

CLOSING THE GRADUATION GAP

***An Innovative Accountability System for
Charter Schools Serving Significant
Populations of Students Eligible under
Minnesota's Graduation Incentives Law***

A Proposal

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MN ASSOCIATION OF
CHARTER SCHOOLS

Unleashing education from convention

Background

- Charter schools are to be innovative in terms of accountability and outcomes
- NCLB – Diverted attention from innovative assessments to standardized tests
- Despite NCLB, there is still a need for innovative assessment methods and measuring outcomes
- While there is a need for innovative assessments and forms of measuring outcomes for all schools, the need is acute for schools serving populations “... *who have experienced or are experiencing difficulty in the traditional education system...*”
- This proposal is for an innovative accountability system for schools serving populations of graduation incentive students.



MACS Graduation Incentives Workgroup Goals

- Identify and collect data about graduation incentives populations in charters and the programs serving them
 - Survey
 - Interviews
- Identify opportunities for data sharing and joint programming
- Develop an accountability system for authorizers and schools, & accompanying legislation



Statutory Context: Charter School Law

MN Charter School Law 124D.10 Subd. 1(A) – Defines the six (6) purposes of charter schools, including:

- (4) *“measure learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes,”*
- (5) *“establish new forms of accountability for schools”*

MN Statute 124D.10 Subd. 9 (2) – states a charter school *“may limit its admissions to pupils who are eligible to participate in the graduation incentives program under section 124D.68.”*



Statutory Context: Graduation Incentives Law

MN 124D.68 Subd. 1: *“The legislature finds that it is critical to provide options for children to succeed in school. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to provide incentives for and encourage all Minnesota students who have experienced or are experiencing difficulty in the traditional education system to enroll in alternative programs.”*

MN Graduation Incentives Law 124D.68 Subd. 2 – Defines the defines twelve (12) criteria for student eligibility



Eligible Schools Under Proposal

- 1) A charter school that designates their school as a “graduation incentives school” and limits enrollment to eligible incentives students.

Or

- 2) A school serving a significant population (70% or more) of graduation incentives students during previous school contract term.



Three-Elements of the Assessment System

1] Academic Assessments

2] Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Assessments

3] Student Engagement Assessments



Weighting of Assessment Elements

- Academic Assessments – 30%
- Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Assessments – 40%
- Student Engagement Assessments – 30%



Academic Assessments – 30%

Schools are required to comply with both of the following assessment elements:

1] Student Academic Achievement

2] Student Longitudinal Academic Growth

Notes:

- A minimum cohort of 20 students required.
- Students enrolled at least 90 days and continuously enrolled at the time of testing.



Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness Assessments – 40%

School chooses at least 4 of the following assessment measures:

1. High School Graduation Rate
2. Student Drop-Out Rate
3. Postsecondary Readiness and Placement Rate
4. Senior Credit Graduation Rate
5. Transition Success
6. Post-completion Success
7. Credit/course Completion
8. Work Certifications & Pre-Apprenticeship Programs
9. Postsecondary Course Completion



Student Engagement Assessments– 30%

School chooses at least 3 of the following student engagement measures:

1. Attendance
2. Truancy
3. Student Re-engagement
4. Returning Students (Retention)
5. Character and Social Competencies
6. Citizenship and Community Service



School and Authorizer Contract

The school and authorizer must agree on the baseline and a growth targets for all of the assessment elements chosen by the school and these would become part of the charter contract.

Academic Assessments
Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness Assessments
Student Engagement Assessments



Next Steps

- Inform and educate the charter school community and any public policy stakeholders
- Encourage schools and authorizers to utilize accountability system in charter contracts.
- Seek legislation to codify proposal framework into law.



For a complete copy of CLOSING THE GRADUATION GAP go to the MACS website www.mncharterschools.org:

1. Click on “Innovation, Quality and Accountability”
2. Click on “Accountability”
3. Find “Closing the Graduation Gap” report at the bottom of the page

