

2022-2023 Sponsor Evaluation: Frontier Schools Inc. (FSI)

As required by Missouri (MO) statutes and the contracts between Saint Louis University (SLU) and our sponsored public charter schools, SLU establishes for each of its sponsored schools what the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) refers to as a “Performance Contract.” The Performance Contract is an explicit statement of the specific academic, financial, and organizational performance standards SLU has established for the charter, and against which the sponsored charter shall be evaluated annually.

SLU’s annual evaluation of a charter school shall be based primarily – though not exclusively – on the school’s achievement of standards established in the governing Performance Contract. Failure to achieve certain Performance Contract standards may result in SLU requirements of the school including, but not limited to, the following:

- the submission of a report to SLU addressing the sources of concerns, as well as school plans for remediation thereof;
- the publication of any such required report (as noted above) on the school’s website for public access;
- the completion of an independent external audit, by an auditor/consultant approved by SLU, of the school’s academic, financial, or organizational performance as defined by SLU;
- the completion of specific training for board members, administrators, staff, or teachers as approved by SLU;
- changes in membership and/or officers of the board of directors.

SLU’s decision to renew a charter with a sponsored school will also be informed by the school’s record of annual achievement of standards in the governing Performance Contracts.

The standards of the Performance Contract and Sponsor Evaluation are stipulated in the tables that follow.



1. Academic Achievement

#	Standard	Measurement/Documentation	Status/ Comments
1.1	School-wide, the percent of Frontier Schools students who score at either the “Proficient” or “Advanced” level on the MO MAP ELA assessment shall be at or greater than the average for all KCPS District schools with the same grade levels.	Missouri Comprehensive Data System (MCDS) Portal - DESE MAP Data	Met FSI = 30.5% KCPS = 24.3%
1.2	School-wide, the percent of Frontier Schools students who score at either the “Proficient” or “Advanced” level on the MO MAP MATH assessment shall be at or greater than the average for all KCPS District schools with the same grade levels.	MCDS Portal - DESE MAP Data	Met FSI = 34.2% KCPS = 18.7%
1.3	School-wide, the percent of Frontier Schools students who score at either the “Proficient” or “Advanced” level on the MO MAP SCIENCE assessment shall be at or greater than the average for all KCPS District schools with the same grade levels.	MCDS Portal - DESE MAP Data	Not met FSI = 17.9% KCPS = 19.9%
1.4	School-wide, the percent of Frontier Schools students who graduate on-time shall be at or greater than 70%.	MCDS Portal - DESE MAP Data	Met FSI graduation rate = 86.4%

*Scores are from the 2021-2022 assessment.

Summary Findings for Academic Achievement

Academic Achievement Rating	Met
Areas of Strength	Areas of Growth
<p>-The academic achievement for students at Frontier continues to move in the right direction. This is evidenced by excellent growth scores and increasing rates of proficiency over time.</p> <p>-Math and ELA proficiency scores for 8th grade students are exceptional, with nearly half of all students being proficient or advanced and fewer than 17% and 10% of students identified as performing below basic in math and ELA respectively in the 2021-2022 iteration of the MAP.</p>	<p>While Frontier is academically outperforming the district in which it is located and by which it is being compared in nearly each tested area, the achievement scores still have room for growth. Also, student proficiency in biology and government needs improvement.</p>

2. Curriculum & Instruction

#	Standard	Measurement/Documentation	Status/ Comments
2.1	Curricula are aligned with all DESE-established learning standards/outcomes.	Per SLU analysis of Frontier’s scope and sequence and curriculum documents	Met
2.2	The school is compliant with the State of Missouri’s and U.S. Department of Education’s requirements for “Highly Qualified” teachers.	Per SLU analysis of MO DESE Staff Certificate Report for Frontier	Met
2.3	Frontier’s teacher evaluation standards and processes are compliant with DESE regulations.	Per SLU analysis of Frontier’s teacher evaluation tool	Met

Summary Findings for Curriculum & Instruction

Curriculum & Instruction Rating	Met
Areas of Strength	Areas of Growth
<p>-Frontier does an exemplary job in supporting faculty teaching and learning through ongoing professional development.</p> <p>-Frontier prioritizes continuing education by providing faculty grants for gaining additional education training and credentials.</p> <p>-As evidenced by their scope and sequence documents and common assessments, it is apparent that the Frontier curriculum planning and alignment processes are robust.</p>	<p>Frontier faculty is in the process of more effectively fine-tuning their continuous improvement cycles that are driven by data gleaned from common formative assessments. Ensuring both the increase in additional faculty credentials and continuing to focus on curriculum planning and alignment with fidelity across grade levels, Frontier increases the likelihood of improved student achievement scores.</p>

3. Culture & Climate

#	Standard	Measurement/Documentation	Status/ Comments
3.1	Adhere to all laws and regulations pertaining to the health and safety of all staff and students, and promptly and adequately responding to any and all issues or complaints raised by any stakeholder.	Per SLU analyses of the data within the MCDS, school site observations, and conversations with various stakeholders	Met
3.2	Maintain school leadership and culture that contributes to successful attainment of stated goals and objectives.	Per SLU observations throughout the evaluation period	Met

Summary Findings for Culture & Climate

Operations & Compliance Rating	Met
Areas of Strength	Areas of Growth
The Frontier team consistently engages with its stakeholders to meet its continuous improvement goals and objectives.	

4. Operations & Compliance

#	Standard	Measurement/Documentation	Status/ Comments
4.1	The school complies with all applicable state/federal laws, including but not limited to those related to special education, title programs, homeless students, and English language learners.	Per SLU analyses of the data within the MCDS	Met
4.2	All state- and federally-required reports/data are submitted by established deadlines and in full compliance with governing regulations.	Per SLU analyses of the data within the MCDS	Met
4.3	The school participates in the statewide system of assessments.	Per SLU analyses of the data within the MCDS	Met
4.4	The school makes publicly available data from DESE's annual report card.	Observed on the following webpage: https://www.frontierschools.org/News/Details/1071?campus=District	Met

Summary Findings for Operations & Compliance

Curriculum & Instruction Rating	Met
Areas of Strength	Areas of Growth
The Frontier team does an excellent job of submitting both timely and accurate reports.	

5. Budget & Finance

#	Standard	Measurement/Documentation	Status/ Comments
5.1	All required Final Expenditure Reports and the Annual Secretary of the Board Report (ASBR) are submitted to DESE by established deadlines.	Per DESE communications with SLU	Met
5.2	Annual independent audit is conducted and submitted to all required parties on time, with no material findings.	Per SLU's review of Board meeting minutes as well as observation of monthly Board meetings	Met
5.3	The Board approves an annual budget by June 30 of the prior fiscal year.	Per SLU's review of Board meeting minutes as well as observation of monthly Board meetings	Met
5.4	The monthly check register is reviewed and approved by the Board as required by 5 CSR 20-100.260 and Board policy.	Per SLU's review of Board meeting minutes as well as observation of monthly Board meetings	Met
5.5	The Board publicly reviews financial statements monthly against the approved budget and makes quarterly budget amendments as required per state law.	Per SLU's review of Board meeting minutes as well as observation of monthly Board meetings	Met
5.6	The school maintains a minimum 3% annual fund balance, calculated per DESE standards.	Per SLU's review of Board meeting minutes as well as observation of monthly Board meetings	Met

Summary Findings for Budget & Finance

Budget & Finance Rating	Met
Areas of Strength	Areas of Growth
Frontier continues to be an excellent steward of both taxpayer and philanthropic dollars.	

6. Governance

#	Standard	Measurement/Documentation	Status/ Comments
6.1	Board member training complies with all state laws.	Per SLU's analyses of onsite secured files	Met
6.2	All Board and committee meetings adhere to the provisions of the MO open meetings/Sunshine laws.	Per SLU's review of Board meeting minutes as well as observation of monthly Board meetings	Met
6.3	All Board members have undergone criminal background and FCSR checks as required in section 160.400.14, RSMo.	Per SLU's analyses of onsite secured files	Met
6.4	All Board members submit ethics commission requirements annually as outlined in 105.483 and 105.492 RSMo.	Per SLU's analyses of onsite secured files	Met

Summary Findings for Governance

Governance Rating		Met
Areas of Strength	Areas of Growth	
The Frontier governing board has created and consistently updates its succession plan, ensuring perpetuity of the organization.	The Frontier governing board is working towards establishing timelines for consistent, proactive reviews of policies.	

Summary Findings for Annual Evaluation

Annual Evaluation Rating	Met
Themes of Strength Across Multiple Standards	Themes of Growth Needs Across Multiple Standards
<p>Frontier has exemplary processes and procedures in place for operation in the six areas addressed in this evaluation. The organization consistently meets its academic and culture outcome goals, reporting deadlines, fiduciary responsibilities, and governance expectations.</p>	<p>Frontier is aware that improved student performance in both biology and government is needed.</p>