s projections.

²¹ Each charter LEA has an enrollment ceiling in its charter agreement, designating the maximum number of students for which the school can receive per pupil funding during each school year.

Grade	School Year				
	2019 – 20	2020 – 21	2021 – 22	2022 – 23	2023 – 24
PK3	120	77	74	74	80
PK4	119	126	100	94	90
K	123	127	129	106	99
1	–	98	102	100	83
2	–	–	77	89	76

The chart below shows the school's student demographics in SY 2023 – 24.

Student Group	Percentage Enrolled
At-Risk or Economically Disadvantaged Students²²	77.3%
Emerging Multilingual Learners (EML)²³	0.0%
Students with Disabilities (SWD)²⁴	19.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.7%
Asian	0.0%
Black or African American	90.9%
Hispanic/Latino	2.6%
Multiracial	5.4%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.0%
White	0.5%

School Climate

The charts below report Cedar Tree PCS's performance in school years 2022 – 23 and 2023 – 24 across three school environment measures: out-of-school suspension (OSS) rates, mid-year withdrawal (MYW) rates, and in-seat attendance (ISA) rates. DC PCSB presents these measures by grade band and student group and compares them to the relevant rates for the DC public charter sector.²⁵ Isolating school environment measures by student groups

²² D.C. Code § 38–2901(2A) defines “at-risk” as a DCPS student or a public charter school student who is identified as one or more of the following: a) homeless; b) in the District's foster care system; c) qualifies for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; or d) a high school student who is one year older, or more, than the expected age for the grade in which the student is enrolled.

“Economically disadvantaged” students are defined as meeting one or more of criteria a, b, or c. For schools serving grades PK – 8, percentages of at-risk students and economically disadvantaged students are identical.

²³ EML students are students who 1) speak a primary language other than English and 2) have been screened and determined eligible for English language development services. An EML student may have difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language.

²⁴ SWD are students identified as having an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that details the special education services the students must receive. For demographic data, DC PCSB counts any student who was identified as SWD through the year in the final calculation.

²⁵ In the following tables, the EML student group includes active EML students only. (Monitored Years 1 – 4 EML students are not included.) An “active EML student” is a student currently participating in EML programming. A “monitored EML student” is a student who has met the English language proficiency level to exit EML

helps to identify whether there may be access and opportunity disparities. For a full report on Cedar Tree PCS's school environment measures across the review period, please see Appendix C.

Key for OSS and MYW Rates	
Blue	Equal to or less than the sector rate
Red	More than the sector rate
Grey	n < 10; the number of students (n-size) is less than 10 ²⁶

OSS

An OSS is when a school temporarily removes a student from school grounds for disciplinary reasons. The OSS rate is the percentage of students who received an OSS.²⁷

Two-Year Average ²⁸ OSS Rates					
School/Sector	Grade Band	All Students	At-Risk Students	EML	SWD
Cedar Tree PCS	PK3 – PK4	0.0%	0.0%	n < 10	0.0%
Sector		0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Cedar Tree PCS	K – 5	0.0%	0.0%	n < 10	0.0%
Sector		3.4%	4.9%	1.2%	5.9%

MYW

The MYW rate is the percentage of students who have withdrawn from school during the school year.²⁹

Two-Year Average MYW Rates (SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24)					
School/Sector	Grade Band	All Students	At-Risk Students	EML	SWD
Cedar Tree PCS	PK3 – PK4	2.7%	3.1%	n < 10	0.0%
Sector		3.2%	4.0%	2.6%	2.3%
Cedar Tree PCS	K – 5	2.4%	2.3%	n < 10	1.8%
Sector		3.8%	4.9%	2.7%	3.8%

programming. After exiting EML programming, students are monitored for four years to ensure they did not exit the program prematurely.

²⁶ DC PCSB does not report values when the n-size is less than 10.

²⁷ The student universe for OSS includes students who were ever enrolled at the school in a given year (i.e., students in the enrollment audit and those who were not).

²⁸ Each table in this section reports two-year average rates for school years 2022 – 23 and 2023 – 24.

²⁹ The student universe for MYW includes audited students only.

ISA

The ISA rate is the percentage of students who were present each day.³⁰

Key for ISA Rates	
Blue	Equal to or more than the sector rate
Red	Less than the sector rate
Grey	n < 10; the n-size is less than 10

Two-Year Average ISA Rates (SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24)					
School/Sector	Grade Band	All Students	At-Risk Students	EML	SWD
Cedar Tree PCS	PK3 – PK4	89.1%	87.8%	n < 10	88.2%
Sector		85.4%	81.7%	86.1%	84.8%
Cedar Tree PCS	K – 5	91.2%	90.2%	n < 10	89.3%
Sector		89.3%	86.4%	92.5%	87.8%

Previous Charter Reviews

Five-Year Review

In SY 2006 – 07, DC PCSB conducted a five-year review of Cedar Tree PCS (then named Howard Road PCS) and found the school met the standard for charter continuance.³¹ DC PCSB noted in the review that the school's reading and math proficiency rates on the DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS)³² were 57.2% and 53.6%, respectively. Based on these findings, in January 2007, DC PCSB voted to continue the school's charter.

10-Year Review

In SY 2011 – 12, DC PCSB conducted a 10-year review of Cedar Tree PCS (again, under the name Howard Road PCS) and found the school met the standard for charter continuance.³³ However, DC PCSB noted a lack of rigor in the school's curriculum and instruction at that time, as well as a high staff attrition rate of 70.0%, and a low re-enrollment rate of 32.2%. Notwithstanding these concerns, in January 2012, DC PCSB voted to continue the school's charter.

³⁰ DC PCSB recently changed its business rules for calculating ISA rates to align with attendance measures evaluated in its accountability system, ASPIRE. For SY 2019 – 20, SY 2020 – 21, and SY 2021 – 22, Cedar Tree PCS's ISA rates include students who were enrolled for at least 10 instructional days. For SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24, Cedar Tree PCS's ISA rates include students who were enrolled for more than 20 instructional days.

³¹ See Cedar Tree PCS's Five-Year Review Report, Appendix D.

³² The DC CAS was the state assessment in Washington, DC until SY 2014 – 15, when the state adopted the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).

³³ See Cedar Tree PCS's 10-Year Review Report, Appendix E.

15-Year Renewal

In SY 2014 – 15, DC PCSB conducted a 15-year renewal of Cedar Tree PCS and found the school met the standard for renewal.³⁴ DC PCSB noted the school had recently reconfigured its campus to serve only grades PK3 – K, which caused a technical complication with assessing goal determination for two of the school's 12 performance measures. Of the remaining ten goals, the school met nine and partially met one. Based on the overall findings of the review, DC PCSB voted to renew Cedar Tree PCS's charter for another 15-year term.

As part of Cedar Tree PCS's renewal, DC PCSB required the school to adopt "fully measurable, rigorous" academic achievement expectations. DC PCSB staff committed to closely monitoring the school's academic performance in SY 2014 – 15, 2015 – 16, and 2016 – 17. The report noted that if the school did not meet its goals and academic achievement expectations in those three years, DC PCSB would conduct a high-stakes review of the school's charter at the conclusion of SY 2016 – 17. DC PCSB did not need to conduct such a review because the school exhibited strong academic performance, scoring Tier 1 on the EC PMF in SY 2015 – 16 and SY 2016 – 17.

20-Year Review

In SY 2019 – 20, DC PCSB conducted a 20-year review of Cedar Tree PCS and found the school met the standard for charter continuance.³⁵ DC PCSB noted the school showed strong academic results since its campus reconfiguration to serve grades PK3 – K. Specifically, DC PCSB noted the school's strength in "demonstrating student progress in English language arts (ELA) and math, with student performance on the NWEA MAP assessment among the highest in the sector." Based on these findings, in February 2020, DC PCSB voted to continue Cedar Tree PCS's charter.

Communication with the School

In September 2024, DC PCSB staff met with Cedar Tree PCS staff to discuss the school's 25-year review. DC PCSB staff explained how DC PCSB assesses goal attainment for SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24 per the *Charter Goals Policy*. DC PCSB also discussed the school's goal performance during SY 2022 – 23.

³⁴ See Cedar Tree PCS's 15-year Renewal Report, Appendix F.

³⁵ See Cedar Tree PCS's 20-Year Review Report, Appendix G.

CHARTER REVIEW STANDARD

The SRA stipulates that DC PCSB “shall review [a school's] charter at least once every [five] years.”³⁶ As part of this review, DC PCSB must determine whether:

- 1) The school committed a violation of applicable law, or a material violation of the conditions, terms, standards, or procedures set forth in its charter, including violations relating to the education of children with disabilities; and/or
- 2) The school failed to meet the goals and student academic achievement expectations set forth in its charter.³⁷

If DC PCSB determines that a school has committed a violation of applicable law or a material violation of the terms of its charter or has not met its goals and academic achievement expectations, it may, at its discretion, revoke the school's charter, or grant the school a continuance.³⁸

Additionally, there is a fiscal component to the charter review. DC PCSB is required by the SRA to revoke a school's charter if DC PCSB determines in its review that the school: 1) has engaged in a pattern of nonadherence to GAAP, 2) has engaged in a pattern of fiscal mismanagement, and/or 3) is no longer economically viable.³⁹

³⁶ D.C. Code § 38-1802.12(a)(3).

³⁷ D.C. Code § 38-1802.13(a).

³⁸ DC PCSB may impose conditions of continuance if it deems such conditions appropriate.

³⁹ D.C. Code § 38-1802.13(b).

SECTION ONE: GOALS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT EXPECTATIONS

Per the SRA, DC PCSB must review whether a school has met its charter goals at least once every five years.

In July 2015,⁴⁰ Cedar Tree PCS adopted the PMF as its charter goals.⁴¹ In doing so, the LEA agreed to the following review standard:

The [s]chool. . . will be deemed to have met its goals and academic achievement expectations if each individual campus. . . meets performance standards [in the EC PMF] to be set by the PCSB Board.

As previously noted, DC PCSB did not assess goal attainment for school years 2019 – 20, 2020 – 21, or 2021 – 22 and ceased producing the PMF after SY 2018 – 19.⁴² For SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24, DC PCSB resumed assessing goal attainment using pathways established in its *Charter Goals Policy*.⁴³

Cedar Tree PCS’s goal attainment results are as follows:

Cedar Tree PCS Goal Attainment				
2019 – 20	2020 – 21	2021 – 22	2022 – 23	2023 – 24
NA			Met	Met

The remainder of Section One contains:

1. An overview of the goal attainment pathways in the *Charter Goals Policy* applicable to Cedar Tree PCS;
2. An explanation of Cedar Tree PCS’s goal attainment for SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24;
3. Data pertaining to the school’s academic performance on each applicable goal attainment pathway; and
4. Additional academic information not included in Cedar Tree PCS’s goal attainment assessment.⁴⁴

Appendix H shows Cedar Tree PCS’s academic performance by student group during the review period.

⁴⁰ See Cedar Tree PCS’s Charter Renewal Agreement, Appendix A1.

⁴¹ For details, see the *2019 – 20 PMF Policy & Technical Guide* here: <https://bit.ly/2D2lvqc>.

⁴² See the *COVID-19 Impact Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/3fy5zDo>.

⁴³ See the *Charter Goals Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/4cpui8l>.

⁴⁴ DC PCSB typically reports additional data about EML students’ English language proficiency, as measured by the ACCESS for English Language Learners 2.0 (ACCESS) assessment. OSSE reports ACCESS growth for schools with 10 or more eligible test-takers. ACCESS data for Cedar Tree PCS is not available because the school had fewer than 10 eligible test-takers throughout this review period.

Charter Goals Policy Pathways Overview

The *Charter Goals Policy* established pathways for schools to demonstrate goal attainment for SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24. DC PCSB evaluated goal attainment using the pathways in the order in which they appear.⁴⁵ A school need only meet one pathway in each school year to be deemed as having met its charter goals. The following table summarizes the pathways applicable to Cedar Tree PCS.

Goal Attainment Pathways	
Pathway	How to Meet the Pathway
A: Individually Negotiated Goals	NA ⁴⁶
B: Transitional Goals ⁴⁷	For each applicable transitional goals data measure (excluding nationally normed growth assessments): Meet or exceed state performance (sector performance when state is unavailable) <u>OR</u> demonstrate improvement compared to prior year data. ^{48, 49}
C: Growth	SY 2022 – 23
	For school-selected, nationally normed growth assessment: Meet or exceed publisher growth criteria on ELA/reading and math subject tests compared to the publisher's national performance rates <u>OR</u> demonstrate improvement compared to SY 2021 – 22 baseline data.
	SY 2023 – 24
	Meet or exceed publisher growth criteria on school-selected, nationally normed growth assessments for ELA/reading and math subject tests compared to the publisher's national performance rates. ⁵⁰

⁴⁵ To assess SY 2022 – 23 goal attainment, DC PCSB first examined whether a campus met or exceeded the state or sector rate or demonstrated improvement from the prior year on each transitional goals measure (Pathway B). If not, DC PCSB examined whether the campus's nationally normed growth assessment met or exceeded publisher growth criteria or demonstrated improvement from SY 2021 – 22 (Pathway C). If not, DC PCSB compared the campus's DC School Report Card score to the 40.0% target (Pathway D). DC PCSB used a similar process to assess SY 2023 – 24 goal attainment. For details, see pages 11 – 13 of the *Charter Goals Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/4cpui8l>.

⁴⁶ Pathway A applies to LEAs with individually negotiated goals in their charter agreement.

⁴⁷ Transitional goals measures include standard academic measures (to the extent available) and certain additional data by grade band, as specified in the *Charter Goals Policy*.

⁴⁸ In some instances, DC PCSB may be unable to assess improvement for transitional goals due to lack of prior year data, or a change in assessment or measure calculation.

⁴⁹ If the overall targets are not met, DC PCSB may consider student group performance on transitional goals. DC PCSB will primarily review performance among at-risk, students with disabilities, and emerging multilingual learner student groups. DC PCSB receives student-level demographic designations from OSSE.

⁵⁰ A portion of Pathway C, growth on the state assessment in ELA and math, is not applicable to Cedar Tree PCS as the state assessment is only administered to grade 3 and above.

Goal Attainment Pathways	
Pathway	How to Meet the Pathway
D: Office for the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) Accountability	NA ⁵¹

Cedar Tree PCS's Goal Attainment

SY 2022 – 23 Goal Attainment

In SY 2022 – 23, Cedar Tree PCS met Pathway C by exceeding publisher growth criteria in both reading and math on its nationally normed growth assessment, NWEA MAP. See the Pathway C Performance Section on page 16 for details about Cedar Tree PCS's performance on Pathway C.

SY 2023 – 24 Goal Attainment

In SY 2023 – 24, Cedar Tree PCS met Pathway C by exceeding publisher growth criteria in both reading and math on its nationally normed growth assessment, NWEA MAP. See the Pathway C Performance Section on page 16 for details about Cedar Tree PCS's performance on Pathway C.

Cedar Tree PCS's Academic Performance Data by Pathway

Pathway B (Transitional Goals) Performance

For schools serving grades PK – 2, transitional goals measures include, to the extent available: PK Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) outcomes, ISA, and re-enrollment.

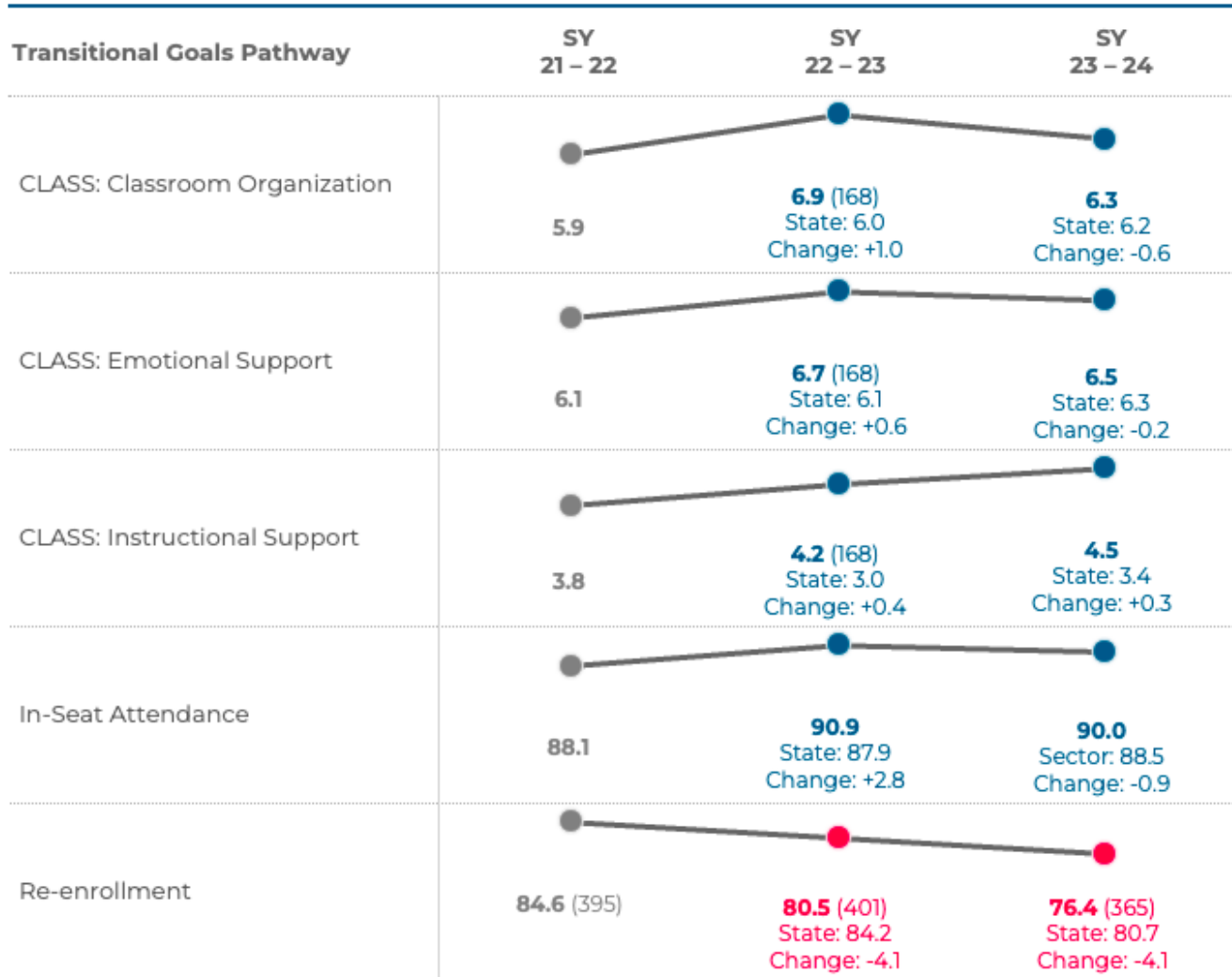
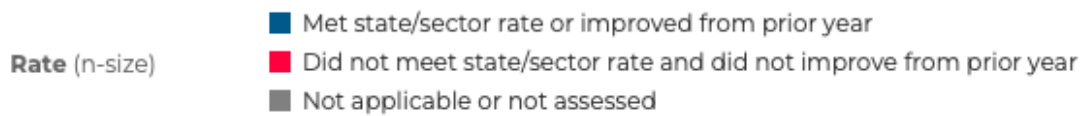
The chart below shows Cedar Tree PCS's performance on each applicable transitional goals measure in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24. (Per the *Charter Goals Policy*, DC PCSB uses SY 2021 – 22 school performance as a baseline to assess improvement in SY 2022 – 23.) The chart indicates whether the school's rate met the state or sector rate, and whether the school improved from its prior year performance.^{52, 53, 54}

⁵¹ Schools must be eligible for at least 50 points on OSSE's accountability system in order to receive a summative score. Consequently, schools with non-traditional grade configurations, such as early childhood programs, do not receive a summative score.

⁵² Per the *Charter Goals Policy*, comparative state/sector rates in the table are from the prior year state/sector data. That is, state/sector rates in the "SY 22 – 23" column represent state/sector rates from SY 2021 – 22, and state/sector rates in the "SY 23 – 24" column represent state/sector rates from SY 2022 – 23. DC PCSB uses state/sector rates from the prior school year as comparative rates so that school leaders have advance notice of the comparative rates.

⁵³ State/sector rates for elementary and/or middle schools are based on PK – 8 inclusive data, excluding outliers. Rates are not grade-band specific.

⁵⁴ The evaluation of transitional goal measures only considers performance compared to state/sector rates or prior year performance. In the case of PK CLASS outcomes, a school may not meet the state rate but may meet the publisher defined threshold of quality in the domain. Teachstone defines the threshold of quality as a score



In SY 2022 – 23, Cedar Tree PCS met or exceeded state performance in four of five transitional goals measures: PK CLASS: Classroom Organization, PK CLASS: Emotional Support, PK CLASS: Instructional Support, and ISA. Cedar Tree PCS did not meet state performance and did not demonstrate improvement in re-enrollment.

In SY 2023 – 24, Cedar Tree PCS met or exceeded state performance in four of five transitional goals measures: CLASS: Classroom Organization, CLASS: Emotional Support, CLASS: Instructional Support, and ISA. Cedar Tree PCS did not meet state/sector

of 6.0 or above in Classroom Organization and Emotional Support and a score of 3.0 or above in Instructional Support. See CLASS® Thresholds Summary (2023) by Teachstone here: <https://bit.ly/47rXI3s>.

performance and did not demonstrate improvement in one transitional goals measure: Re-enrollment.

Pathway C (Growth) Performance

Cedar Tree PCS selected the NWEA MAP as its nationally normed growth assessment. The table below shows Cedar Tree PCS's performance on the NWEA MAP math and reading assessments in SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24.

SY22-23: Met publisher growth criteria or improved from prior year

SY23-24: Met publisher growth criteria

Rate (n-size)

SY22-23: Did not meet publisher growth criteria and did not improve from prior year

SY23-24: Did not meet publisher growth criteria

Not applicable or not assessed

Growth Pathway	SY 21 – 22	SY 22 – 23	SY 23 – 24
K – 3 NWEA MAP: Math	79.0 (293)	96.0 (284) CGP: 50.0	99.0 (256) CGP: 50.0
K – 3 NWEA MAP: Reading	78.0 (293)	93.0 (284) CGP: 50.0	96.0 (256) CGP: 50.0

Data Notes:

DS: Data suppressed (sample size less than 10) and is not evaluated.

<5: Rate is less than 5% and is not shown but is evaluated.

No Comp.: No comparative value (state or sector sample size less than 10).

All data labels are rounded to the nearest tenths. All color coding reflects non-rounded values.

In SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24, Cedar Tree PCS exceeded publisher growth criteria on the NWEA MAP math and reading assessments.

Additional Academic Information

Qualitative Site Review (QSR)

DC PCSB uses the QSR to evaluate the school's environment and instructional quality. DC PCSB staff observes schools across two domains—classroom environment and instruction, as defined in the Charlotte Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.^{55, 56} From November 6 – 17,

⁵⁵ Danielson, Charlotte. *The Framework for Teaching: Evaluation Instrument*. Princeton, NJ: Danielson Group, 2013.

⁵⁶ During SY 2023 – 24 QSR visits, the QSR team observed 75.0% of a campus's core content classrooms. DC PCSB defines core content classrooms as ELA, math, science, and social studies. The QSR team also observed electives when the coursework was an essential part of the school's mission.

2023, in anticipation of this review, DC PCSB staff conducted a QSR at Cedar Tree PCS.⁵⁷ As part of the QSR, DC PCSB also reviews ELA and math assignments. Evaluators analyze the assignments to determine the extent to which schools provide students access to grade-level, standards-based instruction.

Observation Findings

After conducting unannounced observations, the QSR team rated the classroom environment and instruction on the *Framework for Teaching* scale from one to four: “1” indicates “unsatisfactory” performance, “2” indicates “basic,” “3” indicates “proficient,” and “4” indicates “distinguished.”⁵⁸

The following table reports Cedar Tree PCS’s average domain ratings.

Cedar Tree PCS’s Average Domain Ratings		
Observed Program	Classroom Environment	Instruction
Overall	2.97	2.73
Special Education	2.75	2.50

Overall, Cedar Tree PCS scored just below proficient in the classroom environment and instruction domains. QSR observers rated 91.2% of classrooms proficient or distinguished in the classroom environment domain and 72.6% in the instruction domain.⁵⁹ In the classroom environment domain, observers noted interactions between teachers and students and among students were uniformly respectful. Students cheered their classmates on when participating and treated one another with care when working together. Student behavior was also entirely appropriate. In the instruction domain, observers noted that teachers clearly stated what students would be learning. When needed, teachers also explained academic vocabulary in a manner appropriate to students’ needs. In a few classrooms, teachers used open-ended questions, inviting students to think and offer multiple possible answers. However, in most classrooms, teachers framed questions that led students down a single path of inquiry, limiting discussion opportunities.

On its special education observations, Cedar Tree PCS scored just below proficient in the classroom environment domain and between basic and proficient in the instruction domain. Before the two-week observation window, Cedar Tree PCS completed a questionnaire about how it serves students with disabilities. Observers looked for evidence

⁵⁷ See Cedar Tree PCS QSR Report, Appendix XI.

⁵⁸ See pages 20 – 24 of the school’s QSR report in Appendix I for a detailed description of each performance level.

⁵⁹ In SY 2022 – 23 and SY 2023 – 24, the average percentages of observed PK – 8 classrooms in the DC public charter sector rated “proficient” or “distinguished” were 77.8% in the classroom environment domain and 63.6% in the instruction domain.

of the school’s articulated program. Overall, DC PCSB staff found the school implemented its stated special education program with fidelity.

Assignment Review Findings

In addition to conducting classroom observations, DC PCSB staff and The New Teacher Project (TNTP) consultants reviewed sample ELA and math assignments Cedar Tree PCS students received. Evaluators used TNTP’s *Assignment Review Protocol* in assessing whether the assignments: 1) aligned with grade-appropriate standards, 2) provided students with meaningful practice opportunities, and 3) gave students an opportunity to connect academic standards to real-world issues.⁶⁰

Assignments that satisfied TNTP’s Assignment Review Protocol criteria were deemed “sufficient.” Assignments that partially satisfied the criteria were deemed “minimal.” Assignments that did not satisfy the criteria were deemed “no opportunity.” See Cedar Tree PCS’s assignment review ratings in the table below.

Cedar Tree PCS Assignment Review Ratings		
Overall Rating	ELA Assignments	Math Assignments
Sufficient	5	5
Minimal	0	0
No Opportunity	0	0

⁶⁰ See the protocol here: <https://bit.ly/3PfYLKH>.

SECTION TWO: COMPLIANCE WITH CHARTER AND APPLICABLE LAWS

Per the SRA, when reviewing a charter, DC PCSB must determine whether a school has “committed a violation of applicable laws or a material violation of the conditions, terms, standards, or procedures set forth in its charter, including violations relating to the education of children with disabilities.”⁶¹ The SRA contains a non-exhaustive list of applicable laws, which DC PCSB monitors in its annual compliance reviews. Since SY 2019 – 20, Cedar Tree PCS has been compliant with all applicable laws as captured in DC PCSB's compliance reviews.⁶²

DC PCSB also monitors schools' compliance with the procurement requirements in the SRA and with DC PCSB's *Emerging Multilingual Learner Audit and Monitoring Policy*. In addition, DC PCSB supports OSSE, as the state education agency (SEA), in its monitoring of compliance with federal laws pertaining to special education students.

The remainder of this section examines the school's compliance with procurement requirements, the *Emerging Multilingual Learner Audit and Monitoring Policy*, and special education laws over the review period.

Procurement Contract Compliance

D.C. Code § 38-1802.04(c)(1) requires DC charter schools to use a competitive bidding process for any procurement contract valued at \$25,000 or more. Within three days of awarding such a contract, schools must submit to DC PCSB all bids received, the contractor selected, and the rationale for which the contractor was selected. To ensure compliance with this law, DC PCSB requires schools to report key contract information specifying any qualifying procurement contract that the school has executed.⁶³

Cedar Tree PCS Procurement Contract Compliance		
Fiscal Year (FY)	Reported Procurement Packages	Early Warning Notices
2020	2	0
2021	2	0
2022	1	0
2023	5	0
2024	4	0

Currently, DC PCSB has no major concerns about the LEA's compliance with procurement contract submission requirements. DC PCSB will continue to closely monitor the school's

⁶¹ D.C. Code § 38-1802.12(a)(3).

⁶² See Cedar Tree PCS's Compliance Review Reports, Appendices J1 – J5.

⁶³ See the *Procurement Contract Submission and Conflict of Interest Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/4bNG2jK>.

compliance to ensure Cedar Tree PCS reports all procurement contracts in adherence with the *Procurement Contract Submission and Conflict of Interest Policy*.

Emerging Multilingual Learner Compliance

DC PCSB Audit and Monitoring Actions

Pursuant to the *Emerging Multilingual Learner Audit and Monitoring Policy*, DC PCSB staff regularly reviews each LEA's EML data and practices. DC PCSB staff determines 1) whether public charter schools are compliant with local and federal laws pertaining to EML students and 2) whether the LEA's provision of services is equitable for EML students.⁶⁴ During the review period, Cedar Tree PCS did not require any DC PCSB enforcement actions or interventions pursuant to this policy.

Special Education Compliance and Performance⁶⁵

Charter schools are required to comply with all federal and local special education laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)⁶⁶ and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.⁶⁷ As the SEA, OSSE monitors charter schools' special education program performance through an annual review of compliance and student progress measures. In collaboration with OSSE, DC PCSB also monitors indicators of special education compliance and performance through its *Special Education Audit and Monitoring Policy* and other oversight practices.⁶⁸

Every year, OSSE analyzes each LEA's compliance with special education requirements and issues its findings in an annual determination report. In accordance with the U.S. Department of Education reporting requirements, OSSE makes annual determinations using eight applicable measures of IDEA compliance and student progress. Beginning with federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021, OSSE also launched its annual Special Education Performance Report (SEPR).^{69, 70} In SEPR, OSSE assesses performance using an expanded number of measures in two categories: LEA compliance and student progress.⁷¹ The table below shows how IDEA annual determinations align with OSSE's SEPR levels.⁷²

⁶⁴ See the *Emerging Multilingual Learner Audit and Monitoring Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/4c2XP86>.

⁶⁵ See OSSE's Glossary of Special Education Compliance Terms, Appendix K.

⁶⁶ 20 U.S.C. §§ 1400 *et seq.* See 20 U.S.C. § 1413(a)(5).

⁶⁷ 29 U.S.C. § 794.

⁶⁸ For more details, in this report, see the school climate information in the School Background section and Appendix C. Also see the supplemental academic data by student group in Appendix H.

⁶⁹ Federal fiscal year refers to the one-year period that OSSE uses to monitor and report on special education compliance. Each FFY begins July 1 and ends June 30 of the following calendar year. For example, FFY 2021 refers to July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022.

⁷⁰ See the SEPRs for Cedar Tree PCS for FFY 2021 and FFY 2022, Appendices L1 – L2.

⁷¹ In the SEPR, LEA Compliance comprises 35 points of the total score earned, and Student Progress comprises 65 points of the total score earned.

⁷² See Appendix M1 for more detail about LEA performance and OSSE's enforcement actions for each IDEA annual determination and SEPR score level.

Percentage of Points from Applicable Measures ⁷³	LEA Performance Description	IDEA Annual Determination	SEPR Level
81.0% – 100%	LEA demonstrates the highest rates of compliance and quality service delivery to students.	Meets Requirements	Leading
61.0% – 80.9%	LEA shows high rates of compliance and quality service delivery to students.	Needs Assistance	Strengthening
41.0% – 60.9%	LEA is approaching compliance and quality service delivery to students.	Needs Intervention	Building
0.0% – 40.9%	LEA requires supports to improve both compliance and quality service delivery to students.	Needs Substantial Intervention	Emerging

Cedar Tree PCS's IDEA Annual Determinations and SEPR Levels

The table below shows Cedar Tree PCS's annual determinations across the review period.

FFY	Percentage of Points from Applicable Measures	IDEA Annual Determination
2019	86.8%	Meets Requirements
2020	94.7%	Meets Requirements
2021	70.5%	Needs Assistance
2022	70.6%	Need Assistance

SEPR reports on 1) an LEA's capacity to serve students with disabilities and 2) key student progress measures. Cedar Tree PCS's SEPRs for FFYs 2021 and 2022 in Appendices L1 and L2 provide specific information about the school's performance on each measure. The table below shows a summary of Cedar Tree PCS's SEPR results.⁷⁴

FFY	Performance Area	Points Earned	Percent of Points Earned	SEPR Level
2021	LEA Compliance	31.5 of 35	90.0%	Strengthening

⁷³ For a full list of measures, see pages 8 – 11 of OSSE's SEPR Technical Guide here: bit.ly/49Z5Jxt. OSSE evaluates each LEA on the collection of measures that are applicable to the LEA. (For example, the Secondary Transition measure only applies to LEAs that serve students aged 16 and older.)

⁷⁴ For information about the DC public charter sector's SEPR performance in FFYs 2021 and 2022, see Appendix M2.

FFY	Performance Area	Points Earned	Percent of Points Earned	SEPR Level
	Student Progress	39.0 of 65	60.0%	
2022	LEA Compliance	32.1 of 35	91.7%	Strengthening
	Student Progress	38.5 of 65	59.3%	

Cedar Tree PCS received a “Need Assistance/Strengthening” designation in FFYs 2021 and 2022. Cedar Tree PCS lost points in the compliance and student progress domains in the areas of initial evaluations and child find. The school lost between three and four points both years, but still performed above the state average in those areas. The school also lost points in preschool skill milestones and growth by not meeting the state target which accounted for a loss of just 1.2 points. DC PCSB currently has no major concerns about Cedar Tree PCS’s compliance with special education requirements.

OSSE Enforcement Actions

OSSE monitors schools that receive a "Needs Assistance/Strengthening" designation for two consecutive years or more. OSSE is requiring the LEA to access technical assistance (TA) to address noncompliance and improve performance outcomes for students with disabilities. Cedar Tree PCS is expected to complete its TA by June 30, 2025. Additionally, OSSE is directing the LEA’s use of federal funds, imposing special conditions on grant awards, and prohibiting the LEA from reducing its Maintenance of Effort to ensure consistent special education funding.⁷⁵

State and Due Process Complaints

Any individual or organization may submit a written complaint that claims that any District of Columbia public agency has failed to comply with a requirement of Part B or Part C of the IDEA or the District’s laws and regulations regarding special education, including the identification, evaluation, educational placement of the student or the provision of free appropriate public education (FAPE) to such child.

Student-specific complaints are known as due process complaints, and systemic complaints are known as state complaints. When necessary, OSSE conducts hearings to resolve disagreements identified via parent complaints. OSSE issues a written hearing officer determination (HOD) after each due process hearing, detailing its findings along with any actions the LEA must fulfill. OSSE then oversees the timely implementation of actions required by HODs.

⁷⁵ Maintenance of Effort is part of IDEA and requires LEAs to maintain consistent state and local funding for special education annually. OSSE monitors compliance, with exceptions for specific changes like reduced enrollment. This ensures stable services for students with disabilities.

Cedar Tree PCS did not receive state complaints or due process complaints during the review period.

DC PCSB Audit and Monitoring Actions

According to the *Special Education Audit and Monitoring Policy*,⁷⁶ DC PCSB staff regularly reviews LEA data and practices to determine whether public charter schools are compliant with local and federal laws pertaining to students with disabilities.

Cedar Tree PCS did not require any DC PCSB enforcement actions or interventions pursuant to this policy during the review period.

⁷⁶ See the *Special Education Audit and Monitoring Policy* here: <https://bit.ly/49U9wfR>.

SECTION THREE: FISCAL MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC VIABILITY⁷⁷

The SRA requires DC PCSB to revoke a school's charter if DC PCSB determines the school:

- has engaged in a pattern of nonadherence to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP);
- has engaged in a pattern of fiscal mismanagement; and/or
- is no longer economically viable.⁷⁸

Scope of Financial Review

DC PCSB holistically assessed Cedar Tree PCS's financial performance by 1) reviewing information received from or about the school and 2) engaging with the school regarding financial oversight matters. In performing its analyses, DC PCSB relies on the audited and unaudited financial statements, additional information provided by the school, and assurances provided by independent Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) selected by the Auditor Review Committee.⁷⁹

DC PCSB examined financial reports and information, including but not limited to:

- The school's audited financial statements from FY 2020 through FY 2023;
- The school's unaudited financial statements for FY 2024;
- The school's annual budget for FY 2025; and
- DC PCSB's Financial Analysis Report (FAR) of Cedar Tree PCS from FY 2020 through FY 2023 and supporting information.⁸⁰

Summary of Findings⁸¹

Cedar Tree PCS has demonstrated strong fiscal performance during the review period. DC PCSB's review confirmed that 1) the school has not engaged in a pattern of nonadherence to GAAP, 2) the school has not engaged in a pattern of fiscal mismanagement, and 3) the school is economically viable.

Strengths and Weaknesses

- All of Cedar Tree PCS's key financial indicators in the five-year period between FY 2020 and FY 2024 were above target, indicating strong financial performance, robust liquidity, and healthy sustainability.

⁷⁷ Each percentage in Section Three of this report has been rounded to the nearest whole percentage.

⁷⁸ See D.C. Code § 38-1802.13(b).

⁷⁹ The Auditor Review Committee comprises representatives of DC PCSB, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), and OSSE.

⁸⁰ See Cedar Tree PCS's FAR Reports, Appendices N1 – N4.

⁸¹ See Financial Definitions and Examples, Appendix O, for more information on financial terms and indicators used herein.

- The FY 2024 Single Audit reflected a finding related to questioned costs for the Child Nutrition Cluster Federal Program. The school failed to track actual snacks served and used an estimate when submitting four of the ten monthly reimbursement claims.⁸²

GAAP Adherence, Fiscal Mismanagement, and Economic Viability Analysis

Enrollment, Operations, and Facilities

The table and chart below detail some of Cedar Tree PCS's most significant performance and sustainability indicators and operating revenues and expenses per student from FY 2020 to FY 2024.⁸³

Key for Enrollment, Operations, and Facilities Metrics Table	
Comparison to FAR Benchmarks	What this means in the following table
Within target range	Generally strong financial position
Outside of target range	Possibly imminent financial concerns; operations may not be adequately managed, sustainable, or economically viable; closer monitoring warranted

⁸² See the Audit Reports section on page 29 of this report.

⁸³ FY 2020 through FY 2023 numbers originate from audited financial statements. FY 2024 numbers originate from unaudited interim financial statements.

Cedar Tree PCS - Enrollment, Operations, and Facilities Metrics								
Financial Measure * Higher is better ** Lower is better	Audited				Unaudited		FY 2024	FY Trends
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Median	Target	
Audited Enrollment	362	428	482	463	428	399		
Change in Net Assets Margin*	7%	25%	27%	23%	18%	4%	>= 0%	
Primary Reserve Ratio*	1.9	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.4	0.6	>= 0.2	
Debt Ratio**	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.6	<= 0.5	
Occupancy Expenses as a % of Facilities Allowance**	73%	53%	62%	65%	78%	123%		

Audited Enrollment

The school reflected an increase in enrollment of 66 students (15%) and 54 students (13%) in FY 2021 and FY 2022, respectively, which was primarily attributable to the expansion into a new grade each year. However, the school reflected decreases of 19 students (4%) in FY 2023, 35 students (8%) in FY 2024, and 29 students (7%) in FY 2025.

Change in Net Assets Margin, Primary Reserve Ratio, and Debt Ratio

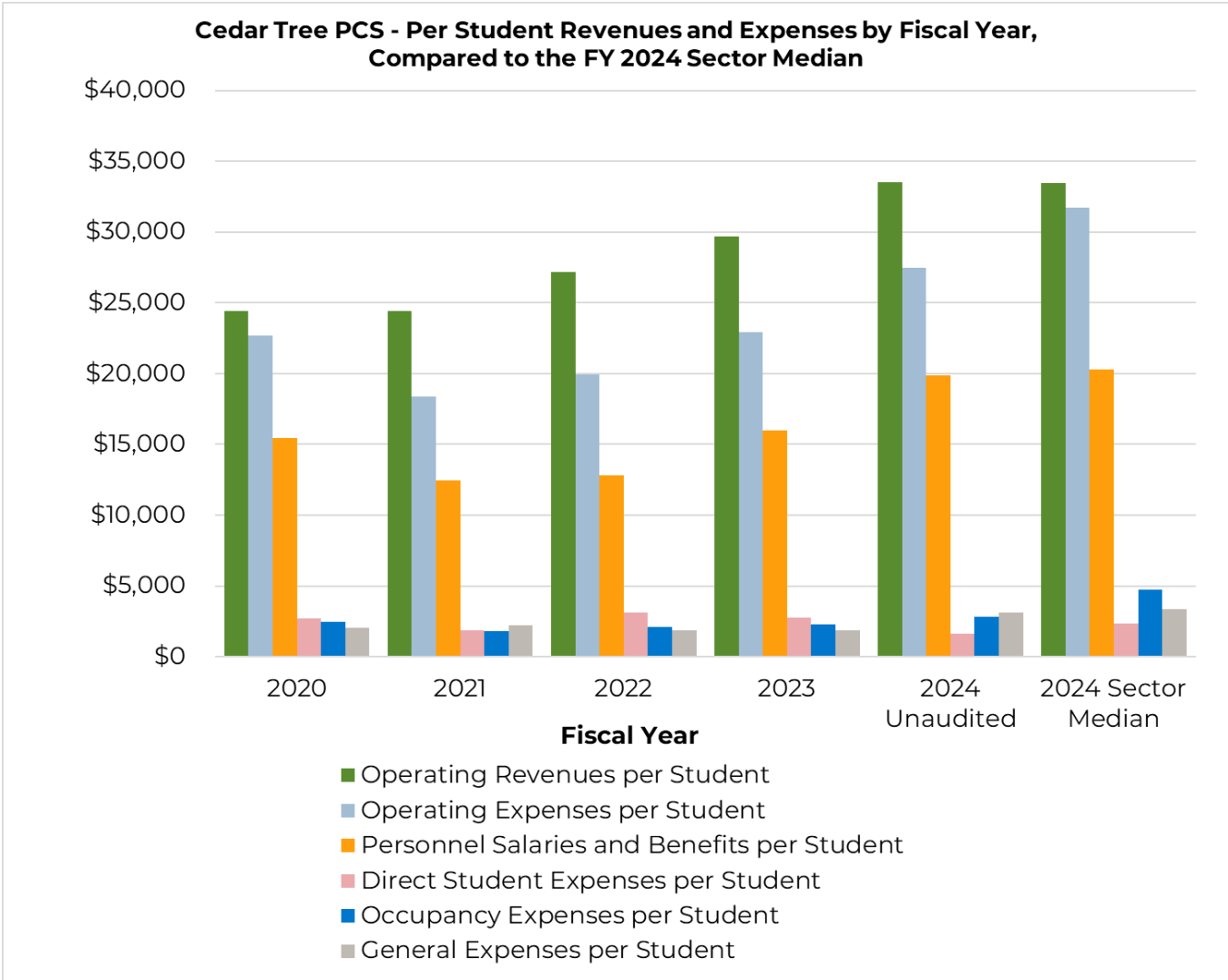
Despite the decrease in enrollment, the school has shown a positive change in net assets margin. The change in net assets margin averaged 20% in the five-year period between FY 2020 through FY 2024, consistently above the 0% target, reflecting robust financial health. The change in net assets margin peaked at 27% in FY 2022 and decreased to 18% by FY 2024, which was primarily attributable to the decreases in enrollment and available Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding. However, the school maintained strong financial sustainability through its consistently above-target primary reserve ratio ranging from 1.9 at fiscal year-end (FYE) 2020 to 2.4 at FYE 2024. In the same five-year period, the debt ratio ranged from 0.1 to 0.2, below the 0.5 target.

Occupancy Expenses

The school currently operates one facility located at 701 Howard Road SE. The school held \$3.0M in notes payable at FYE 2024, which were associated with the building purchase. The \$3.0M in outstanding notes payable was paid off prior to the notes maturing in December 2024.

Occupancy expenses as a percentage of facilities allowance ranged from 53% to 78% from FY 2020 to FY 2024, significantly below the 123% FY 2024 sector median. The fluctuations between fiscal years are primarily related to increases in the per-pupil facilities allotment and changes in enrollment.

Per Student Revenue and Expenses

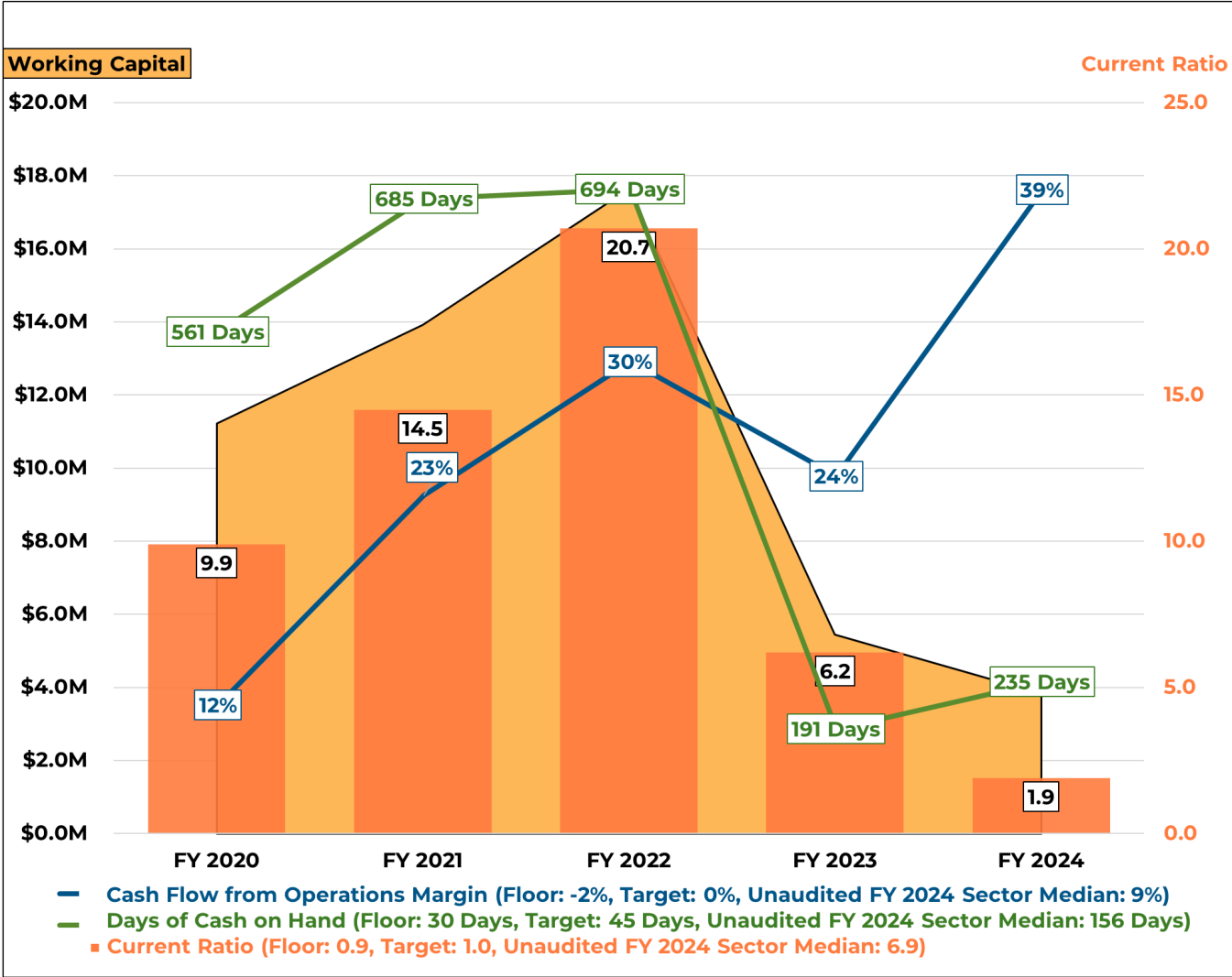


Operating revenue per student has consistently outpaced operating expenses per student during the review period. (Both revenue and expenses per student have steadily increased

from FY 2021 to FY 2024.) The school’s occupancy expenses per student have been significantly below the sector median for the review period. These low occupancy expenses have contributed to below-median operating expenses per student and a positive change in net assets.

Liquidity

The chart below shows Cedar Tree PCS’s performance on key liquidity measures, including current ratio, working capital, days of cash on hand, and cash flow from operations margin.



The school demonstrated robust liquidity over the past five years. Days of cash on hand at FYE 2020 through FYE 2024 ranged between 191 days and 694 days, above the FY 2024 155-day sector median and consistently exceeding the 45-day target. From FYE 2022 to FYE 2023, days of cash on hand decreased from 694 days to 191 days, which is not a cause for concern because it was directly related to the investment in \$15.3M of noncurrent investments. The school continued to hold \$16.1M in noncurrent investments at FYE 2024,

but still reflected an increase in days of cash on hand of 44 days from FYE 2023 to FYE 2024 (see Other Key Findings below). The current ratio at FYE 2020 through FYE 2024 was consistently above the 1.0 target and reflected continuous growth from FYE 2020 to FYE 2022 from 9.9 to 20.7. The current ratio reflected a 14.5 decrease from FYE 2022 to FYE 2023, generated by an investment of \$15.3M in noncurrent investments. In addition, the current ratio further declined from FYE 2023 to FYE 2024 because of the \$3.1M increase in current liabilities primarily attributable to the two notes payable set to mature in December 2024. The school paid off both notes payable by their maturity with excess cash reserves. The cash flow from operations margin that averaged 26% in the five-year period between FY 2020 through FY 2024, above the 0% target, reflects the school's ability to generate cash flow from carrying out its operations.

Audit Reports

The school's annual independent auditor reports for FY 2020 through FY 2023 reflected unmodified opinions and no audit findings on the school's financial reporting internal controls or Single Audits. However, the FY 2024 Single Audit reflected a finding related to questioned costs for the Child Nutrition Cluster Federal Program. The school failed to track the actual snacks served and used an estimate when submitting four of the ten monthly reimbursement claims. The school's corrective action plan includes providing staff training on procedures for record-keeping and submission of reimbursable meal counts.

Other Key Findings

The school has been accumulating cash reserves to construct a new building to replace its current facility at 701 Howard Road SE at an estimated cost of \$48.0M, with the expectation that \$15.0M in pre-construction and construction costs will be funded with cash and \$33.0M will be financed through various loans. The LEA's goal is to begin construction in fall 2025 and complete construction in fall 2027.