

**MISSOURI STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA ITEM:****January 2020**

CONSIDERATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION RENEWAL FOR  
THE BIOME

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY:**

Sections 160.400 and 160.405, RSMo

Consent  
ItemAction  
ItemReport  
Item**STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

Access, Opportunity, Equity – Provide all students access to a broad range of high-quality educational opportunities from early learning into post-high school engagement.

**SUMMARY**

The 1998 session of the Missouri General Assembly authorized establishment of charter schools. Renewal charter applications are submitted every five years. Section 160.405.9, RSMo requires the State Board of Education to vote to renew the charter after the sponsor has demonstrated compliance with state and federal law.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education received a Charter School Renewal Application approved by the University of Missouri-Saint Louis (UMSL). The Biome, St. Louis, currently serves 199 students in grades K-5. The charter school has requested that UMSL renew its charter for a term of five years beginning July 1, 2020, and ending June 30, 2025. The sponsor has indicated the charter school is in good standing and requests renewal from the State Board of Education.

**PRESENTER**

Chris Neale, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Quality Schools, will assist in the presentation and discussion of this agenda item.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Department recommends that the State Board of Education authorize The Biome to continue operations pursuant to the charter renewal granted by UMSL, effective July 1, 2020, for a five-year period, per the contingencies outlined in the performance contract.



# CONSIDERATION OF RENEWAL: THE BIOME

*University of Missouri-St. Louis*

Missouri Department  
of Elementary and Secondary Education

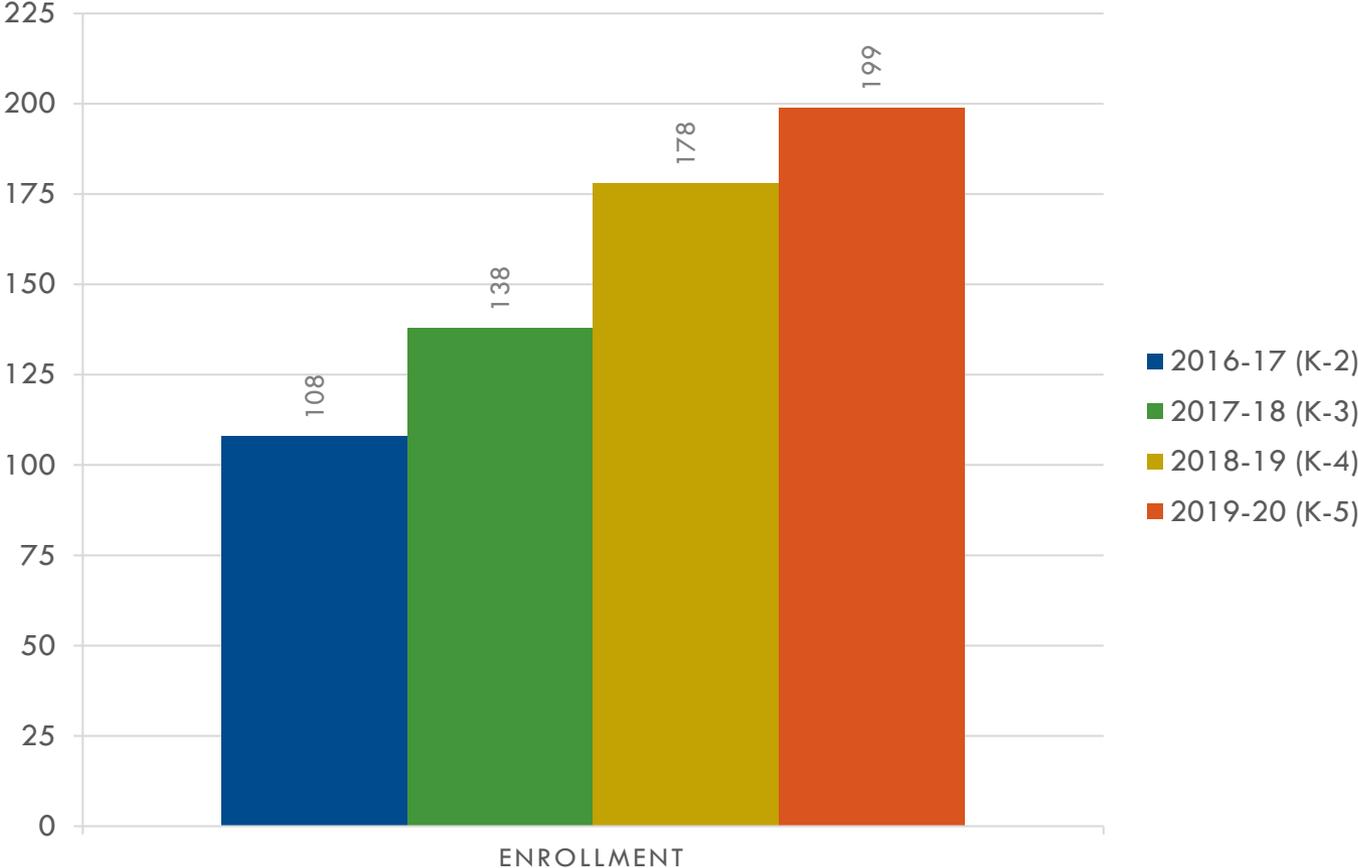
# Profile

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- Location: 4471 Olive Street, St. Louis
- Opened in 2015-2016
- 1<sup>st</sup> renewal
- Grades Served: K-5



# Enrollment History



# Demographic Summary

	The Biome	St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS)	State
Asian	*	2.7	2.1
Black	80.9	79.1	15.7
Hispanic	*	5.1	6.7
Indian/Alaskan	*	.1	.4
Multi-Race	4.5	*	4.3
White	13.5	13.0	70.7
LEP	*	10.4	3.9
FRL	67.8	CEP**	50.0
Special Education	6.2	14.4	13.5

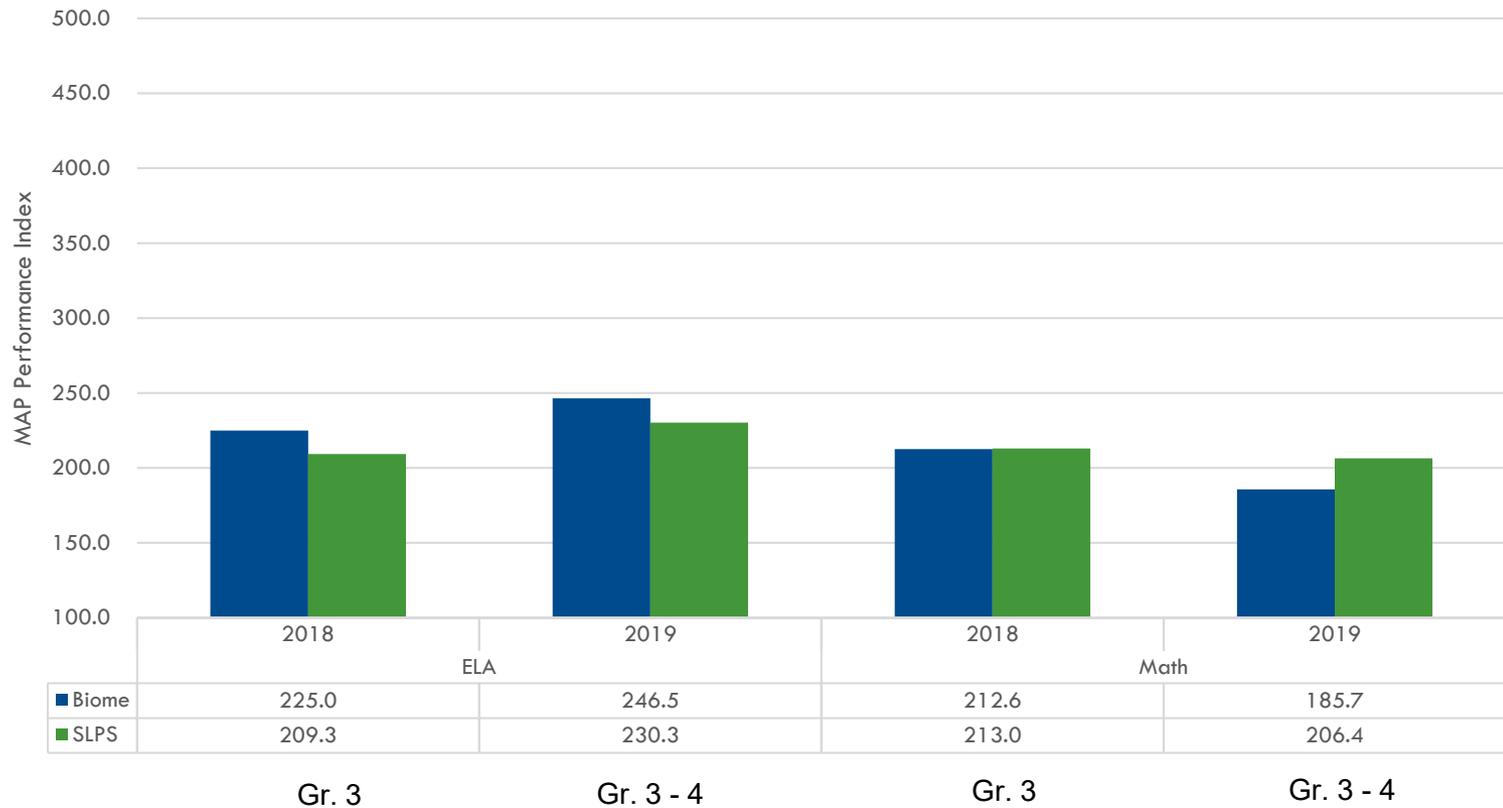
\* Data suppressed to protect student privacy when cross referenced to other reports

\*\* Community Eligibility Provision, meals free regardless of student income



# Achievement Data

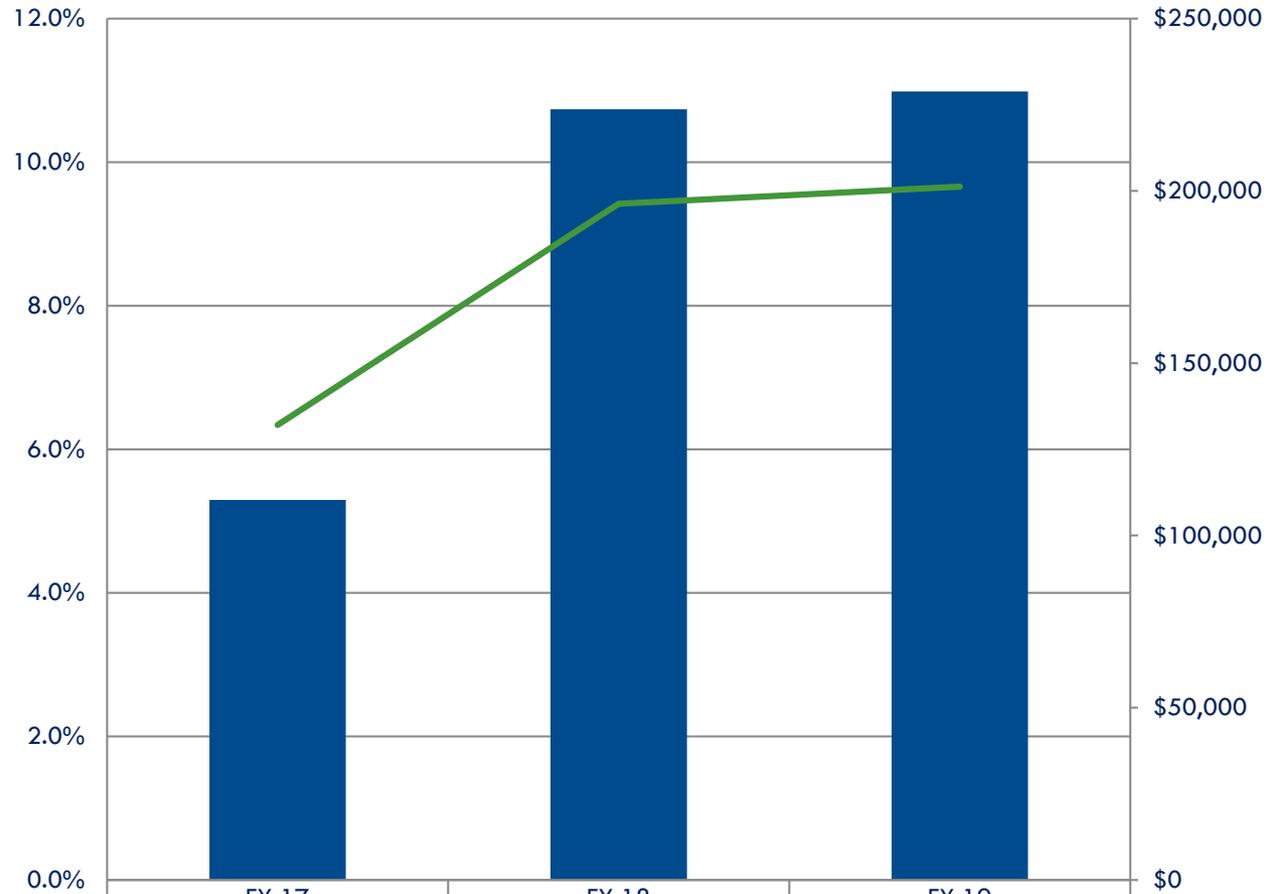
Grade Span Achievement Comparison



Data represented by MAP Performance Index  
 Single-year outcomes; not three-year averages



# The Biome Fund Balances



Operating Fund Balance	\$110,324	\$223,691	\$228,841
Balance Percentage	6.3%	9.4%	9.7%



# Statutory Requirements for Renewal

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## □ Section 160.405.9, RSMo

- Annual performance report that equals or exceeds the district in which the charter school is located three of the last four school years by appropriate grade level configuration.
- The charter school is fiscally viable and does not have:
  - a. A negative balance in its operating funds;
  - b. A combined balance of less than three percent of the amount expended for such funds during the previous fiscal year; or
  - c. Expenditures that exceed receipts for the most recently completed fiscal year.
- The charter is in compliance with its legally binding performance contract and Sections 160.400 to 160.425 and 167.349, RSMo.



# Sponsor Performance Contract Analysis

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## Table 1. Academic Achievement

Measure	Annual Target
Academic Achievement ELA – 225.0, 246.4 Math – 212.5, 185.7	345.0, 360.0 – Does Not Meet 345.0, 360.0 – Does Not Meet
Subgroup Achievement ELA – 220.0, 244.2 Math – 206.7, 182.7	345.0, 360.0 – Does Not Meet 345.0, 360.0 – Does Not Meet

## Table 2. MSIP 5

Measure	Annual Target
Student Attendance	Meets
Overall APR Score	N/A

**Finance Standards:** Meets

**Governance Standards:** Meets



# Sponsor Performance Contract Analysis

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- Academic and Subgroup achievement
  - Charter did not meet contract targets in ELA or Math
  - Charter outscored district in ELA
  - ELA showed significant improvement
- Targets set in 2015, prior to new assessments in 2018



# Qualification for Renewal

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- Compliance with statute 160.405.9, RSMo
  - The Biome has met the statutory requirements for organizational and fiscal viability.
  - The charter has outperformed the district on fifty-percent of the applicable standards.
  - Sponsor considers school to be in compliance with contract.
- Sponsor recommendation
  - The University of Missouri-St. Louis, the sponsor, recommends a five-year renewal.
- DESE recommendation
  - DESE recommends a five-year renewal.





## Inspiring Dreams. Growing Possibilities.



- Our learners experience a unique hands-on, learner driven education program.
- We are making huge investments in building strong readers
- The Biome way focuses on the individual needs of our learners.
- We are dedicated to our learner's future and direction.
- We thrive and grow through our volunteers and donors.
- Our staff, board and volunteers are passionate about the long-term success of the school to be a learning destination for city families.
- We are committed to our classroom leader's professional development to be able to grow and provide a richer experience for our learners.

# Charter School Renewal

Implementation Year(s): 2019-20

## The Biome (115926)

Team Members:	Bill Kent	President and CEO	bkent@thebiomeschool.org	3145310982
	Bill Mendelsohn	Executive Director Charter Schools Office	mendelsohnb@umsl.edu	3145164872

Directions: Please state 'yes' or 'no' for each assurance. Please explain If an assurance requirement is not met. Comments should be as concise as possible, please include an attachment if further explanation is needed.

Charter schools requesting to renew its charter must submit this application electronically by responding to the following sections. The renewal submission must be signed by the Local Education Agency (LEA) authorized representative and the sponsor to ensure information submitted is accurate and in compliance with all statutes.

Upload questions require a document to be uploaded. This is done by selecting Manage Uploads, select Upload a Document, browse for the file, under File Description include the number of the question you are addressing and a description of the file as indicated by the Upload questions. Under Manage Team, include LEA contact and sponsor contact information.

1. Upload one page letter from the sponsor requesting renewal that must be signed by the Program Director of the Charter Sponsor Office. This assures that the Charter Renewal Application is accurate and in compliance with all statutes. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 1. Sponsor Renewal Letter

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2. LEA assures that Core Data/MOSIS is updated with current school name, superintendent/head administrator, and names of buildings(s) and principal(s).

Yes

If no, please explain.

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3. LEA assures that Core Data/MOSIS is updated with mailing/physical address and telephone number of the charter school's main office.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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4. LEA assures that Core Data/MOSIS is updated with list of the current board members including name, title and years served.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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5. List the education service provider name and address (if applicable).

Education service provider name and address is below

Not applicable

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6. LEA assures that the charter school adheres to the requirements of the applicable state statutes and regulations, the state rules governing the programs, and all other applicable statutes.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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7. Upload the school's mission and briefly present the vision for how the school will continue to operate in the next five years. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 7. Mission and Vision

7. Mission and Vision Uploaded

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8. List the date of board meeting which the vision and mission were adopted.

December 1, 2015

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9. Upload or comment any changes or modifications to the school (new management, new theme, change in population, instructional staff). Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 9. Changes or Modifications

9. Changes or Modifications Uploaded

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10. Upload or comment a concise projection of the school's goals over the next term of the charter. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 10. School Goals

10. School Goals Uploaded

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11. Upload or comment on other areas that have/will be addressed to improve performance. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 11. Improve Performance

11. Improve Performance Uploaded

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12. LEA assures that the school's educational program goals and curriculum aligned with state standards.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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13. Upload the organizational chart of the staffing/reporting structure for the board, administration and staff, including teachers and contract employees. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 13. Organizational Chart

13. Organizational Chart Uploaded

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14. Upload the Articles of Incorporation, bylaws and Missouri not-for-profit status. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 14. Articles of Incorporation Bylaws and Not-For-Profit Status

14. Articles of Incorporation Bylaws and Not-For-Profit Status Uploaded

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15. Upload the renewal notification letter sent to the school board of the district. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 15. Renewal Notification Letter

15. Renewal Notification Letter Uploaded

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16. LEA assures that professional development/training was provided for all teachers and leaders.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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17. LEA assures that requisite insurance coverage for directors/officers, and buildings.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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18. LEA assures that board's most recent fingerprints.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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19. LEA assures that there is a signed Conflict of Interest disclosure forms.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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20. Assurance of Family Care Safety Registry check.

Yes

If no, please explain.

21. Assurance of requisite surety bond for school financial officer(s).

Yes

If no, please explain.

The Biome does not maintain a surety bond for our school financial officer as it is not required.

22. List the date the board reviewed faculty and staff handbook.

The Biome Board will review the most recent staff handbook and approve it on 1/14/2020.

23. Assurance the board satisfies sunshine law compliance, including: posting agenda, time change notification.

Yes

If no, please explain.

24. Comment how board agendas and minutes are made available to the public.

All meetings of the governing Board of Directors of The Biome School comply with the Open Meetings Act (Sunshine Law) Chapter 610, RSMo. An agenda for each scheduled, special or proposed closed meeting of the Board is prepared by the Board Chair in consultation with the President and CEO. Notices for meetings are posted at the entrance of the school. Agendas and minutes of Board meetings are available to the public for inspection at the President and CEO's office, at reasonable hours. The minutes include the date, time, place, members present, and a record of any votes taken.

25. Comment how often the board meets (monthly, semi-monthly).

The Board meets six times a year. Meetings are held bi-monthly, with one summer month having no meeting

26. Comment how often does the board review policies.

The Biome School Board reviews policies annually to ensure compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. The review process is led by the President and CEO, and supported by the school's legal counsel.

27. Comment how many hours of board training are required for the board annually.

The Biome School creates and implements annual training for all members of the Board of Directors. Under the new sponsor contract with UMSL, Board training will be developed in partnership with our sponsor.

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28. Assurance that the school uses curriculum guides.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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29. Assurance of an evaluation process of the LEA's leadership (admin, superintendent, principals).

Yes

If no, please explain.

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30. List any sponsor/partnership efforts that help support the charter school(s) in increasing student performance.

Active and engaged community involvement is at the core of our academic model. The Biome has established an ongoing partnership between the school and community organizations to build mutual responsibility for our students' learning, academic excellence, and social and emotional development. The list of current community partners includes:

- Donald Danforth Plant and Science Center - In 2018, The Biome embarked on a new partnership with the Donald Danforth Plant and Science Center. The Biome is preparing to serve as a pilot site for the Center's first greenhouse constructed at a public, St. Louis City School. Our teams are working together to design and construct the greenhouse and our students are playing an integral role in the research and development phases.
- Fleishman Hillard – Fleishman Hillard has generously donated time and resources to help The Biome improve its marketing resources and products. A team from Fleishman regularly communicates with The Biome to share marketing and public relations resources and best practices.
- Forest Park Forever - Forest Park Forever has invited The Biome's 3rd graders to partner on their new Natural Playscape project. Our students will meet with playscape designers to offer their perspective and help design the area, which will be an asset to the general public.
- Linblad Expeditions & National Geographic - In the coming school year, The Biome will have connections with internationally renowned, Linblad Expeditions and National Geographic Society. Thanks to the industriousness of one of our 3rd grade teachers, The Biome is one of only 45 schools across the US and Canada that will be represented in this year's fellowship class. Our students will have access to a plethora of virtual resources and real-time learning as their teacher embarks on an Arctic expedition with geography professionals.
- Literacy Morning Corporate Sponsors - Microsoft, Ameren Corporation, and Bayer are a few of the local corporations that will adopt at least one of The Biome's Literacy Mornings in the 2019-2020 school year. Members of these corporations will volunteer their time to share the joys of literacy as they read books with The Biome's learners on a Friday morning. Thanks to Board Member Amy Hulse at Microsoft for initiating this effort.
- Local Universities - The Biome is fortunate to have partnerships with our local universities. On a weekly basis, undergraduate students from Washington University's Books & Basketball group and Saint Louis University's Micah Program spend time

with The Biome's learners by helping with tutoring and enrichment activities in the extended day program. Additionally, students from UMSL's School of Education spend time volunteering as teachers' assistants during the school day. Last school year, a total of 215 volunteers served 1,884 hours in these capacities.

- Managing Partners – Thanks to the leadership of Board Chair, Judy DeLuca-Ford, Managing Partners has generously provided in-kind human resource development support for The Biome. The Biome is able to utilize information from the Big Five Work Style Assessments in the hiring process and assisting with employee professional development planning.

- Missouri Community Service Commission - The Biome has expanded a partnership with the Missouri Community Service Commission (AmeriCorps) in the delivery of academic and social-emotional learning interventions for children. A total of 11 AmeriCorps Members will serve full-time to assist in the school day and extended day program, with a core focus that supports children who, in turn, benefit from individualized attention.

- MO Valley Chapter of the Parenteral Drug Association (PDA) – After an introduction by Thermo Fisher representatives, The MO Valley Chapter of the PDA selected The Biome to be the recipient of a donation of STEM books needed for the coming school year. Thanks to this partnership, The Biome received \$1,400 worth of books requested by our kindergarten classroom leaders.

- Pixel Press Technology, LLC - The Biome partners with the St. Louis based company, Pixel Press Technology, LLC, to utilize the organization's video-game design tool, Bloxels, to support STEAM programming. During our inaugural year in 2015-2016, The Biome was one of the first schools in St. Louis to test Bloxels before it was released to the public by working with Bloxels co-founders, Robin Wrath and Josh Stevens. Prior to this partnership with The Biome, Pixel Press worked with Youth Learning Center (The Biome's founder) as a participant in the YLC Midwest Regional Game Jam in 2013 and 2014 and at the Cortex Murmuration Festival in 2016.

- Saint Louis Zoo - The Biome, in partnership with the Saint Louis Zoo, most recently delivered another successful spring 2019 pilot of our "study abroad micro school". The first partnership of its kind among St. Louis City public schools. For an entire week, our students were immersed in the daily life of the Saint Louis Zoo and nearby areas of Forest Park to participate in hands-on, cross-curricular projects, and to interact, observe and learn from a variety of Zoo scientists and staff members.

- Slalom - The Biome partners with local technology company, Slalom, to encourage IT professionals to work with our staff and students on a variety of projects from cloud-based professional development to Mine Craft classes.

- Staenberg Group – The Biome is grateful to partner with Michael Staenberg and the Staenberg Group to access in-kind property management consulting resources. This relationship was leveraged by Board Chair, Judy DeLuca-Ford.

- The Opportunity Trust - The Biome is part of the new Better Measures regional learning cohort, sponsored by The Opportunity Trust in partnership with Panorama Education, to collect and use more holistic data on students' social-emotional development and school climate.

- Thermo Fisher Scientific - Thermo Fisher Scientific, a world leader in serving science, is growing its new partnership with The Biome thanks to the leadership of Board Member, Daniel Garcia. In addition to financial investment and sponsoring The Biome's 2020 gala, the company encourages its scientists to volunteer their time with The Biome's children conducting science experiments. Volunteers have packaged and donated over 400 science kits for our students to use.

- University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) – UMSL is The Biome's school sponsor, and continues to commit funding and professional development support for our educational programming. The UMSL Charter School Office is responsible for ensuring that our educational program meets state and sponsor requirements, and that our school has access to necessary resources to be successful.

- Washington University Medical Center - Washington University Medical Center partners with The Biome to fulfill supply needs of our classrooms. The Center, thanks to the leadership of Board Member Brian Philips, has conducted school supply drives for The Biome two years in a row. It has also partnered with Park Central Development to host fund and friend-raising events to benefit The Biome.

- 500 Women Scientists - 500 Women Scientists is working with The Biome to fulfill science and STEM classroom needs. The group is in the process of holding a supply drive for our classrooms.

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31. Assurance of compliance with any/all federal and state programs' requirements.

Yes

If no, please explain.

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32. Upload the existing performance contract that includes timelines and standards for renewal (include procedures and consequences for failure to meet requirements). Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 32. Current Performance Contract

32. Current Performance Contract Uploaded

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33. Upload data on measurements and objectives met (or not) in existing performance contract. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 33. Current Measurements and Objectives

33. Current Measurements and Objectives Uploaded (Note: Measurements and objectives are included in the Performance Contract)

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34. Upload the performance contract for the next term of charter. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 34. Next Term Performance Contract

34. Next Term Performance Contract Uploaded

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35. If the school is a recipient of a federal Charter School Program grant, the sponsor assures that student performance is the most important factor in the determination of renewal/revocation.

Yes

If no, please comment.

N/A

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36. Comment on goals to address academic performance based on current and projected data.

The existing performance contract (2015 - 2020) includes timelines and standards for renewal and is attached as Upload (34). Data on measurements and objectives met (or not) are outlined in Upload (32). (Note: Achievement Targets not yet applicable can be found in Upload 34). Beyond the performance contract. UMSL conducts an annual performance review focused on the following Performance Areas ):

- I. Transformative and Innovative Vision
  - II. Substantive Student Academic Achievement
  - III. Transformational Curriculum
  - IV. Empowering Culture of Achievement
  - V. Strong School Leaders
  - VI. Transformational Teachers
  - VII. Comprehensive Student Support System
  - VIII. Responsible Board Governance
  - IX. Sound Financial Operations
  - X. Engaged Parents and Community

The annual performance review and performance contract is a guideline for establishing improvement goals, increasing transparency between UMSL's Charter

School Office and The Biome's Board of Directors, and school accountability. Identifying strengths and areas for growth are major parts of this review process that ensures that The Biome school is focused on areas of growth which impact student achievement. The Biome School is committed to partnering with UMSL to meet the expectations and requirements as defined through the performance contract, annual review process, and in compliance with applicable state and federal laws governing charter.

As indicated in Upload (32), The Biome has not met the performance contract (2015 – 2020) goals. Despite having completed only four years of operation and amassing only two years of MAP data, our staff has and will continue to improve academic performance by utilizing STAR Literacy and Math Data, Fountas and Pinnell reading data, and by implementing evidenced based interventions.

### Literacy

Again, despite our limited years of operation and MAP data, we have identified patterns in our learners' literacy needs. We are striving to create a culture of literacy at the Biome that not only supports and advances our reluctant, struggling readers but pushes our strong, capable readers to reach their full potential.

The initiatives are evident in the classroom instruction, Tier II instruction with specialists, and the overall culture on the focus of literacy to students. Our overall goal of providing learning opportunities that support the growth of our readers include but are not limited to, developing a comprehensive Biome library where all students have access to culturally relevant books, as well as leveled libraries in every classroom.

The literacy instruction in the 2019-20 school year was increased from 90 minutes to 160 minutes at all grade levels. This 'core' literacy instructional time is considered 'untouchable' time. This reinforces the belief that literacy is vital to success and that literacy learning is at its maximum. The literacy instruction includes a systemic approach to writer's workshop block. Our writer's workshop instruction method is focused on the work of Lucy Calkins. This time is used for the instruction of writing in various genres. Along with the writing component, kindergarten and first grade have adopted a systematic, explicitly taught phonics program, Really Great Reading. Our diagnostical assessment tools have shown this to be an area of weaknesses in our learners. However, up to this point in the history of the Biome, we had not implemented any specific instruction to focus primarily on acquisition of this skill. To support the phonics/spelling component in grades 2-5, we adopted a word study program, Words Their Way, that focuses on the study of word structures and is used to assist our learners with these missing skills in the more intermediate grades.

In order to continue to support our learners when they are not at school, last year we began our first ever summer school at The Biome. For four weeks, learners were immersed in different genres of reading and writing while receiving individual and small group reading instruction based on their specific needs.

In looking at our learners' needs, it is apparent that more focused, small group and individual instruction is required in order to advance many learners in their skills in literacy. The Biome now employs 1.5 reading specialists, and a part time instructional coach. These interventionists support learners by a program titled, Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI). LLI incorporates reading, writing, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency, giving the students a well-balanced literacy intervention. In order to facilitate a seamless approach to our intervention, the special education teachers also support the learners they service with the LLI system. Additionally, the interventionists support the teachers' instruction of literacy in the classroom by coaching different reading strategies throughout the year.

### Mathematics

During the last four years, we have grown a great deal in our math curriculum/program, but not enough. The original teaching series adopted by the

Biome Staff was Jump Math. This series was recommended because of its success at camp type programs. The Biome staff found that teaching from the Jump Math series provided a foundation but limited the diverse experiences they could offer the children, such as remediation and accelerations. In the last two years we have focused on trying to develop the math program and are looking for a new series that provided more resources, technology, enrichment opportunities, remediation and parent involvement. We decided to use the Envisions Math Program and increased our instructional time to one hour per day. We are currently in our second year of implementation of Envisions Math.

The new series and strategies allowed us to start making gains in math. Looking at the first four years of our Math program, we have seen some good growth in Math based on our STAR data across all grade levels, but it is inconsistent. The Math MAP data for the past two years reflects scores in basic and below basic for the 3rd and 4th grades. This has been addressed by providing mathematical instruction that focuses on skill development, processing and thinking skills, and to creating a strong reading foundation so they can successfully answer math story problems. The Biome staff is implementing the new curriculum series with fidelity but there needs to be more support to understand how best to deliver the Envisions Math series to our learners so that we can continue making Math academic gains. Plans are in place to provide a daylong workshop for all classroom leaders with one of the Envisions trainers. This will be in conjunction with supportive webinars to continue growing our skills and strategies.

The expectation is for improved math instruction and math learning by providing the training, support, and practices necessary for our learners.

#### Tiered Structure of Support at The Biome School- Policy and Procedures

##### Tier I

Tier I instruction refers to scientifically based classroom interventions, accommodations, and modifications centered around high-quality teaching in the general education classroom. All students have access to such teaching methods aimed at facilitating academic success at a differentiated level. Teachers should be providing such instruction on a daily basis with consistency and fidelity. Tier I instruction should include regular screenings for on-grade-level achievement and are conducted in whole group intervention. School administration and The Student Success Team support each teacher as needed to implement such instruction.

##### Tier II

For students not making adequate progress within Tier I instruction, supports with increasing intensity matched to each student's needs and rate of progress are required. At The Biome, Tier II supports are targeted specifically in the areas of Literacy, Social Emotional Learning, and Behavior Intervention. Progress monitoring is completed through the following: informal assessment, Emergent Literacy screenings, observations, classroom data collection, Speech/Language Screenings, Fountas and Pinnell Benchmarks, Guided Reading Assessments, Lucy Caulkins Benchmarks, and STAR District Assessment scores. The Student Success Team facilitates bi-monthly meetings with each individual teacher to review Tier I instruction and determine need for Tier II intervention\*\*. These interventions are then put in place for students showing lack of progress through the above-mentioned screenings. When attending these meetings, teachers follow a Tier II checklist, providing assessment data, work samples, Behavior Collection Forms, and a history of parent contact/involvement. The team then determines eligible students to be provided intensified intervention in small-group settings in addition to the general education curriculum.

##### Tier III

Students continuing to display lack of progress with Tier I and Tier II are then considered for further intensive and individualized intervention to target the skill deficits. Data collected during Tier I and II are used to support a referral form to The Student Success Team. The team then facilitates bi-monthly meetings to discuss each student. These meetings include School Administrator (Principal/LEA), general education teacher, and all interventionists. Plans are then created to provide Tier III

intervention in the targeted areas. For Students who do not progress to the desired level of achievement in response to these specific interventions may be referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for Special Education services under IDEA. Data collected from Tier I, II, and III are included when making the eligibility determination. It is noted that at any time during this process, IDEA allows parents to request a formal evaluation to determine Special Education eligibility.

\*\*For Tier II and Tier III literacy intervention, the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) system is utilized.

#### Attendance

The Biome School has traditionally produced a strong attendance percentage for our students and during the 2018 – 19 school year we exceeded the 90/90 attendance goal. This improvement was due to increased focus on communicating early and often with parents who failed to meet attendance expectations. This year, we have added a social worker to continue partnering with parents and assists them in meeting attendance requirements. However, we want to also hold them accountable for attendance issues that will impact their child's ability to learn.

#### Parent Engagement, Satisfaction, and Interventions (Items 47-49)

The Biome School conducts a Biannual Annual Survey of to gain a better understanding of both the strengths and improvement areas of the school as perceived by the parents and guardians of The Biome's learners. This survey data is used to improve the facilities, academic programming, support services, opportunities for parent engagement, and overall culture at The Biome.

In April of 2019, parents and guardians of learners attended a focus group dinner with President and CEO of The Biome, Bill Kent. The conclusion of this section will summarize concerns voiced by a variety of families and the ongoing and planned interventions.

#### Summary of Major Themes

- Environment & Facilities

The survey data indicates that parents and guardians of learners at The Biome are satisfied with the appearance, cleanliness, and overall warmth of staff members upon entry into the school, as indicated by 96% of responses. Parents and guardians report that they feel safe when dropping off their learners at the school.

- Teachers

The majority (91%) of responses indicate that parents and guardians are satisfied with their learner's teacher, believing that they treat their child fairly and with respect (96%); however, 15% of parents and guardians are unsatisfied with the frequency of updates about their learner's strengths and progress. While several survey participants express their appreciation of their learner's teachers, others commented that there are, "inconsistent... communication methods," between the learners' parents and guardians and their teachers.

- Principal

The majority (96%) of parents and guardians report feeling satisfied with the Principal, and 100% of participants indicated that they feel the principal treats them with care and respect.

- Educational Services

The majority 91% of parents and guardians at The Biome are satisfied with educational services provided by the school. Many survey participants state that they value the hands-on, engaging education that their learner receives; however, some disagree that the learning environment meets their child's specific needs and 8% believe that their child is not being adequately challenged.

- Values & Character Building

The majority (96%) of parents and guardians agree that their learners are becoming more confident, skilled learners with positive behaviors. Overall, survey participants agree that their child is learning positive behaviors at The Biome. However, 27% indicated that they neither agree nor disagree that there is a positive difference in their child's behavior because of the school's values and character program. One guardian reflected on their learner's increased negative behaviors and inquired what the school is doing to discuss and prevent bullying. Additionally, when asked whether their learner is developing Growth Mindset, a key approach to learning at The Biome, 38% of parents and guardians indicated that they do not know about Growth Mindset.

- Enrichment Classes

The majority (92.3%) of parents and guardians are satisfied with the enrichment classes provided by The Biome staff. While some guardians comment that they would like to see their learners provided with more adaptive thinking activities, several others praised the school for holistic engagement, such as The Biome's mind and movement activities.

- Parent/Family Education & Engagement

Overall, satisfaction with parent and family education and engagement is high at 90%; however, 31% of parents and guardians indicate that they are not receiving an adequate amount of helpful information from The Biome regarding child development, health and nutrition, and other similar topics. One survey participant suggested that parents and guardians receive event notifications earlier. Overall, parents and guardians commend The Biome staff in keeping students engaged in and out of school and expressed appreciation for parent involvement.

- Extra Supports

Parents and guardians seem uncertain about what supplementary resources are available at The Biome. While 56% of parents and guardians indicate agreement that the Biome school provides adequate supports to families and learners, 39% neither agree nor disagree that these supports are available. These outcomes suggest that many parents and guardians lack knowledge of resources that The Biome provides. Further, it appears that there is a communication gap between The Biome and learners' parents and guardians regarding information about services that support family needs and their child's learning and behavior needs.

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37. Upload projected budget for the next five years (list of items). Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 37. Projected Budget

37. Projected Budget Uploaded

- 
38. Comment or upload any building/facility plan changes anticipated in the next five years.

N/A

- 
39. Comment on plans of expansion of grade levels.

The Biome School was chartered as a K-8 School in 2014. On November 27, 2018, The Biome Board of Directors unanimously approved the resolution to not expand to middle school. This decision was made after a year of research and feedback from other charter schools and educational professionals. As an organization that carefully and routinely reviews its progress and applies the lessons learned, we determined that:

- Diverting our resources to launch a middle school, which we determined to be a different academic model, would divert our limited resources from improving our elementary program.
  - Acquiring new facilities would require significant financial debt that we are not willing to assume.
  - Our students deserve a fully functioning middle school versus a developing model.
-

40. Assurance the school board reviews expenditures, low balances in operating funds, compliance with federal/state programs, and staff hiring.

Yes

If no, please explain.

---

41. Assurance that the school reports outstanding debt as required in Section 37.850.1.

Yes

If no, please explain.

---

42. Upload a school review process/ form of items that the sponsor addresses annually to ensure LEA is fulfilling its mission of educating children. Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 42. School Review Process/Form

---

43. Assurance the charter school understands the procedures for closure & distribution of assets as specified in RSMo160.405.1

Yes

If no, please explain.

---

44. List the date the charter school was placed on probation or remediation (if applicable).

---

45. Upload the reasons why the charter is on probation or has remediation plan (if applicable). Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 45. Probation or Remediation Plan

---

46. Comment on what attributes to student performance below 70% APR.

---

47. Upload intervention strategies currently in place based on analysis of student data (include timeline). Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 47. Intervention Strategies

---

48. Upload or comment on what improvements/results have been obtained? Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 48. Improvement Results Obtained

48. Improvement Results Obtained Uploaded

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49. Upload or comment on what additional steps/strategies are planned? Upload file under Manage Uploads. File Description would be 49. Additional Steps Strategies

49. Additional Steps Strategies Uploaded

---

50. The authorized representative assures DESE that the charter school, in accordance with Sections 160.400-160.425, RSMo, shall:

1. Receive and expend state/federal funds in a manner consistent with the intent of the approved application.

2. Keep such records for a period of three years and provide such information as may be necessary for the fiscal program auditing and for program evaluation; provide DESE any information it may need to carry out its responsibilities under the program.

The LEA authorized representative understands the assurances and the responsibility for compliance placed upon the applicant. The applicant will refund directly to DESE the amount of any funds made available to the applicant that may be determined by DESE, or an auditor representing DESE, to have been misspent or otherwise misapplied.

Yes

If no, please explain.

---



3651 Olive Street Suite 203D  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
O: 314.516.4872

October 30, 2019

Charles Shields: President, Missouri State Board of Education  
Vic Lenz: Vice-President  
Members of the State Board of Education

RE: Request for State Board Approval of The Biome's Charter Renewal

The University of Missouri-St. Louis has carefully reviewed the charter school renewal application submitted by the Board of Directors and administration of The Biome, fully endorses its contents, and requests approval of the school's charter for the next five school years, 2021-2025.

Based on the UMSL Charter Schools Office's review of Missouri statutes and its annual reviews of The Biome, UMSL ensures that, to the best of its knowledge, The Biome is in compliance with all applicable statutes.

UMSL is pleased to continue its sponsorship of The Biome. After a challenging start, the board and administration has strengthened the school's leadership, instructional model and curriculum. UMSL is excited to support the school's efforts to provide a quality education to the students it serves.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Mendelsohn".

Bill Mendelsohn  
Executive Director  
UMSL Charter Schools Office



3651 Olive Street Suite 203D  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
O: 314.516.4872

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Bill Mendelsohn  
Executive Director  
UMSL Charter Schools Office



Inspiring Dreams. Growing Possibilities.

## MISSION AND VISION

The Biome's Mission and Vision were adopted at the December 1, 2015 meeting of The Biome Board of Directors.

### Mission Statement

We engage students in an individualized and challenging, yet nurturing, educational environment, enriching their minds and cultivating confident and creative builders of the future. Our integrated approach promotes interdisciplinary, inventive thinking.

### Vision Statement

To share the promise of education – **We believe education is the key to a better life.** We are committed to promoting the values of education to our families, our children, and the communities in which we work. **We will be the preeminent elementary school for teaching and learning** based on student performance and adherence to core beliefs.

## Core Beliefs and Commitments

### Core Beliefs

1. **Sharing the promise of education** – We believe education is the key to a better life. We are committed to promoting the values of education to our families, our children, and the communities in which we work.
2. **Striving for educational equity** – We believe every child can learn but does not necessarily have the opportunity. We are committed to creating access to quality educational opportunities for all students. We will deploy our resources to support students in their pursuit of education and a productive life.
3. **Requiring excellence of ourselves and our students** – We set high standards and expect excellence and innovation in our work product and outcomes. We believe in the potential of every child and, as educators, we are committed to guiding each student to achieve his or her best effort.
4. **Cultivating a culture of integrity** – We believe in accountability through measurable outcomes and results. Our board of directors and staff are committed to accomplishing our goals through ethical means and upholding the pledge that our children come first.

### Commitments



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Based on our Core Beliefs we are committed to:

- Providing each student with an equal opportunity to achieve.
- Providing a holistic, premier academic model, which prepares our students for a successful secondary education experience.
- Organizing our school and its resources around our core mission of teaching and learning.
- Measuring our academic results and organizational effectiveness.
- Forming strategic partnerships to enhance the educational experiences of our students.
- Holding every student to clearly defined and high expectations.
- Ensuring that our facilities meet the needs of the academic program.
- Hiring highly skilled and motivated staff.



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## STEAM AND PBL

A major theme of The Biome's original vision was to be a model for integrating student-centered learning, project-based opportunities, and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) within a nurturing, academic environment.

As we have learned more about our student population, we understand that many of our students come to us lacking a solid foundation in literacy and math. Before students can be truly immersed in STEAM or Project Based Learning, a strong academic foundation must exist. To this end, we have deemphasized PBL to allow more time for building foundational literacy and math skills. As our student's educational outcomes improve, we will methodically move our model closer to the school's original vision.

## Teaching and Learning

We are striving to create a culture of literacy at The Biome that not only supports and advances our reluctant, struggling readers but pushes our strong, capable readers to reach their full potential. Our goal is to provide learning opportunities that support the growth of capable, confident, and eager readers.

### **Improvements in Literacy Materials and Opportunities:**

- We have improved our understanding and practice regarding routine and consistency. In routine and consistency, children find safety and security. Their minds can be free not to worry about what comes next, but what new things they will learn.
  - Our classrooms follow consistent schedules, routines, and procedures for our students throughout the day, but most importantly, throughout the literacy block.
  - The literacy block throughout the grades is considered an 'untouchable' time block. Protecting instructional time reinforces the belief that literacy is vital to our student's success and that literacy instruction is prioritized.
  - The Schlafly library staff visits The Biome twice a month to bring books for the learners so they can check out. They are also supporting the teacher leaders and curriculum through their out-reach program. We are privileged to supply this needed library experience.
  - Reading Garden, located in our new annex building, has been accumulating books of various levels through donations. The space will continue to grow and serves as a resource to learners and staff in the future by working as a lending library.
  - Through and UMSL mini-grant, we acquired \$15,000 in classroom books and leveled texts. An overwhelming amount of these funds went to supply the



## Inspiring Dreams. Growing Possibilities.

learners in grades 3-5 with appropriate texts for their classrooms and instructional use. These texts strongly represent our population, which supports learners' interest in reading. Through additional donor investments of \$15,000, we have invested in culturally relevant literacy materials for our students.

- Through Donor's Choose funds, we acquired much needed appropriate lower leveled text. These new texts have repetitive sentence structures, lots of sight words, and understandable story structures. Our emergent readers were in great need of appropriate books for instructional purposes.

### **Improvements in Classroom Instruction:**

Our classroom leaders have been instrumental in assuring that all instructional needs are in place, whether it's furniture, equipment, materials, resources, or curriculum development. The administration and instructional staff collaborate and are engaged in all facets of the delivery of instruction. Our academic team has built a strong foundation for addressing classroom needs and providing professional development and support for everyone within our learning community.

The heart of literacy instruction is in the classroom. Classroom teacher leaders need curriculum resources, supplies, and, most importantly, expertise in the area of literacy to change the tertiary of the current status of many of our learners. We engage in ongoing assessment to drive instruction and support our teachers in understanding methods to instruct our learners effectively.

Recent improvements include:

- Increased literacy instruction time from 90 minutes of small group reading time, to approximately 160 minutes of literacy instruction.
- Increased literacy instruction from small group reading to now include more methods that support all the components of reading.
- A writer's workshop has been incorporated across all the grade levels.
- Increased use of instructional literacy coaches to provide support to include all teachers at all grade levels (not just teachers new to The Biome), especially at the beginning of the year, but continually as the year progresses.
- Kindergarten and first-grade classes have adopted a systematic, explicitly taught phonics program. Research has shown phonics to be a great deficit across the country. Our diagnostical assessment tools also show this to be an area of weaknesses in our learners.
- Adoption of a word study program in grades 2-5 that focuses on the study of word structures and spelling is used to assist our learners with these missing skills in the more intermediate classes.

During the last four years, we have grown a great deal in our math curriculum/program, but not enough. The original teaching series adopted by the Biome Staff was Jump Math. This series



## Inspiring Dreams. Growing Possibilities.

was recommended because of its success at camp type programs. The Biome staff found that teaching from the Jump Math series provided a foundation but limited the diverse experiences they could offer the children, such as remediation and accelerations. In the last two years we have focused on trying to develop the math program and are looking for a new series that provided more resources, technology, enrichment opportunities, remediation and parent involvement. We decided to use the Envisions Math Program and increased our instructional time to one hour per day. We are currently in our second year of implementation of Envisions Math.

The new series and strategies allowed us to start making gains in math. Looking at the first four years of our Math program, we have seen some good growth in Math based on our STAR data across all grade levels, but it is inconsistent. The Math MAP data for the past two years reflects scores in basic and below basic for the 3rd and 4th grades. This has been addressed by providing mathematical instruction that focuses on skill development, processing and thinking skills, and to creating a strong reading foundation so they can successfully answer math story problems. The Biome staff is implementing the new curriculum series with fidelity but there needs to be more support to understand how best to deliver the Envisions Math series to our learners so that we can continue making Math academic gains. Plans are in place to provide a daylong workshop for all classroom leaders with one of the Envisions trainers. This will be in conjunction with supportive webinars to continue growing our skills and strategies.

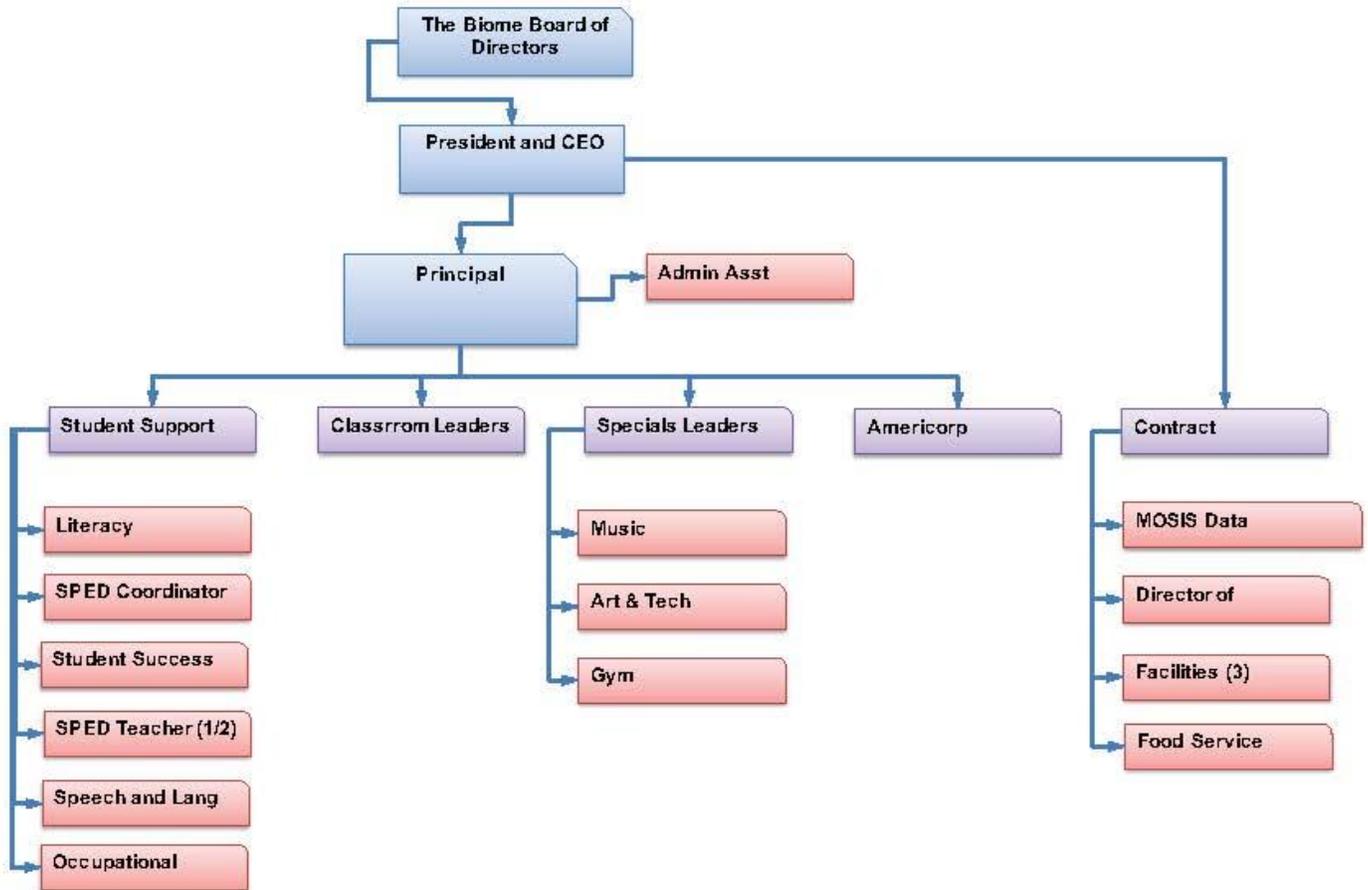
The expectation is for improved math instruction and math learning by providing the training, support, and practices necessary for our learners.

### **Improvements in Intervention:**

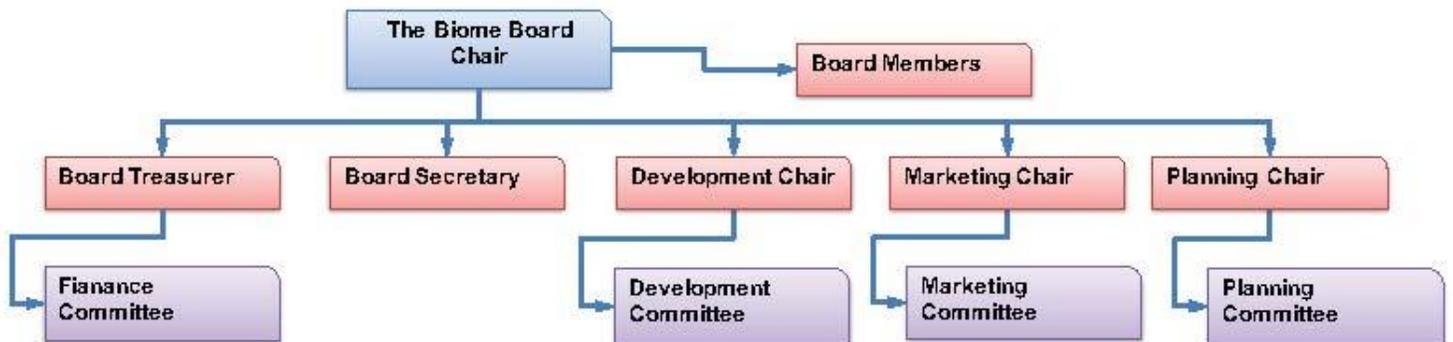
Unfortunately, there are learners who lack the skills necessary for learning. For these learners, we are intervening with additional support.

- The Biome has adopted a program titled, Leveled Literacy Intervention.
- The Leveled Literacy Intervention program provides daily, intensive, small group instruction which supplements the classroom literacy teaching.
- The program includes phonics, reading, and writing.
- This intervention is used by reading specialists, reading interventionists (the literacy team), **and** special education teacher leaders to provide a seamless approach to our reading and writing intervention at The Biome.
- Additionally, learners receiving reading support with the literacy team are supplied with additional leveled texts to be read at home, so they can practice their newly learned skills with their families.

## STAFF ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



## ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE BOARD





T1416418505

File Number:

N01409346

Date Filed: 06/13/2014

Jason Kander

Secretary of State

**ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION  
OF  
THE BIOME**

A Missouri Nonprofit Corporation

The undersigned, being a natural person of the age of eighteen years or more, for the purpose of forming a corporation under the Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Act, hereby adopts the following Articles of Incorporation:

1. The name of the corporation (hereinafter referred to as the "Corporation") is The Biome.

2. This Corporation is a public benefit corporation.

3. The period of duration of the Corporation is perpetual.

4. The street address of the Corporation's initial registered office in Missouri is 221 Bolivar Street, Suite 101, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101, and the name of its initial registered agent at such address is BCRA Co.

5. The name and address of the incorporator is Paula L. Robinson, 211 N. Broadway, Suite 3600, St. Louis, Missouri 63102-2750.

6. The Corporation is organized, and shall be operated, exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), including, for such purposes, to establish and operate a charter school.

7. No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its Directors, Officers or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in this Article. The Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office. Except to the extent permitted by Code Section 501(h), no substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation. Any other provision of these Articles to the contrary notwithstanding, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from the Federal income tax under Code Section 501(c)(3), (b) by a corporation contributions to which are deductible under Code Section 170(c)(2), and (c) by a corporation organized under the Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Act as now existing or hereafter amended.

8. The Corporation shall have one or more Members as provided in the Bylaws. The affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by, or under the direction of, its Board of Directors. The number of Directors and their terms shall be as provided in the Bylaws, provided

that there shall not be less than three Directors. The Directors of the Corporation shall be elected in the manner described in the Bylaws.

9. The Corporation shall have all the powers permitted a corporation that is both a nonprofit corporation under the Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Act and an exempt organization described in Code Section 501(c)(3).

10. Bylaws of the Corporation, consistent with these Articles, shall be adopted by the Board of Directors or the Incorporator, and may be amended in the manner provided in the Bylaws.

11. These Articles may be amended by the Board of Directors in the manner provided in the Bylaws.

12. If the Corporation is ever determined to be a private foundation within the meaning of Code Section 509, the Corporation shall not: (a) engage in any act of self-dealing which is subject to tax under Code Section 4941; (b) retain any excess business holdings which are subject to tax under Code Section 4943 of the Code; (c) make any investments in such manner as to subject it to tax under Code Section 4944; or (d) make any taxable expenditures which are subject to tax under Code Section 4945.

13. Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Corporation, distribute all the assets of the Corporation to Youth Learning Center, if it is then qualified under Code Section 501(c)(3), or, if it is not then qualified under Code Section 501(c)(3), to one or more organizations then qualified under Code Section 501(c)(3) selected by the Board of Directors of the Corporation. Any of such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the city or county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located to such organization or organizations as said court shall determine and as are then qualified as exempt under Code Section 501(c)(3). Notwithstanding the foregoing, to the extent required by Missouri law, upon closure of the Corporation's charter school any unobligated assets of the charter school shall be returned to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of the State of Missouri for their disposition, which upon receipt of such assets shall return them to the local school district in which the school was located, the state, or any other entity to which they would belong.

14.

(a) The provisions of this Article shall be in the nature of a contract between the Corporation and each of its Directors and Officers made in consideration of such person's continued service to the Corporation. The protection afforded to each Director or Officer by the provisions of this Article shall survive such person's term of office or employment. This Article may not be repealed, nor may the benefits to the Directors and Officers afforded hereby be diminished, except as to liability accruing in respect of acts or omissions occurring after the date of such repeal or modification.

(b) The Corporation shall hold harmless and indemnify each Director and Officer to the fullest extent authorized or permitted by the provisions of Subsections 1 through 6 and 9 through 11 of Section 355.476, Missouri Revised Statutes, as amended (which Section, in its

entirety, is hereinafter referred to as the "State Statute") or any other or additional statutory provisions which are hereafter adopted authorizing or permitting such indemnification.

(c) The Corporation may purchase and maintain for the benefit of each Director or Officer, as named insured or additional insured, a policy or policies of general comprehensive liability insurance (covering claims arising out of death, illness or injury or arising out of property loss or damage) and directors' and officers' liability insurance (covering claims arising out of wrongful acts or omissions) in respect of liabilities asserted against and/or incurred by its Directors and Officers in either such capacity or otherwise in the performance of their services for the Corporation.

(d) In addition to the foregoing, and subject only to the exclusions set forth in section (e) of this Article, the Corporation shall, to the fullest extent authorized or permitted by the provisions of Subsection 7 of the State Statute, hold harmless and indemnify each Director and Officer: (i) against any and all expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by such Director or Officer in connection with any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative (including an action by or in the right of the Corporation) to which such Director or Officer is, was or at any time became a party, or is threatened to be made a party, by reason of the fact that such Director or Officer is, was or at any time becomes a Director, Officer, employee or agent of the Corporation, or is or was serving or at any time serves at the request of the Corporation as a Director, Officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise; and (ii) otherwise to the fullest extent as may be provided to such Director or Officer by the Corporation under the non exclusivity provisions of the State Statute.

(e) No indemnity pursuant to section (d) of this Article shall be paid by the Corporation: (i) except to the extent the aggregate of losses to be indemnified thereunder exceeds the amount of such losses for which the Director or Officer is indemnified either pursuant to section (b) of this Article or pursuant to any insurance of the type referred to in section (c) of this Article purchased and maintained by the Corporation; (ii) in respect of remuneration paid to such Director or Officer if it shall be determined by a final decision of a court having jurisdiction in the matter that such remuneration was in violation of law; (iii) on account of such Director's or Officer's conduct which is finally adjudged by a court having jurisdiction in the matter to have been knowingly fraudulent, deliberately dishonest or willful misconduct; or (iv) if a final decision by a court having jurisdiction in the matter shall determine that such indemnification is not lawful.

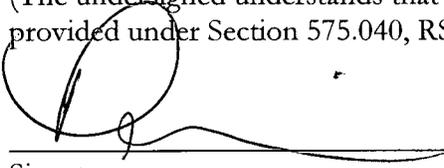
(f) All agreements and obligations of the Corporation contained in this Article shall continue during the period the Director or Officer is a Director or Officer of the Corporation (or is or was serving at the request of the Corporation as a director, officer, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise) and shall continue thereafter so long as the Director or Officer shall be subject to any possible claim or threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal or investigative, by reason of the fact that he or she was a Director or Officer of the Corporation or was serving in any other capacity referred to in this Article.

(g) The Corporation will pay, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit or proceeding, all reasonable expenses of the Director or Officer incurred in defending any civil

or criminal action, suit or proceeding against him or her, provided he or she shall have agreed to reimburse the Corporation if and to the extent that it shall be ultimately determined that he or she is not entitled to be indemnified by the Corporation for such expenses.

In affirmation thereof, the facts stated above are true and correct:

(The undersigned understands that false statements made in this filing are subject to the penalties provided under Section 575.040, RSMo)



Signature

Paula L. Robinson

Printed Name

# State of Missouri



Jason Kander  
Secretary of State

## CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION MISSOURI NONPROFIT

WHEREAS, Articles of Incorporation of

*The Biome*  
N01409346

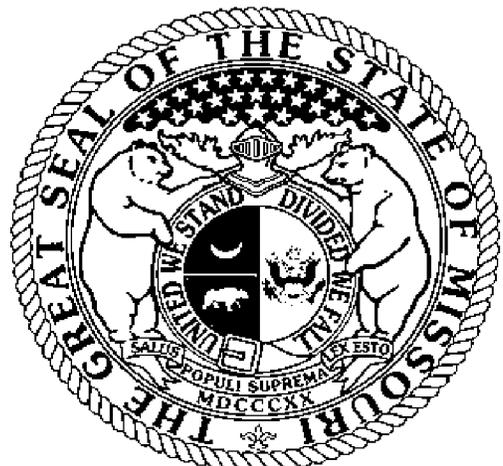
have been received and filed in the Office of the Secretary of State, which Articles, in all respects, comply with the requirements of Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Law;

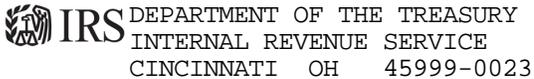
NOW, THEREFORE, I, JASON KANDER, Secretary of the State of Missouri do by virtue of the authority vested in me by law, do hereby certify and declare this entity a body corporate, duly organized this date and that it is entitled to all rights and privileges granted corporations organized under the Missouri Nonprofit Corporation Law.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and cause to be affixed the GREAT SEAL of the State of Missouri.  
Done at the City of Jefferson, this  
13th day of June, 2014.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jason Kander".

Secretary of State





Date of this notice: 06-13-2014

Employer Identification Number:  
47-1100460

Form: SS-4

Number of this notice: CP 575 E

THE BIOME  
% CARE OF BILL KENT JR  
4471 OLIVE ST  
SAINT LOUIS, MO 63108

For assistance you may call us at:  
1-800-829-4933

IF YOU WRITE, ATTACH THE  
STUB AT THE END OF THIS NOTICE.

WE ASSIGNED YOU AN EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER

Thank you for applying for an Employer Identification Number (EIN). We assigned you EIN 47-1100460. This EIN will identify you, your business accounts, tax returns, and documents, even if you have no employees. Please keep this notice in your permanent records.

When filing tax documents, payments, and related correspondence, it's very important that you use your EIN along with your complete name and address exactly as shown above. Any variation may cause a delay in processing, result in incorrect information in your account, or even cause you to be assigned more than one EIN. If the information shown above isn't correct, please send us the correction using the attached tear-off stub.

Annual filing requirements

Most organizations with an EIN have an annual filing requirement, even if they engage in minimal or no activity.

A. If you are tax exempt, you may be required to file one of the following returns or notices:

Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax  
Form 990-EZ, Short Form Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax  
Form 990-PF, Return of Private Foundation  
Form 990-N, e-Postcard (available online only)

Additionally, you may be required to file your annual return electronically.

If an organization required to file a Form 990, Form 990-PF, Form 990-EZ, or Form 990-N does not do so for three consecutive years, its tax-exempt status is automatically revoked as of the due date of the third return or notice.

Please refer to [www.irs.gov/990filing](http://www.irs.gov/990filing) for the most current information on your filing requirements.

B. If you are not tax-exempt, you may be required to file one of the following returns:

Form 1120, U.S. Corporation Income Tax Return  
Form 1041, U.S. Income Tax Return for Estates and Trusts  
Form 1065, U.S. Return of Partnership Income

Please refer to Publication 1635, Understanding Your EIN, for more information about which forms you may be required to file.

### Applying for Tax-Exempt Status

Receiving an EIN from the IRS is not the same thing as receiving IRS recognition of tax-exempt status. To apply for formal recognition of tax-exempt status, most organizations will need to complete either Form 1023, *Application for Recognition Under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code*, or Form 1024, *Application for Recognition of Exemption Under Section 501(a)*. Submit the completed form, all applicable attachments, and the required user fee to:

Internal Revenue Service  
PO Box 12192  
Covington, KY 41012-0192

Publication 557, *Tax Exempt Status for Your Organization*, has details on the application, process as well as information on returns you may need to file.

### Additional information

To obtain tax forms and publications, including those referenced in this notice, visit our Web site at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). If you don't have access to the Internet, call 1-800-829-3676 (TTY/TDD 1-800-829-4059) or visit your local IRS office.

### IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- \* Keep a copy of this notice in your permanent records. **This notice is issued only one time and the IRS will not be able to generate a duplicate copy for you.** You may give a copy of this document to anyone asking for proof of your EIN.
- \* Use this EIN and your name exactly as they appear at the top of this notice on all your federal tax forms.
- \* Refer to this EIN on your tax-related correspondence and documents.
- \* Provide future officers of your organization with a copy of this notice.

If you have questions about your EIN, you can contact us using the phone number or address shown at the top of this notice. If you write, please tear off the stub at the bottom of this notice and send it along with your letter. If you don't need to write us, please don't complete and return this stub.

Your name control associated with this EIN is THEB. You will need to provide this information, along with your EIN, if you file your returns electronically.

Thank you for your cooperation.



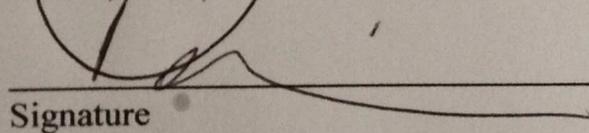
## ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT OF FOR A NONPROFIT CORPORATION

The undersigned corporation, for the purpose of amending and restating its Articles of Incorporation, hereby executes the following Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation:

1. The name of the corporation is The Biome (the "corporation"). The corporation was organized on June 13, 2014.
2. The amendment to the Articles of Incorporation was adopted effective as of July 29, 2014 to change Article 13 to read as attached hereto as Attachment A.
3. Approval of the amendment by members was not required. The amendment was approved by sufficient vote of the incorporator of the corporation.
4. Approval of the Amendment was by a person other than the members, the board or the incorporator pursuant to Section 355.606.

In affirmation thereof, the facts stated above are true and correct:

(The undersigned understands that false statements made in this filing are subject to the penalties provided under Section 575.040, RSMo)

  
Signature

Paula L. Robinson, Incorporator 7/29/14  
Printed Name Title Date

Attachment A

Article 13. Subject to the last sentence of this Section, upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Corporation, distribute all the assets of the Corporation to Youth Learning Center, if it is then qualified under Code Section 501(c)(3), or, if it is not then qualified under Code Section 501(c)(3), to one or more organizations then qualified under Code Section 501(c)(3) selected by the Board of Directors of the Corporation. Any of such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the city or county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located to such organization or organizations as said court shall determine and as are then qualified as exempt under Code Section 501(c)(3). Notwithstanding the foregoing, to the extent required by Missouri law, upon closure of the Corporation's charter school any unobligated assets of the charter school shall be returned to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of the State of Missouri for their disposition, which upon receipt of such assets shall return them to the local school district in which the school was located, the state, or any other entity to which they would belong.

**BYLAWS  
OF  
THE BIOME**

A Missouri Nonprofit Corporation

ARTICLE I: OFFICES

1. The corporation may have offices at such place or places as the Board of Directors may from time to time determine or the business of the corporation may require.

ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP

1. The number of Members shall initially be one (1) and the initial member shall be: Youth Learning Center, a Missouri nonprofit corporation. The number of Members may be increased or decreased to such other number as may be determined by the Members from time to time, provided that there shall be no less than one (1) Member at any time. Members shall maintain their Memberships until terminated by death, resignation, termination or dissolution and liquidation. Member vacancies shall be filled by the majority of the Members. If at any time there shall be no Members, the Board of Directors may appoint one (1) Member.

2. A Member may be terminated or suspended by majority vote of the Members. In case of Membership termination or suspension, written notice shall be given at least fifteen (15) days prior to such event. Written notice given by mail shall be given by first class or certified mail sent to the last address of the Member shown on the corporation's records.

3. Each Member shall have one vote on each matter that comes before the membership for a vote.

4. Members may not transfer their Memberships.

5. A Member that is not a natural person ("Institutional Member") shall appoint one or more natural person(s) who shall act as its authorized representative in all corporate meetings and activities of the Members. Each Institutional Member shall notify the Secretary of the corporation in writing of the name, address and office of such authorized representative(s) and the Secretary shall enter the same upon the books of the corporation. Appointment of and notice of appointment of the authorized representative shall be a condition precedent to each Member's participation in the meetings and activities of the corporation.

6. An Institutional Member may delegate to a governing committee (e.g., Executive Committee) the full authority to act for it as to all matters relating to the corporation.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERS' MEETINGS

1. All meetings of the Members shall be held at such place, within or without the State of Missouri, as may be designated from time to time by resolution or written consent of the

Members. While the initial member, Youth Learning Center, is the only member, the meeting of the Members will only consist of Youth Learning Center.

2. The corporation shall notify its Members of the place, date and time of each annual, regular and special meeting of Members no fewer than ten (10), (or if notice is mailed by other than first class or registered mail no fewer than thirty (30)) nor more than sixty (60) days before the meeting date. Notice of an annual or regular meeting shall include a description of any matters which must be approved by the Members concerning: authorization, approval or ratification of a conflict of interest transaction; indemnifications of persons; the adoption of amendments to the corporation's Articles of Incorporation; an amendment to the corporation's Bylaws; a plan of merger; disposition of all or substantially all of the corporation's property; or dissolution of the corporation. Notice of a special meeting shall include a description of the matter or matters for which the meeting is called. Notice of any meeting shall be deemed waived if a Member attends a meeting of Members.

3. Special meetings of the Members, for any purpose or purposes, may be called by the President, the Secretary, the Board of Directors, or five percent (5%) of the Members provided one or more written demands are signed, dated and delivered to a corporate officer and describes the purpose or purposes for which the special meeting is to be held.

4. The business transacted at any special meeting of Members shall be confined to the purposes stated in the notice.

5. A majority of the Members shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the Members for the transaction of business, except as otherwise provided by statute.

6. When a quorum is present at any meeting, the vote of a majority of the Members present shall decide any question brought before such meeting, unless the question is one upon which, by express provision of the statutes, the Articles of Incorporation, or these Bylaws, a different vote is required, in which case such express provision shall govern and control the decision of such questions.

7. Action required or permitted by law to be approved by the Members may be approved without a meeting of Members if the action is approved by the Members in one or more written consents, signed by such Members, and the consent or consents are delivered to the corporation for inclusion in the minutes or filing with the corporate records. Unless determined by law or by another provision of these Bylaws, the record date for determining Members entitled to take action without a meeting is the date the first Member signs the written consent. Written notice of the action approved without a meeting of Members shall be given to all Members who have not signed the written consent.

#### ARTICLE IV: DIRECTORS

1. The day to day affairs of the corporation shall be managed by or under the direction of the Board of Directors. The number of Directors to constitute the Board of Directors shall be determined by the Board of Directors, provided, however, that there shall always be at least three (3) Directors. Directors shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Members to serve for a

term of three (3) years or until his or her successor shall have been elected and qualified. Directors may be removed, with or without cause, by the vote of a majority of all the Members at a meeting of the Members. Any vacancy created by such removal shall be filled for the unexpired term in respect of such vacancy by a majority vote of the Members present at such meeting or, in the absence of such action at such meeting, by resolution of the Members

2. The Directors may keep the books of the corporation at the principal business office of the corporation in this state or at such other place as they may from time to time determine and as may be permitted by law.

3. If the office of a Director becomes vacant for any reason, other than by removal of the Director, the majority of the Members shall choose a successor or successors who shall hold office for the unexpired term in respect of which such vacancy occurred or until the next election of Directors.

#### ARTICLE V: COMPENSATION OF DIRECTORS

1. Directors, as such, shall not receive any stated salary for their services, but by resolution of the Board, expenses of attendance, if any, may be allowed for attendance at each regular or special meeting of the Board; provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any Director from serving the corporation in any other capacity and receiving compensation or reimbursement of expenses therefor.

#### ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

1. Meetings of the Directors shall be held at the principal office of the corporation, or at such other place, within or without the State of Missouri, as may be designated from time to time by resolution or written consent of the Board of Directors. The first meeting of each newly elected Board shall be held immediately after the annual meeting of the Members, or at such time and place as shall be fixed by the vote of the Members at the annual meeting.

2. The annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held at such time and place as shall be determined by the Board of Directors. Regular meetings of the Board shall be held at such time and place as shall from time to time be determined by the Board of Directors. Notice of Board meetings shall comply with the laws governing meetings of governmental bodies as set forth in Section 610.010 *et seq.* of the Missouri Revised Statutes (the "Sunshine Law").

3. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the President, the Secretary, or twenty-five percent (25%) of the Directors on not less than two (2) days' notice to each Director, either personally or by first class mail or by telegram or by email or by telephone, provided notice of such meeting is made public under the laws.

4. A Director's attendance at or participation in a meeting waives any required notice of the meeting unless the Director upon arriving at the meeting or prior to the vote on a matter not noticed in conformity with the law, the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws, objects to lack of notice and does not vote for or assent to the objected to action. Neither the business to be

transacted at, nor the purpose of, any regular or special meeting of the Board of Directors need be specified in any notice or waiver of notice of such meeting.

5. At all meetings of the Board, a majority of all the Directors in office shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and the act of a majority of the Directors present at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be the act of the Board of Directors, unless the action is one upon which, by express provision of the statutes, the Articles of Incorporation, or these Bylaws, a different vote is required, in which case such express provision shall govern and control. If a quorum shall not be present at any meeting of Directors, the Directors present thereat may adjourn the meeting, from time to time, without notice other than announcement at the meeting, until a quorum shall be present.

6. Members of the Board of Directors may participate in a meeting of the Board by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment whereby all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other, and participation in a meeting in this manner shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

7. Action required or permitted by law to be taken at a Board of Directors' meeting may be taken outside of a regularly scheduled meeting by means of circulated written consent if the action is taken by all of the Directors of the Board then in office, provided that notice of such action is made public in a manner compliant with the Sunshine Law. The action shall be evidenced by one or more written consents describing the action taken, signed by each Director, and included in the minutes filed with the corporate records reflecting the action taken. Such action shall be effective when the last Director signs the consent, unless the consent specifies a different effective date.

#### ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

1. The Board of Directors, by a resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors in office, may designate an Executive Committee of at least three Directors, which shall consist of the Chairman of the Board and two (2) other Directors who shall serve as members of the Executive Committee for one year or until the earlier expiration of their term as Chairman of the Board or as a Director of the Board, as the case may be. A majority of the members of the Executive Committee shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum of the Committee for the transaction of business. The Executive Committee shall have and exercise all authority of the Board of Directors between meetings of the Board of Directors and shall have such other authority as delegated or designated by the Board of Directors, to the extent permitted by law..

2. The Board of Directors, by a resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors in office, may designate one or more other Board committees, each of which shall consist exclusively of at least two (2) Directors. Such committees shall, to the extent provided in such resolution, have and exercise the authority of the Board of Directors, to the extent permitted by law.

3. Other committees of the corporation not having and exercising authority of the Board of Directors may be designated by a resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

4. At all meetings of committees, a majority of the members of the committee shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and the act of a majority of the members of the committee present at any meeting at which there is a quorum shall be the act of the committee, unless the action is one upon which, by express provision of the statutes, the Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, or a resolution of the Board of Directors, a different vote is required, in which case such express provision shall govern and control. Provisions in these Bylaws pertaining to meetings of the Board of Directors shall also apply to a committee or committees of the Board of Directors.

5. Public notice of meetings of committees shall be provided as necessary in order to comply with the Sunshine Law.

#### ARTICLE VIII: NOTICES

1. Whenever, under the provisions of the statutes, the Articles of Incorporation, or these Bylaws, notice is required to be given to any Director or Member, such notice may be given orally or in writing. Notice may be communicated in person; by any form of wire or wireless communication such as telephone, electronic mail, mail or private carrier; or if the preceding forms of personal notice are impracticable, by a newspaper of general circulation in the area where published; or other form of public broadcast communication such as radio, or television.

2. Unless prohibited by Missouri law governing notice of meetings of governmental bodies, whenever any notice is required to be given to a particular person or persons, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, and filed with the minutes or corporate records, shall be deemed equivalent thereto.

3. Notice given by mail shall be by certified mail, postage prepaid, and shall be deemed given five (5) days following deposit in the mail.

#### ARTICLE IX: OFFICERS

1. The officers of the corporation shall consist of a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and such other officers as may be elected by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors may also elect a Chairman of the Board, one or more Executive Vice Presidents, one or more Vice Presidents who may be identified as "Senior" or "First" or by other appropriate title, one or more Assistant Secretaries and Assistant Treasurers, and such other officers and agents as it shall deem necessary, who shall exercise such powers and perform such duties as shall be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors. The compensation of all officers, if any, shall be fixed by the Board of Directors.

2. The officers of the corporation shall hold their offices for a term of one year, or for such other term not exceeding three years as shall be determined from time to time by the Board of Directors. Officers may be reelected to successive terms. Any officers may be removed at any time by the Board of Directors. An officer may resign at any time by delivering notice to the corporation. A resignation is effective when the notice is delivered unless the notice specifies a

future effective date. If the office of any officers becomes vacant for any reason, the vacancy may be filled by the Board of Directors.

#### ARTICLE X: PRESIDENT

1. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the corporation and, in the absence of the Chairman of the Board, if any, shall preside at all meetings of the Members and Directors at which he is present. He or she shall perform such duties as the Board of Directors may prescribe, and shall see that all orders and resolutions of the Board of Directors are carried into effect.

2. The President shall execute bonds, mortgages and other contracts, except where permitted by law to be otherwise signed and executed and except where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board of Directors to some other officer or agent of the corporation.

#### ARTICLE XI: CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

1. The Chairman of the Board, if any, shall preside at all meetings of the Members and Directors at which he or she is present, and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Directors or these Bylaws may prescribe.

#### ARTICLE XII: EXECUTIVE AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENTS

1. The Executive and Senior Vice Presidents, if any, in the order of their seniority shall, in the absence or disability of the President, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President, and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may prescribe.

#### ARTICLE XIII: OTHER VICE PRESIDENTS

1. Other Vice Presidents, if any, in the order of their seniority shall, in the absence or disability of the President and any Executive Vice Presidents, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the President, and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may prescribe.

#### ARTICLE XIV: SECRETARY AND ASSISTANT SECRETARIES

1. The Secretary shall serve as the custodian of records and shall keep or cause to be kept a record of all meetings of the Members and Directors and shall record all votes and the minutes of all proceedings in a book to be kept for that purpose. He or she shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Members and regular and special meetings of the Board of Directors, and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors or Chair, under whose supervision he or she shall be. He or she shall be responsible for authenticating the records of the corporation.

2. The Assistant Secretaries, if any, in order of their seniority shall, in the absence or disability of the Secretary, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Secretary and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may prescribe.

ARTICLE XV: TREASURER AND ASSISTANT TREASURERS

1. The Treasurer shall have the custody of the corporate funds and securities, shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the corporation, shall deposit all moneys and other valuable effects in the name and to the credit of the corporation in such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Directors, and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may prescribe.

2. The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the corporation as may be ordered by the Board, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements, and shall render to the President and Directors, at the regular meetings of the Board, or whenever they may require it, an account of all his or her transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the corporation.

3. If required by the Board of Directors, the Treasurer shall give the corporation a bond in such sum and with such surety or sureties as shall be satisfactory to the Board of Directors for the faithful performance of the duties of his or her office and for the restoration to the corporation, in case of his or her death, resignation, retirement or removal from office, of all books, papers, vouchers, money and other property of whatever kind in his or her possession or under his or her control belonging to the corporation.

4. The Assistant Treasurers, if any, in the order of their seniority shall, in the absence or disability of the Treasurer, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Treasurer and shall perform such other duties as the Board of Directors may prescribe.

ARTICLE XVI: CHECKS

1. All checks or demands for money and notes of the corporation shall be signed by such officer or officers or such other person or persons as the Board of Directors may from time to time designate.

ARTICLE XVII: FISCAL YEAR

1. The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin the 1st day of July in each year.

ARTICLE XVIII: SEAL

1. The corporation shall not have a seal.

ARTICLE XIX: ALTERATION, AMENDMENT OR  
REPEAL OF BYLAWS

1. An amendment to these Bylaws shall be effective if approved by a majority of the Members.

ARTICLE XX: RECORDS

1. The corporation shall keep as permanent records minutes of all meetings of its Members and Board of Directors, a record of all actions taken by the Members or Directors without a meeting, and a record of all actions taken by committees of the Board of Directors. Such records shall be available to the public to the extent required under the Sunshine Law.

2. The corporation shall maintain appropriate accounting records, and a record of its Members. A copy of the following records shall be kept at the corporation's principal office: the Articles of Incorporation and all amendments to them currently in effect, these Bylaws and all amendments to them currently in effect, resolutions adopted by the Board of Directors relating to the characteristics, qualifications, rights limitations and obligations of Members, the minutes of all meetings of Members and records of all actions approved by the Members for the past three years, all written communications including financial statements to all Members furnished to them for the past three years, a list of the names and business or home addresses of the current Directors and officers, the most recent annual report delivered to the Secretary of State, and appropriate financial statements of all income and expenses.



Charter Schools Office  
3651 Olive Street Suite 203D  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
O: 314.516.4872

October 25, 2019

Brian Phillips, Board Chair – The Biome  
Members of The Biome Board

RE: UMSL’s Decision to Renew The Biome’s Charter

I am pleased to notify the Board of Directors of The Biome that the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) will continue to sponsor The Biome and supports renewal of its charter by the Missouri State Board of Education for a five-year term beginning in SY2021 and ending in SY2025.

The UMSL Charter Schools Office based this renewal decision on a thorough review of The Biome’s performance contract with UMSL, state assessment and other student achievement outcomes, record of statutory compliance, and annual reviews between SY2016 and SY2019.

Your next steps are to complete the renewal application for submission to DESE and the State Board of Education. Our office will work with you to prepare the application.

UMSL values its relationship with The Biome and our office looks forward to supporting your efforts to reach your vision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Mendelsohn", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

Bill Mendelsohn  
Executive Director, Charter Schools Office

**Renewal Review  
October 21, 2019**

**The Biome  
Performance Contract 2015-2020\***

As the official charter school sponsor of THE BIOME, the University of Missouri, St. Louis (UMSL) is legislatively required to monitor compliance and performance of the school, recommend sanctions, if necessary, and revocation and closure when the school demonstrates an inability to meet standards. This performance contract represents expectations in THE BIOME's charter term and supersedes any other contracts negotiated and agreed to prior to the date on this one.

\* This contract is an update of the 2015 contract accompanying The Biome's original application to reflect changes in UMSL's performance contract format since 2015.

## A. Governance

Charter schools are governed by an independent board of directors that are required to abide by all laws governing 501(c)3 organizations, and public charter schools. For the term of this performance contract, the board of The Biome will:

1. Consistently abide by all Missouri laws, including the Missouri Sunshine Law in all its operations.
2. Maintain an active, involved board as described in their charter.
3. Meet all standards for governance listed below as assessed by the UMSL sponsor during its annual review:

Standard	Metric	MET: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NOT MET: <input type="checkbox"/> X				
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
A.1 The school Board operates legitimately and in the best interest of its students and mission.	Governance records Criminal background and FCSR checks as outlined in section RSMo160.400.14	MET	MET	MET	MET	
A.2 All board members receive training in Missouri Sunshine Law, nepotism, school governance, student achievement, school law and policy and conflict of interest within their first year of service.	Board survey Board minutes	MET	MET	MET	MET	
A.3 Appropriate Board Policies are developed, revised as needed, and followed.	Board Policies and appropriate school documents, such as enrollment procedures, student handbooks, etc.	MET	MET	MET	MET	
A.4 Meetings are regularly scheduled and appropriately conducted.	Governance records.	MET	MET	MET	MET	
A.5 Governance records and documentation are appropriately created and maintained.	Board Meeting Agenda, notices, minutes, and supporting documentation.	MET	MET	MET	MET	
A.6 School business is conducted in a transparent manner subject to the provisions and sections 610.010 to 610.030, Missouri Sunshine Law; free of conflict of interest, and models best practices regarding governance roles and responsibilities.	Fiscal records. Fiscal Audits and ASBR. Core Data Reports.	MET	MET	MET	MET	
A.7 The Board implements a transparent process for evaluating the school leader that includes progress made on school goals.	School leader evaluation document	NOT MET	NOT MET	NOT MET	MET	
A.8 The Board communicates in a timely manner with UMSL's sponsorship liaison about significant policy, personnel, school performance or legal issues.	Board-sponsor communications	MET	MET	MET	MET	
A.9 The Board annually self-evaluates using a standardized tool that assesses performance based on setting goals, developing policy, and communication.	Board self-evaluation document	MET	MET	MET	MET	
A.10 The Board officially reviews the sponsor's Annual Review at one of its board meetings.	Board minutes	MET	MET	MET	MET	

## B. School Leadership

For the term of this performance contract:

1. The President of The Biome will meet all standards for school leadership listed below as assessed by the UMSL sponsor during its annual review:

Standard	Metric	MET: √ NOT MET: X				
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
B.1 Student enrollment procedures, including open enrollment and lottery, if needed, are appropriately conducted and documented.	School policies, procedures, and practices Enrollment and attendance documents Core Data	MET	MET	MET	MET	
B.2 Student enrollment and attendance numbers are in line with the charter agreement, and provide evidence that the school is a viable school of choice for the community.	Student enrollment data Student attendance data. Student retention data Core Data reports Charter agreement	MET	MET	MET	MET	
B.3 Personnel procedures and practices are conducted in a manner that promotes instructional effectiveness and continuous school improvement.	Teacher and administrator retention data School Improvement Plan Professional Development Plan Academic accountability indicators	MET	MET	MET	MET	
B.4 School meets all state and local standards relative to health and safety; and maintains a clean and safe environment that supports the educational mission of the school.	Board Policies and documentation Health and safety permits Fiscal records On-site observations and reports	MET	MET	MET	MET	

## C. Financial Operations

The school depends on the board maintaining proper fiduciary responsibility. For the term of the charter, The Biome will:

1. Comply with annual auditing and ASBR requirements, and remedy all audit findings.
2. Maintain adequate fiscal health, as evidenced by producing regular financial statements, ensuring board review and oversight of payments, and paying all obligations in a timely manner.
3. Maintain an Ending Cash Fund Balance that is no less than **5% in year one and 6% thereafter.**
4. Meet all standards for fiscal operations listed below as assessed by the UMSL sponsor during its annual review:

Standard	Metric	MET: $\checkmark$ NOT MET: X				
		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
C.1 Fiscal records are appropriately maintained.	Governance records. Fiscal records. Independent Fiscal Audit. Annual Report to the Board (ASBR).	MET	MET	MET	MET	
C.2 The school operates in a fiscally sound and appropriate manner.	Governance records. Fiscal reports. Independent Fiscal Audit. Annual Report to the Board (ASBR).	MET	MET	MET	MET	
C.3 School business and expenses, including personnel, are made free of conflict of interest and directed toward meeting the mission of the school.	Governance records. Fiscal reports and including payroll and retirement records. Independent Fiscal Audit. Annual Report to the Board (ASBR).	MET	MET	MET	MET	
C.4 Core Data and other required school reporting is conducted in a timely and appropriate manner.	Fiscal reports. Governance records. Core Data Reports.	MET	MET	MET	MET	

## D. Reporting

Schools maintain and submit large amounts of data to all regulatory authorities. UMSL monitors compliance of all these requirements. For the term of the charter, The Biome will:

1. Maintain a 90% compliance rate for submitting required data and reports to UMSL.
2. Consistently comply with DESE reporting requirements and requests, including MOSIS Submissions and Tiered Monitoring requirements.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Met: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Met: <input type="checkbox"/>	MET	MET	MET	MET	

## E. Academic Achievement, Attendance and Annual Performance Report (APR)

The most important measure of success in any school is student outcomes. Quality teaching is the most important input to successful outcomes. For the term of this performance contract, The Biome will:

1. Maintain a professional development system that includes: a teacher evaluation system that meets state requirements, retention of excellent teachers, and removal or development of teachers that are not meeting expectations.
2. Meet MSIP-5 academic achievement targets below:

### MSIP 5 Standard 1: Academic Achievement

Measure	Annual Minimum Targets				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
• ELA MPI Target			345	360	375
Actual Score			225	246.4	
Met: $\checkmark$ Not Met: X			NOT MET	NOT MET	
• Math MPI Target			345	360	375
Actual Score			212.5	185.7	
Met: $\checkmark$ Not Met: X			NOT MET	NOT MET	

- \* Annual Minimum Targets may be adjusted on an annual basis by mutual agreement of the UMSL Charter School Office and <name of school>.
- \*\* Annual Minimum Targets are based on the current state assessment (MAP) and will be renegotiated based on any new or revised state assessment as necessary.

### MSIP 5 Standard 2: Subgroup Achievement

Measure	Annual Minimum Targets				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
• ELA MPI Target			345	360	375
Actual Score			220	244.2	
Met: $\checkmark$ Not Met: X			NOT MET	NOT MET	
• Math MPI Target			345	360	375
Actual Score			206.7	182.7	
Met: $\checkmark$ Not Met: X			NOT MET	NOT MET	

- \* Annual Minimum Targets may be adjusted on an annual basis by mutual agreement of the UMSL Charter School Office and The Biome
- \*\* Annual Minimum Targets are based on the current state assessment (MAP) and will be renegotiated based on any new or revised state assessment as necessary.

**MSIP 5 Standard 3: Attendance**

3. For the term of this performance contract, <Name of School> will meet the following MSIP5 90/90 attendance targets:

<b>Measure</b>					
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
Percent of students with 90% attendance rate: Target	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%
Actual Percentage	81.4	82.6	82	94.5	
Met: √ Not Met: X	NOT MET	NOT MET	NOT MET	MET	

**Annual Performance Report (APR)**

4. For the term of this performance contract, <Name of School> will meet the following MSIP5 APR targets:

<b>Measure</b>					
	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>
APR Percentage Target					≥ 70%
APR Percentage					
Met: √ Not Met: X					

\* These goals are based on the current state accountability system and structure (MSIP 5) and will be renegotiated based on any new or revised accountability system and structure as necessary.

# THE BIOME SCHOOL

## Five Year Projections

	FY 19-20 PROJECTIONS	FY 20-21 PROJECTIONS	FY 21-22 PROJECTIONS	FY 22-23 PROJECTIONS	FY 23-24 PROJECTIONS
	<i>As of October 2019</i>				
Regular Enrollment	195	225	225	225	225
Summer Enrollment	36	45	45	45	45
Estimated ADA	185	201	201	201	201
FRL Count	112	125	125	125	125
IEP Count	11	13	13	13	13
<b>DISTRICT REVENUE</b>					
DESE Formula Payments					
Basic Formula	1,700,150	1,847,190	1,847,190	1,847,190	1,847,190
Classroom Trust Fund	70,896	82,290	94,950	94,950	94,950
Proposition C	188,881	205,128	223,776	223,776	223,776
	<u>1,959,927</u>	<u>2,134,608</u>	<u>2,165,916</u>	<u>2,165,916</u>	<u>2,165,916</u>
Need-Based Programs					
Title I Funding	71,281	71,281	71,281	71,281	71,281
Title IV.A Funding	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Title II.A Funding	7,155	7,155	7,155	7,155	7,155
IDEA Part B Funding	39,144	39,144	39,144	39,144	39,144
SDAC/Medicaid	27,276	27,276	27,276	27,276	27,276
Lunch Program	40,156	42,164	42,164	42,164	42,164
Breakfast Program	13,110	13,766	13,766	13,766	13,766
	<u>208,122</u>	<u>210,785</u>	<u>210,785</u>	<u>210,785</u>	<u>210,785</u>
Student Fees					
Paid Meal Fees	23,535	24,711	24,711	24,711	24,711
Extended Day Fees	63,520	66,696	66,696	66,696	66,696
	<u>87,055</u>	<u>91,407</u>	<u>91,407</u>	<u>91,407</u>	<u>91,407</u>
Other Revenue					
Fundraising Revenue	500,000	505,000	510,050	515,151	520,302
	<u>500,000</u>	<u>505,000</u>	<u>510,050</u>	<u>515,151</u>	<u>520,302</u>
<b>GRAND TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b><u>2,755,103</u></b>	<b><u>2,941,800</u></b>	<b><u>2,978,158</u></b>	<b><u>2,983,259</u></b>	<b><u>2,988,410</u></b>
<b>DISTRICT EXPENSES</b>					
Salaries & Wages					
Salaries & Wages	1,200,378	1,275,378	1,300,886	1,326,903	1,353,441
Employee Benefits	404,853	428,615	432,901	437,230	441,602
	<u>1,605,231</u>	<u>1,703,993</u>	<u>1,733,787</u>	<u>1,764,133</u>	<u>1,795,044</u>
Management Fees					
Executive Services	501,005	511,025	516,136	521,297	526,510
Facility Services	182,671	186,324	188,187	190,069	191,970
	<u>683,676</u>	<u>697,349</u>	<u>704,323</u>	<u>711,366</u>	<u>718,480</u>
Purchased Services and Supplies					
Professional Services	21,500	21,930	22,149	22,371	22,595
Business Services	54,703	55,797	56,355	56,919	57,488
Plant Operations	177,500	186,375	188,239	190,121	192,022
Instructional Costs	180,150	189,158	191,049	192,960	194,889
	<u>433,853</u>	<u>453,260</u>	<u>457,792</u>	<u>462,370</u>	<u>466,994</u>
<b>GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>2,722,760</u></b>	<b><u>2,854,602</u></b>	<b><u>2,895,902</u></b>	<b><u>2,937,870</u></b>	<b><u>2,980,517</u></b>
<b>NET REVENUE LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>32,343</u></b>	<b><u>87,198</u></b>	<b><u>82,257</u></b>	<b><u>45,389</u></b>	<b><u>7,893</u></b>

**The Biome  
Performance Contract 2021-2025**

As the official charter school sponsor of The Biome, the University of Missouri, St. Louis (UMSL) is legislatively required to monitor compliance and performance of the school, recommend sanctions, if necessary, and revocation and closure when the school demonstrates an inability to meet standards. This performance contract represents expectations in The Biome's charter term and supersedes any other contracts negotiated and agreed to prior to the date on this one.

## A. Governance

Charter schools are governed by an independent board of directors that are required to abide by all laws governing 501(c)3 organizations, and public charter schools. For the term of this performance contract, the board of The Biome will:

1. Consistently abide by all Missouri laws, including the Missouri Sunshine Law in all its operations.
2. Maintain an active, involved board as described in their charter.
3. Meet all standards for governance listed below as assessed by the UMSL sponsor during its annual review:

Standard	Metric	MET: <input type="checkbox"/> NOT MET: <input type="checkbox"/>				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
A.1 The school Board operates legitimately and in the best interest of its students and mission.	Governance records Criminal background and FCSR checks as outlined in section RSMo160.400.14					
A.2 All board members receive training in Missouri Sunshine Law, nepotism, school governance, student achievement, school law and policy and conflict of interest within their first year of service.	Board survey Board minutes					
A.3 Appropriate Board Policies are developed, revised as needed, and followed.	Board Policies and appropriate school documents, such as enrollment procedures, student handbooks, etc.					
A.4 Meetings are regularly scheduled and appropriately conducted.	Governance records.					
A.5 Governance records and documentation are appropriately created and maintained.	Board Meeting Agenda, notices, minutes, and supporting documentation.					
A.6 School business is conducted in a transparent manner subject to the provisions and sections 610.010 to 610.030, Missouri Sunshine Law; free of conflict of interest, and models best practices regarding governance roles and responsibilities.	Fiscal records. Fiscal Audits and ASBR. Core Data Reports.					
A.7 The Board implements a transparent process for evaluating the school leader that includes progress made on school goals.	School leader evaluation document					
A.8 The Board communicates in a timely manner with UMSL's sponsorship liaison about significant policy, personnel, school performance or legal issues.	Board-sponsor communications					
A.9 The Board annually self-evaluates using a standardized tool that assesses performance based on setting goals, developing policy, and communication.	Board self-evaluation document					
A.10 The Board officially reviews the sponsor's Annual Review at one of its board meetings.	Board minutes					

## B. School Leadership

For the term of this performance contract:

1. The President of The Biome will meet all standards for school leadership listed below as assessed by the UMSL sponsor during its annual review:

Standard	Metric	MET: √ NOT MET: X				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
B.1 Student enrollment procedures, including open enrollment and lottery, if needed, are appropriately conducted and documented.	School policies, procedures, and practices Enrollment and attendance documents Core Data					
B.2 Student enrollment and attendance numbers are in line with the charter agreement, and provide evidence that the school is a viable school of choice for the community.	Student enrollment data Student attendance data. Student retention data Core Data reports Charter agreement					
B.3 Personnel procedures and practices are conducted in a manner that promotes instructional effectiveness and continuous school improvement.	Teacher and administrator retention data School Improvement Plan Professional Development Plan Academic accountability indicators					
B.4 School meets all state and local standards relative to health and safety; and maintains a clean and safe environment that supports the educational mission of the school.	Board Policies and documentation Health and safety permits Fiscal records On-site observations and reports					

<b>Student Retention Rate</b>					
Enrollment from the beginning of the year to the end of the same year.					
<b>Target: 75%</b>					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Actual Rate</b>					
<b>Met: √ Not Met: X</b>					

<b>Teacher Retention Rate</b>					
Percent of teachers at the end of the school year who return the following year.					
<b>Target: 60%</b>					
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Actual Rate</b>					
<b>Met: √ Not Met: X</b>					

### C. Financial Operations

The school depends on the board maintaining proper fiduciary responsibility. For the term of the charter, The Biome will:

1. Comply with annual auditing and ASBR requirements, and remedy all audit findings.
2. Maintain adequate fiscal health, as evidenced by producing regular financial statements, ensuring board review and oversight of payments, and paying all obligations in a timely manner.
3. Maintain an Ending Cash Fund Balance that is no less than 8% in year one and no less than 14% by year five.
4. Meet all standards for fiscal operations listed below as assessed by the UMSL sponsor during its annual review:

Standard	Metric	MET: √ NOT MET: X				
		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
C.1 Fiscal records are appropriately maintained.	Governance records. Fiscal records. Independent Fiscal Audit. Annual Report to the Board (ASBR).					
C.2 The school operates in a fiscally sound and appropriate manner.	Governance records. Fiscal reports. Independent Fiscal Audit. Annual Report to the Board (ASBR).					
C.3 School business and expenses, including personnel, are made free of conflict of interest and directed toward meeting the mission of the school.	Governance records. Fiscal reports and including payroll and retirement records. Independent Fiscal Audit. Annual Report to the Board (ASBR).					
C.4 Core Data and other required school reporting is conducted in a timely and appropriate manner.	Fiscal reports. Governance records. Core Data Reports.					

## D. Reporting

Schools maintain and submit large amounts of data to all regulatory authorities. UMSL monitors compliance of all these requirements. For the term of the charter, The Biome will:

1. Maintain a 90% compliance rate for submitting required data and reports to UMSL.
2. Consistently comply with DESE reporting requirements and requests, including MOSIS Submissions and Tiered Monitoring requirements.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Met: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Met: <input type="checkbox"/> X					

## E. Academic Achievement, Attendance and Annual Performance Report (APR)

The most important measure of success in any school is student outcomes. Quality teaching is the most important input to successful outcomes. For the term of this performance contract, The Biome will:

1. Maintain a professional development system that includes: a teacher evaluation system that meets state requirements, retention of excellent teachers, and removal or development of teachers that are not meeting expectations.
2. Meet MSIP-5 academic achievement targets below:

### MSIP 5 Standard 1: Academic Achievement

Measure	Annual Minimum Targets				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
• ELA MPI Target	250	262	275	287	300
Actual Score					
• ELA % Prof/Adv. Target	28	31	34	37	40
Actual Score					
Met: √ Not Met: X If The Biome meets the MPI Target OR the % Prof/Adv target, then UMSL considers that The Biome has met the target. If The Biome meets neither MPI nor %Prof/Adv; before designating the target as Not Met, UMSL will analyze The Biome's NCE growth data as compared to the state norm and The Biome's MPI and Prof/Adv data relative to the state average to make the final designation.					
• Math MPI Target	200	212	225	238	250
Actual Score					
• Math % Prof/Adv. Target	10	12	15	17	20
Actual Score					
Met: √ Not Met: X If The Biome meets the MPI Target OR the % Prof/Adv target, then UMSL considers that The Biome has met the target. If The Biome meets neither MPI nor %Prof/Adv; before designating the target as Not Met, UMSL will analyze The					

Biome's NCE growth data as compared to the state norm and The Biome's MPI and Prof/Adv data relative to the state average to make the final designation.					
• Science MPI Target	200	212	225	238	250
Actual Score					
• Science % Prof/Adv. Target	10	12	15	17	20
Actual Score					
Met: √ Not Met: X If The Biome meets the MPI Target OR the % Prof/Adv target, then UMSL considers that The Biome has met the target. If The Biome meets neither MPI nor %Prof/Adv; before designating the target as Not Met, UMSL will analyze The Biome's NCE growth data as compared to the state norm and The Biome's MPI and Prof/Adv data relative to the state average to make the final designation.					

- \* Annual Minimum Targets may be adjusted on an annual basis by mutual agreement of the UMSL Charter School Office and The Biome
- \*\* Annual Minimum Targets are based on the current state assessment (MAP) and will be renegotiated based on any new or revised state assessment as necessary.

**MSIP 5 Standard 2: Subgroup Achievement**

Measure	Annual Minimum Targets				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
• ELA MPI Target	250	262	275	287	300
Actual Score					
• ELA % Prof/Adv. Target	28	31	34	37	40
Actual Score					
Met: √ Not Met: X If The Biome meets the MPI Target OR the % Prof/Adv target, then UMSL considers that The Biome has met the target. If The Biome meets neither MPI nor %Prof/Adv; before designating the target as Not Met, UMSL will analyze The Biome’s NCE growth data as compared to the state norm and The Biome’s MPI and Prof/Adv data relative to the state average to make the final designation.					
• Math MPI Target	195	212	220	233	245
Actual Score					
• Math % Prof/Adv. Target	8	10	13	16	18
Actual Score					
Met: √ Not Met: X If The Biome meets the MPI Target OR the % Prof/Adv target, then UMSL considers that The Biome has met the target. If The Biome meets neither MPI nor %Prof/Adv; before designating the target as Not Met, UMSL will analyze The Biome’s NCE growth data as compared to the state norm and The Biome’s MPI and Prof/Adv data relative to the state average to make the final designation.					
• Science MPI Target	195	212	220	233	245
Actual Score					
• Science % Prof/Adv. Target	8	10	13	16	18
Actual Score					
Met: √ Not Met: X If The Biome meets the MPI Target OR the % Prof/Adv target, then UMSL					

<p>considers that The Biome has met the target.</p> <p>If The Biome meets neither MPI nor %Prof/Adv; before designating the target as Not Met, UMSL will analyze The Biome’s NCE growth data as compared to the state norm and The Biome’s MPI and Prof/Adv data relative to the state average to make the final designation.</p>					
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- \* Annual Minimum Targets may be adjusted on an annual basis by mutual agreement of the UMSL Charter School Office and The Biome
- \*\* Annual Minimum Targets are based on the current state assessment (MAP) and will be renegotiated based on any new or revised state assessment as necessary.

**MSIP 5 Standard 3: Attendance**

3. For the term of this performance contract, The Biome will meet the following MSIP5 90/90 attendance targets:

<b>Measure</b>					
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
Percent of students with 90% attendance rate: Target	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%	≥ 90%
Actual Percentage					
Met: √ Not Met: X					

**Annual Performance Report (APR)**

For SY19, DESE revised the APR report. The department no longer produces a single metric that sponsors can use to indicate whether or not a charter school would have accredited status if it were to be accredited by DESE; nor does it allow sponsors to make direct comparisons with St. Louis Public School at the district or building level. At this time UMSL will utilize other data to compare The Biome with SLPS (see below).

**Comparison to SLPS District and Buildings**

The Biome’s student achievement data will be equal to or exceed the grade 3-5 grade level configuration data of the St. Louis Public School District and peer school buildings of similar size and scope in the St. Louis Public School District as follows:

- English Language Arts: MPI scores and/or % of proficient or advanced
- Math: MPI scores and/or % of proficient or advanced
- Science: MPI scores and/or % of proficient or advanced

Three to five comparison schools will be chosen based on location, enrollment numbers and selectivity, student demographics, and percentage of free or reduced lunch.

\* These goals are based on the current state accountability system and structure (MSIP 5) and will be renegotiated based on any new or revised accountability system and structure as necessary.

## F. Final Terms and Signatures

The Biome and UMSL agree that substantial failure to meet the terms of performance stated above could cause UMSL to place The Biome on probation. Probation will require a remediation plan for addressing all deficiencies in the following year. Failure to remediate will result in a recommendation for revocation of the charter contract and closure of the school at the end of the school year.

Furthermore, this performance contract is for five years of operation of the school. In the fifth year, The Biome and UMSL will determine, based on UMSL policy and procedures and successful completion of this contract, if the school is prepared for renewal. At that time, a new performance contract will be created to address the next five years of the proposed, renewed charter.

The Board of Directors of The Biome approved this contract on January 14, 2020.

In agreement:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Bill Mendelsohn  
Executive Director: Charter Schools and Partnerships  
Charter Schools Sponsor Office – UMSL COE

Dec. 4, 2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Brian Phillips**  
Interim Board Chair  
The Biome

January 14, 2020

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## 2019 UMSL Annual Review Report <Name of School>

**NOTE: This is a draft of the report. Our office may make revisions between now and the release of the final version.**

### Contents:

Summary Page (page 2)

### Evaluation Standards

#### Ten elements of school evaluation:

- I. [Transformative and Innovative Vision](#)
- II. [Substantive Student Academic Achievement](#)
- III. [Transformational Curriculum](#)
- IV. [Empowering Culture of Achievement](#)
- V. [Strong School Leaders](#)
- VI. [Transformational Teachers](#)
- VII. [Comprehensive Student Support System](#)
- VIII. [Responsible Board Governance](#)
- IX. [Sound Financial Operations](#)
- X. [Engaged Parents and Community](#)

### NOTE:

In the Evidence columns, under Required Documents:

- Documents in **bold blue** must be submitted to the Charter School Office.
- Documents in **bold black** must be on hand, but do not need to be submitted to the Charter School Office.

## Summary Page

**THIS PAGE WILL BE COMPLETED WHEN THE REPORT IS FINALIZED**

Please note that the comments in this report reflect our analysis as of the end of the 2018-19 school year.

1. Areas of Strength

Here are the top strengths that you can leverage to continuously improve and move you towards your vision.

2. Areas for Growth

Here are the key areas for growth that could move you towards your vision.

I. Transformative and Innovative Vision A transformational school:		
Standard	Indicators	Evidence
a. Develops a transformational mission and vision for its students and their families.	i. Reaching the vision clearly places students on paths of greater opportunity in life.	<b>Required Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Charter Application:</b> (Met as part of the charter application approval process.)</li> <li>• <b>Approved Charter Amendments</b></li> </ul> <b>Other Evidence</b>
b. Students, parents and staff understand and are invested in the mission and vision.	a) Students, parents and staff can articulate the mission and vision. b) In their classrooms, teachers and students are mission driven as indicated by their enthusiasm, active and consistent participation and task completion.	<b>Required Documents:</b>  <b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student, parent and staff interviews and survey data</li> <li>• Classroom observations</li> </ul>

Element I: Vision	
Areas of strength	Areas for Growth

II. Substantive Student Academic Achievement: A transformational school:		
Standards	Indicators	Evidence
<p>a. Sets and meets clear, meaningful, and measureable academic goals and student learning objectives as stated in the charter through an accountability plan (performance contract) with its sponsor</p> <p>b. Demonstrates high expectations for student achievement</p>	<p>i. Articulates its curricular content and performance standards, including minimum student performance standards for advancement or graduation.</p> <p>ii. Student achievement targets in the accountability plan (performance contract) propel students towards proficient and advanced scores on state assessments and success in future educational and occupational settings.</p> <p>iii. Uses multiple forms of assessment, including growth-measures assessments, to inform instructional decision-making.</p> <p>iv. Implements assessments that collect data about students' short-term acquisition and long-term mastery of essential knowledge.</p> <p>v. Analyzes assessments to gauge students' progress towards meeting school performance goals and makes instructional adjustments, as needed, to improve student achievement.</p> <p>vi. Tracks and disseminates growth data for students over time using both norm referenced measures and state assessments.</p> <p>vii. Closes the achievement gap among sub-groups of students.</p> <p>viii. Complies with the accountability plan (performance contract) established with its sponsor.</p> <p>ix. Maintains an attendance rate that aligns with the school's performance contract.</p> <p>x. Maintains a high graduation rate (secondary schools) that aligns with the school's performance contract.</p>	<p><b>Required Documents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Performance Contract</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher and instructional coordinator interviews</li> <li>• Internal formative and summative assessment data</li> <li>• MSIP-5 student achievement, attendance and retention data.</li> </ul>

**Element II: Student Achievement**

**GENERAL NOTE:**

- DESE did not release the SY18 state assessment data until February 2019. UMSL could not utilize the findings in the SY18 Annual Review Report. If trends from the past three years are a strong indicator, it is unlikely that DESE will release the SY19 state assessment data until October, 2019 at the earliest. **So that UMSL can complete and submit the SY Annual Review Report to our schools by mid-summer, the findings in this section of the report are based on the SY18 state assessment data.**
- **Analyzing SY18 state assessment data presents several challenges:**
  - The assessment was brand new. **DESE explicitly cautioned schools against making comparisons with previous years.**

- The assessment was more rigorous than those from previous years. The statisticians had to alter cut scores significantly to avoid a situation where the vast majority of students across the state failed to reach proficient or advanced. In spite of the alteration, ELA and math outcomes still declined compared to previous years.
- For reasons that are not clear to UMSL, in spite of the general decline in test outcomes, APR scores increased compared to previous years.

**These trends make it very difficult to draw conclusions from comparisons between our schools' assessment outcomes and their performance contract annual targets. UMSL has approached these comparisons with caution.**

Areas of Strength	Areas for Growth

DRAFT

III. Transformational Curriculum A transformational school:		
Standards	Indicators	Evidence
a. Curriculum and instruction are aligned to the mission, vision and educational philosophy of the school.	i. Curriculum scope and sequence provide opportunities for students to reach the school's mission and vision. ii. Instructional practices provide opportunities for students to reach the school's mission and vision. iii. Curriculum and instruction are aligned to the educational philosophy of the school as described in the charter.	<b>Required Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Schoolwide Curriculum Scope and Sequence</b></li> </ul>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom observations – including SPED and Title 1 programs</li> <li>• Student and staff interviews</li> <li>• Sample unit and lesson plans</li> <li>• Student work</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
b. Provides a challenging, engaging, coherent, transformational curriculum that meets the academic needs of all students	i. Implements curriculum that clearly identifies and builds essential and enduring knowledge. ii. Structures a curriculum scope and sequence aligned to Missouri's Common Core Standards. iii. Ensures that the curriculum invests and prepares students to extend their learning and be successful beyond the classroom and beyond their school career (life-long learning, career readiness, college readiness, active citizenship). iv. Uses a variety of instructional techniques to enhance content acquisition and meet the needs of a diverse student population. v. Develops and implements clearly defined strategies to meet the needs of a diverse student population. vi. Utilizes high quality instructional materials, including technology, to support the curriculum	<b>Required Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as above</li> </ul>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as above</li> <li>• MSIP-5 student achievement, attendance and retention data</li> </ul>

Element III: Curriculum and Instruction	
Areas of Strength	Areas for Growth

IV. Empowering Culture of Achievement A transformational school:		
Standard	Indicators	Evidence
a. Supports students in a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment that invests them in achievement, builds character, increases responsibility, fosters inclusion and inspires joy.	i. Creates a school environment conducive to learning and growth. ii. Maintains a safe school environment free of violence and the threat of violence. iii. Implements processes to promote student health and wellness. iv. Ensures that students feel supported and respected by teachers and staff. v. Communicates and consistently implements a comprehensive student discipline policy that complies with the Missouri Safe School Act and the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.	<b>Required Documents:</b>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Onsite observations</li> <li>• Parent surveys and interviews</li> <li>• Student surveys and interviews</li> <li>• Staff surveys interviews</li> <li>• Student support staff interviews (Counselors, nurses, social workers, School Psychologists)</li> <li>• Parent complaint/grievance records</li> <li>• Discipline, suspension and/or expulsion data</li> </ul>

Element IV: Culture of Achievement	
Areas of Strength	Areas for Growth

V. Strong School Leadership and Operations A transformational school leader:		
Standards	Indicators	Evidence
a) Invests students, parents and staff in the mission and vision of the school.	i. Communicates the mission and vision on a frequent basis to students, parents and staff. ii. Monitors students, parents and staff to gauge their understanding of the mission and vision and the extent to which they're striving to reach it.	<b>Required Documents:</b>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School leader interview</li> <li>Student, staff and parent surveys and interviews</li> <li>School publications such as newsletters and announcements</li> </ul>
b) Employs a clear strategic approach to meeting the goals of improving student academic achievement	i. With the Board of Directors, develops strategic plans that ensure fidelity to the school's vision by addressing critical issues; including school performance, financial management, human resource management, facilities, and quality improvement ii. Articulates and monitors the goals identified in the strategic plans. iii. Holds him/herself accountable for specific outcomes outlined in the charter and detailed in the school's performance contract with the sponsor iv. Engages in ongoing relevant professional development v. Utilizes an effective data communication instrument providing consistent, timely data regarding the school's progress toward meeting agreed upon performance expectations (academic, operational, and financial) vi. Implements the academic program in alignment with the school's charter and Missouri Common Core Standards vii. Collects, assimilates, and disseminates student achievement data to inform a continuous cycle of school improvement	<b>Required Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>School Annual Calendar</b></li> <li><b>Strategic plan</b></li> <li><b>School Leader Mentoring Plan</b></li> <li><b>School Leader Professional Development Plan</b></li> <li><b>Student Assessment Plan</b></li> </ul>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School leader interview</li> <li>School leadership team interviews</li> <li>Teacher interviews</li> <li>Student data analysis plans</li> </ul>
c) Implements recruitment and enrollment strategies and practices that respect diversity and are consistent with the school's charter, mission, and vision, as well as federal and state regulations	i. Implements student recruitment strategies that focus on the targeted population stated in its charter and that are inclusive of a diverse range of learners ii. Utilizes a public lottery process for open enrollment iii. Ensures no practices are implemented which may limit the opportunity for students with special needs to enroll iv. Ensures that student enrollment and attendance numbers are in line with the charter agreement, and provide evidence that the school is a viable school of choice for the community.	<b>Required Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Enrollment Application</b></li> <li><b>Marketing/Recruitment Materials</b></li> </ul>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School leader interview</li> <li>Observation of lotteries</li> <li>Enrollment and attendance data</li> <li>Core data</li> </ul>

<p>d) Develops and sustains a school culture conducive to student learning</p>	<p>i. Maintains a clean and safe environment that supports the educational mission of the school.</p> <p>ii. Maintains open, consistent, clear communication among students, staff, parents, and administration</p> <p>iii. Maintains a school culture conducive to learning and continuous improvement</p> <p>iv. Communicates effectively to all stakeholder groups</p>	<p><i>Same evidence sources as described in Element IV above.</i></p> <p><b>Required Documents:</b></p> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Onsite observations</li> <li>• Parent surveys and interviews</li> <li>• Student surveys and interviews</li> <li>• Staff surveys and interviews</li> <li>• Student support staff interviews (Counselors, nurses, social workers, School Psychologists)</li> <li>• Discipline, suspension and/or expulsion data</li> <li>• Parent complaint/grievance records</li> </ul>
<p>e) Employs qualified staff, provides professional development opportunities to improve their performance.</p>	<p>i. Conducts personnel procedures and practices in a manner that promotes instructional effectiveness and continuous school improvement.</p> <p>ii. Conducts personnel procedures and practices in a manner that promotes the recruitment and retention of an effective instructional staff.</p> <p>iii. Provides professional development opportunities for all staff members that are aligned to the school's vision and advances their effectiveness in their roles.</p>	<p><b>Required Documents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Staff Organization Chart</b></li> <li>• <b>Employee School Handbook</b></li> <li>• <b>Assurance of Faculty/Staff Background Checks (FCSR and fingerprinting)</b></li> <li>• <b>Staff Professional Development Plan and Calendar</b></li> <li>• <b>Staff Mentoring and Coaching Plan</b></li> <li>• <b>Teacher Evaluation Plan (including blank evaluation forms)</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leader interview</li> <li>• Staff interviews</li> <li>• Student interviews</li> <li>• Staff retention data</li> </ul>
<p>f) Understands and complies with the laws, policies, and state and federal requirements that govern charter schools</p>	<p>i. Participates regularly in professional development opportunities, which provide insight into the trends, issues, and potential changes in the environment in which charter schools operate</p> <p>ii. Allocates resources based primarily on their impact on student achievement, learning, and well-being</p> <p>iii. Implements business policies and procedures that promote school sustainability, operational integrity, and a focus on student achievement and learning results</p> <p>iv. Establishes programs and policies that enable all students to be served effectively</p> <p>v. Ensures timely submission of required data and reporting</p>	<p><b>Required Documents:</b></p> <p><b>Health and Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Health Permits (food service)</b></li> <li>• <b>Fire Safety Permit</b></li> <li>• <b>Building Inspection/Certificate of Occupancy</b></li> <li>• <b>Elevator Inspection Certificate</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Special Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SPED Compliance Plans (IDEA &amp; 504)</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Title I</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Title I Parent Meetings (sign in sheets)</b></li> <li>• <b>HQ Parent Notification Letters</b></li> </ul>

	<p>vi. Ensures that school is in compliance with state and federal laws, policies and requirements and provisions in its contract with UMSL in these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Health and safety</li> <li>b. Student records: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Thorough and comprehensive</li> <li>ii. Secure and confidential</li> <li>iii. Appropriate employee access to the data system</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Special Education</li> <li>d. Title I</li> <li>e. Free and reduced lunch</li> <li>f. Homeless and ELL students</li> <li>g. Fiscal management</li> <li>h. State testing</li> <li>i. Other operations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Homeless and ELL Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">ELL Intervention Plan</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">ELL Pupil Count/Percentages</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Homeless Student Policy</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Fiscal Management</b> (Refer to Element IX: Sound Financial Operations below)</p> <p><b>State Testing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Quality Assurance – Grade Level Assessment Assurance Document</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">State Exam Security Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">State Exam Testing Calendar</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Operations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Student/Parent Handbook</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Media Policy</a></li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leader interview</li> <li>• Document/MOSIS submission history with UMSL and DESE</li> <li>• Interviews with consultants: Shannon Spradling and Thurma DeLoach</li> <li>• FERPA compliance procedures</li> <li>• Student record keeping system</li> </ul>
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<b>Element V: School Leadership and Operations</b>	
<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Growth</b>

VI. Transformational Teachers A transformational teacher:		
Standard	Indicator	Evidence
a. Understands and believes in the vision and innovative identity of the school.	i. Develops an ambitious, measurable and inspiring course vision and goals aligned to the school's vision and innovative identity. ii. Provides students with a clear picture of what reaching the vision and goals looks like.	<b>Required Documents:</b>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher and student surveys and interviews</li> <li>Classroom observations</li> </ul>
b. Takes responsibility for investing students in reaching their academic and personal growth goals.	i. Believes that all students can learn. ii. Holds high expectations for all students iii. Inspires and motivates students to reach the vision and goals. iv. Builds a strong culture of achievement where the classroom environment is conducive to learning and growing. v. Builds strong, trusting relationships with students and their families. vi. Is passionate about the content of the curriculum and conveys that passion to students.	<b>Required Documents:</b>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher surveys and interviews</li> <li>Classroom observations</li> <li>Student and parent surveys and interviews</li> <li>Course scope and sequence, unit and lesson plans</li> </ul>
c. Develops and/or implements curriculum that is strongly aligned to student academic achievement and personal growth goals	i. Designs a course scope and sequence that is tightly aligned to the vision and goals. ii. Designs a course that engages students in both critical thinking and meaningful discourse around enduring understandings and essential questions. iii. Designs units and lessons that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are tightly aligned to course learning objectives and desired student outcomes.</li> <li>Build on what students already know and do and provide the scaffolding they need to reach the level of success commensurate with the vision and goals.</li> <li>Engage students with thought-provoking and ambiguous texts/materials that challenge their thinking and feelings.</li> <li>Give students opportunities to conduct research to answer a question, explore and take a stand on an issue, or develop solutions to a problem.</li> <li>Use writing to communicate their reflections and understandings</li> <li>Incorporate a variety of teaching methods that meet the needs of diverse student learning styles</li> </ul>	<b>Required Documents:</b>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School leader/Curriculum leader interview</li> <li>Teacher surveys and interviews</li> <li>Classroom observations</li> <li>Course scope and sequence, unit and lesson plans</li> <li>Assessment plans/performance tracking systems</li> <li>Student performance data (including state, formative and internal benchmark assessments)</li> </ul>

d. Employs best instructional practices to engage students in learning and raise academic achievement.	i. Keeps instruction student centered and inquiry oriented ii. Continually orients students to content iii. Continually orients students to each other iv. Continually checks for student understanding and makes appropriate adjustments as necessary	<b>Required Documents:</b>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leader/Curriculum leader interviews</li> <li>• Teacher interviews</li> <li>• Classroom observations</li> </ul>
e. Tracks student progress towards academic and personal growth goals and makes adjustments as necessary.	i. Uses multiple forms of assessment, including growth-measures assessments, to inform instructional decision-making. ii. Evaluates students' progress towards meeting course and school performance goals and modifies goals, as needed, to improve student achievement. iii. Tracks and disseminates growth data for students over time using both norm referenced measures and state assessments. iv. Builds student skills in tracking their own progress and motivates them to take charge of their own academic and personal growth. v. Pursues professional development opportunities to address areas for growth in their own teaching.	<b>Required Documents:</b>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leader/Curriculum leader interviews</li> <li>• Classroom observations</li> <li>• Teacher surveys</li> <li>• Course scope and sequence, unit and lesson plans</li> <li>• Assessment plans/performance tracking systems</li> <li>• Student performance data (including state, formative and internal benchmark assessments)</li> </ul>

Element VI: Teachers	
Areas of Strength	Areas for Growth

VII. Comprehensive Student Support System The support staff of a transformational school:		
Standard	Indicators	Evidence
a. Develops and utilizes a comprehensive, developmental student support system that proactively assists all students to develop and apply skills for maximum academic, career, and personal/social growth during the school years.	i. Collects and uses academic, behavior and attendance data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Plan appropriate programs for students both individually and collectively.</li> <li>o Monitor student performance and provide appropriate interventions in cooperation with all stakeholders for student success.</li> </ul> ii. Assists all students with developing academic, career, and personal/social skills; helping them to utilize reasoning, understand connections and make complex choices. iii. Uses a variety of activities, resources and strategies; including individual and group counseling, classroom presentations, academic advising, parent education and other responsive services	<b>Required Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">SPED Compliance Plans (IDEA &amp; 504)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">ELL Intervention Policy</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Title I Needs Assessment and Plan</a></li> </ul> <b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student support team interviews</li> <li>• School leader interviews</li> </ul>
b. Advocates for students and provides professional expertise to help school personnel, parents/guardians and community members to increase the effectiveness of student success.	i. Proactively facilitates communication and collaboration within and among the school, home and community to promote and build trust, understanding and partnerships with all segments of the school community. ii. Seeks solutions and provide referrals to overcome barriers to effective involvement in education and success of students.	<b>Required Documents:</b> <b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student support team interviews</li> <li>• School leader interviews</li> <li>• Staff, student and parent surveys</li> </ul>
c. Develops and implements policies and procedures to ensure that all children with disabilities are identified and evaluated; and if eligible, receive services that meet their specific needs.	i. Ensure that teachers have the expertise to identify students who may have special needs and communicates regularly with teachers to share concerns. ii. Follows protocol related to parent concerns in a timely manner. iii. Develops and implements a system (internal or external) to evaluate students. iv. Develops and implements appropriate services that meet each student's individual needs. v. Is in compliance with all special education statutes and procedures.	<b>Required Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul> <b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student support team interviews</li> <li>• School leader interviews</li> <li>• DESE CAPs</li> <li>• Staff, student and parent surveys</li> </ul>
d. Develops and implements policies and procedures to ensure that all children who qualify as homeless receive all necessary	i. Develops and implements a plan that's in compliance with state and federal guidelines that ensures homeless students have an equal opportunity to a public education.	<b>Required Documents:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Homeless Student Policy</a></li> </ul> <b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student support team interviews</li> </ul>

services and support to meet their specific needs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leader interviews</li> <li>• DESE compliance reports</li> <li>• Staff, student and parent surveys</li> </ul>
e. Develops and implements policies and procedures to ensure that all children who qualify as ELL receive necessary services and support to meet their specific needs.	i. Develops and implements a plan that's in compliance with state and federal guidelines that ensures ELL students receive necessary services and support to meet their specific needs.	<p><b>Required Documents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ELL Intervention Plan</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student support team interviews</li> <li>• School leader interviews</li> <li>• DESE compliance reports</li> <li>• Staff, student and parent surveys</li> </ul>

Element VII: Student Support System	
Areas of Strength	Areas for Growth
<b>Dr. Thurma DeLoach's Review</b>	
<b>THURMA's report goes here</b>	<b>THURMA's report goes here</b>

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**VIII. Responsible Governance**  
**The Board of Directors of a transformational school:**

Standard	Indicator	Evidence
<p>a. Operates legitimately and in the best interest of its students and mission.</p>	<p>i. Considers implications of decisions on the mission of the school.</p> <p>ii. The Board annually self-evaluates using a standardized tool that assesses performance based on setting goals, developing policy, communication with the school and community and oversight of school leadership.</p> <p>iii. Ensures the board and school have all necessary insurance policies in place.</p>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Board Self-Evaluation</b></li> <li>• <b>Insurance Policies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Directors and Officer Coverage</b></li> <li>○ <b>General Liability</b></li> <li>○ <b>Professional Liability</b></li> <li>○ <b>Property</b></li> <li>○ <b>Workmen Compensation</b></li> <li>○ <b>Employee Dishonesty/Crime (minimum \$500k)</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation of board meetings</li> <li>• UMSL Sponsor communication with board president and/or directors</li> </ul>
<p>b. Recruits and maintains a strong governing board with diverse backgrounds and skills sets</p>	<p>i. Includes individuals who are experienced in managing organizations and well versed in charter law</p> <p>ii. Maintains among its Directors a balance of skills and professional expertise (i.e. K-12 education, business, marketing, legal, accounting, fundraising, real estate etc.) necessary to fulfill all Board obligations.</p> <p>iii. Provides new board members a formal orientation on the purpose and educational vision of the school, the school's performance objectives, and their roles and legal responsibilities</p> <p>iv. Seeks information and professional development opportunities related to charter operation, laws, and effective non-profit board work</p>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Board Organizational Structure Chart</b></li> <li>• <b>Board Director Profiles/Contact Information</b></li> <li>• <b>Assurance of Board Criminal Background and FCSR (child abuse registry) Checks</b></li> <li>• <b>Board Development Plans</b></li> <li>• <b>Board Member Financial Disclosure Confirmation</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director interviews</li> </ul>
<p>c. Conducts its business in compliance with all state statutes and regulations</p>	<p>i. Meetings are regularly scheduled and appropriately conducted.</p> <p>ii. Governance records and documentation are appropriately created and maintained.</p> <p>iii. School business is conducted in a transparent manner subject to the provisions and sections 610.010 to 610.030, open meetings law; free of conflict of interest, and models best practices regarding governance roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Board Meeting Agenda</b></li> <li>• <b>Board Meeting Calendar</b></li> <li>• <b>Board Meeting Document Packets</b></li> <li>• <b>Board Meeting Minutes - Approved</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation of board meetings</li> <li>• Board meeting notices and signage</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

<p>d. Ensures that policies are complete, regularly reviewed, updated as needed, and followed in a fair and consistent manner</p>	<p>i. Develops, adopts, and follows a comprehensive set of bylaws which at a minimum include conflicts of interest policies, meeting protocols and procedures, and formal delineations of roles and authorities within the charter school</p> <p>ii. Regularly reviews board policies, updating as necessary.</p> <p>iii. Organizes and makes available to the public the school policies utilizing multiple forms of communication</p>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Board Policy Manual and Bylaws;</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation of board meetings</li> <li>• Board meeting agendas and minutes</li> <li>• Evidence in board minutes that check registry has been reviewed and approved by the board.</li> </ul>
<p>e. Employs a clear strategic approach to meeting the school's vision</p>	<p>i. With the school leaders, develops strategic plans that ensure fidelity to the school's vision by addressing critical issues; including school performance, financial management, human resource management, facilities, and quality improvement</p> <p>ii. Monitors progress towards goals identified in the strategic plans</p>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Strategic Plan (same as for School Leader)</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation of board meetings</li> <li>• Board meeting approved minutes</li> </ul>
<p>f. Selects, supports, and annually evaluates the school leader</p>	<p>i. Selects a highly qualified school leader and defines the role the leader plays in the overall operation of the charter school</p> <p>ii. Supports the administrator's decision making</p> <p>iii. Establishes clear expectations of and assesses the performance of the school leader using a consistent evaluation instrument reflecting the mission and vision of the school, the performance goals set forth in the performance contract, the day-to-day management of the school and progress made on yearly school goals.</p>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Board Evaluation of School Leader (blank template)</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair and Director interviews</li> <li>• Board meeting observations</li> </ul>
<p>g. Monitors the school's education program, operational procedures, and fiscal health in cooperation with the sponsor.</p>	<p>i. Directs the school leader to provide an annual self-evaluation to the sponsor and regular reports of student performance, academic progress, and the school's fiscal health to the sponsor and to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.</p> <p>ii. Monitors student academic performance, curriculum and instruction, operational procedures and fiscal management.</p>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">School Annual Self-Evaluation (same as for School Leader)</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair and Director interviews</li> <li>• Board meeting observations</li> <li>• Board meeting approved minutes</li> </ul>
<p>h. Fulfills its responsibilities to UMSL's sponsorship liaison.</p>	<p>i. The Board communicates in a timely manner with UMSL's sponsorship liaison about significant policy, personnel, school performance or legal issues.</p> <p>ii. A written response from the Board that addresses the concerns and recommendations of the annual sponsor evaluation no later than one week following the board's regularly-scheduled October meeting.</p>	<p><b>Documents</b></p> <p><b>Other Evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board-UMSL sponsor communications</li> <li>• Written response to Annual School Review</li> </ul>

Element VIII: Board Governance

**Recommendation: Board Policy Review**

Our office strongly recommends that each of our boards regularly review board policies to ensure that they are current with Missouri statutes.

**Areas of Strength**

**Areas for Growth**

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IX. Sound Financial Operations A transformational school:		
Standard	Indicator	Evidence
a. Fulfills its fiduciary responsibility for public funds by ensuring the school operates in a fiscally sound and appropriate manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Preserves a minimum of three percent budget surplus</li> <li>ii. Maintains accessible and appropriate fiscal records</li> <li>iii. Core Data and other required school reporting is conducted in a timely and appropriate manner</li> <li>iv. Conducts an annual financial audit</li> <li>v. Ensures that school business and expenses, including personnel, are made free of conflict of interest and directed toward meeting the mission of the school.</li> </ul>	<b>Documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Secretary to the Board Report (ASBR)</li> <li>• Independent Annual Audit</li> <li>• Cash Flow Projection and Analysis</li> <li>• Annual Debt Report</li> <li>• Tear Sheet and Invoice for Locally Published Annual Audit</li> </ul>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with CFO</li> <li>• Payroll and retirement records</li> <li>• Core Date Reports</li> <li>• Evidence in board minutes that check registry has been reviewed and approved by the board.</li> </ul>
b. Establishes clear fiscal policies that use public funds appropriately	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Adhere to an adopted and board approved fiscal policy and procedures manual</li> <li>ii. Ensure fiscal policies include procedures for the authorization of purchases and release of funds</li> <li>iii. Adopt a budget by June 30 for the upcoming fiscal year</li> <li>iv. Ensure that the budgeting process maintains a direct focus on teaching and learning needs with a fiscal balance to cover expenses with revenue</li> </ul>	<b>Documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Budget</li> <li>• Monthly Financial Statements</li> <li>• Banking Information</li> <li>• Account Coding Data FED/LEA</li> <li>• Internal Control Policies and Procedures</li> <li>• Procurement Policy</li> <li>• Federally Funded Purchase Inventory</li> </ul>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with CFO</li> <li>• Approved board meeting minutes</li> </ul>
c. Ensures financial resources are directly related to the school's purpose: student achievement and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Ensure that the school's physical space, materials, and supplies are conducive to accomplishing the charter's school-wide learning goals as specified in the charter</li> <li>ii. Establish policies to ensure that contracts reflect fair market value</li> <li>iii. Determine compensation levels for employees that are appropriate for the positions and responsibilities and that are consistent with industry norms</li> </ul>	<b>Documents</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff Salary Records (including average staff salary)</li> </ul>
		<b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building walk-through</li> <li>• Classroom observations</li> <li>• Vendor contracts</li> </ul>

<b>Element IX: Financial Operations</b>	
<b>Areas of Strength</b>	<b>Areas for Growth</b>
<b>Shannon Spradling's/ Janice Denigan's Review</b>	
<b>SHANNON's report goes here</b>	

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X. Engaged Parents and Community A transformational school:		
Standard	Indicator	Evidence
a. Engages parents and community stakeholders in the vision and mission of the school	i. Develops and implements an effective communications plan consistently engaging the community in becoming educated regarding quality education and developing support for their charter school	<b>Documents</b>  <b>Other Evidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent interviews</li> <li>• Parent and community communication/involvement plan</li> <li>• Data on parent and community participation in school events</li> <li>• Parent-teacher contact data</li> <li>• Newsletters and other communications</li> <li>• Parent survey data</li> <li>• Board meeting agendas, notices, minutes and supporting documentation</li> </ul>
	ii. Ensures the active engagement of administrators, board members, parents, and staff in communication and outreach planning and implementation	
iii. Communicates and engages all stakeholders in the mission and vision of the school		
iv. Involves students, parents, and community members as part of the school's support system.		
v. Fosters strong relationships between school staff and parents.		
b. Seeks input from relevant, critical, impacted stakeholders	i. Establishes regular opportunities and methods of communication among the stakeholders, administration, and the board ii. Conducts its meetings regularly and in an open, organized, and effective manner iii. Operates within the requirements of the Missouri Sunshine Law ensuring board meeting agendas and meeting minutes are posted in a timely manner for broad public review and all state non-profit requirements are met	

Element X: Parents and Community	
Areas of Strength	Areas for Growth



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## Literacy

Again, despite our limited years of operation and MAP data, we have identified patterns in our learners' literacy needs. We are striving to create a culture of literacy at the Biome that not only supports and advances our reluctant, struggling readers but pushes our strong, capable readers to reach their full potential.

The initiatives are evident in the classroom instruction, Tier II instruction with specialists, and the overall culture on the focus of literacy to students. Our overall goal of providing learning opportunities that support the growth of our readers include but are not limited to, developing a comprehensive Biome library where all students have access to culturally relevant books, as well as leveled libraries in every classroom.

The literacy instruction in the 2019-20 school year was increased from 90 minutes to 160 minutes at all grade levels. This 'core' literacy instructional time is considered 'untouchable' time. This reinforces the belief that literacy is vital to success and that literacy learning is at its maximum. The literacy instruction includes a systemic approach to writer's workshop block. Our writer's workshop instruction method is focused on the work of Lucy Calkins. This time is used for the instruction of writing in various genres. Along with the writing component, kindergarten and first grade have adopted a systematic, explicitly taught phonics program, Really Great Reading. Our diagnostic assessment tools have shown this to be an area of weaknesses in our learners. However, up to this point in the history of the Biome, we had not implemented any specific instruction to focus primarily on acquisition of this skill. To support the phonics/spelling component in grades 2-5, we adopted a word study program, Words Their Way, that focuses on the study of word structures and is used to assist our learners with these missing skills in the more intermediate grades.

In order to continue to support our learners when they are not at school, last year we began our first ever summer school at The Biome. For four weeks, learners were immersed in different genres of reading and writing while receiving individual and small group reading instruction based on their specific needs.

In looking at our learners' needs, it is apparent that more focused, small group and individual instruction is required in order to advance many learners in their skills in literacy. The Biome now employs 1.5 reading specialists, and a part time instructional coach. These interventionalists support learners by a program titled, Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI). LLI incorporates reading, writing, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary and fluency, giving the students a well-balanced literacy intervention. In order to facilitate a seamless approach to our intervention, the special education teachers also support the learners they service with the LLI



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system. Additionally, the interventionists support the teachers' instruction of literacy in the classroom by coaching different reading strategies throughout the year.

## Mathematics

During the last four years, we have grown a great deal in our math curriculum/program, but not enough. The original teaching series adopted by the Biome Staff was Jump Math. This series was recommended because of its success at camp type programs. The Biome staff found that teaching from the Jump Math series provided a foundation but limited the diverse experiences they could offer the children, such as remediation and accelerations. In the last two years we have focused on trying to develop the math program and are looking for a new series that provided more resources, technology, enrichment opportunities, remediation and parent involvement. We decided to use the Envisions Math Program and increased our instructional time to one hour per day. We are currently in our second year of implementation of Envisions Math.

The new series and strategies allowed us to start making gains in math. Looking at the first four years of our Math program, we have seen some good growth in Math based on our STAR data across all grade levels, but it is inconsistent. The Math MAP data for the past two years reflects scores in basic and below basic for the 3rd and 4th grades. This has been addressed by providing mathematical instruction that focuses on skill development, processing and thinking skills, and to creating a strong reading foundation so they can successfully answer math story problems. The Biome staff is implementing the new curriculum series with fidelity but there needs to be more support to understand how best to deliver the Envisions Math series to our learners so that we can continue making Math academic gains. Plans are in place to provide a daylong workshop for all classroom leaders with one of the Envisions trainers. This will be in conjunction with supportive webinars to continue growing our skills and strategies.

The expectation is for improved math instruction and math learning by providing the training, support, and practices necessary for our learners.

## Tiered Structure of Support at The Biome School- Policy and Procedures

### Tier I

Tier I instruction refers to scientifically based classroom interventions, accommodations, and modifications centered around high-quality teaching in the general education classroom. All students have access to such teaching methods aimed at facilitating academic success at a differentiated level. Teachers should be providing such instruction on a daily basis with consistency and fidelity. Tier I instruction should include regular screenings for on-grade-level



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achievement and are conducted in whole group intervention. School administration and The Student Success Team support each teacher as needed to implement such instruction.

### **Tier II**

For students not making adequate progress within Tier I instruction, supports with increasing intensity matched to each student's needs and rate of progress are required. At The Biome, Tier II supports are targeted specifically in the areas of Literacy, Social Emotional Learning, and Behavior Intervention. Progress monitoring is completed through the following: informal assessment, Emergent Literacy screenings, observations, classroom data collection, Speech/Language Screenings, Fountas and Pinnell Benchmarks, Guided Reading Assessments, Lucy Caulkins Benchmarks, and STAR District Assessment scores. The Student Success Team facilitates bi-monthly meetings with each individual teacher to review Tier I instruction and determine need for Tier II intervention\*\*. These interventions are then put in place for students showing lack of progress through the above-mentioned screenings. When attending these meetings, teachers follow a Tier II checklist, providing assessment data, work samples, Behavior Collection Forms, and a history of parent contact/involvement. The team then determines eligible students to be provided intensified intervention in small-group settings in addition to the general education curriculum.

### **Tier III**

Students continuing to display lack of progress with Tier I and Tier II are then considered for further intensive and individualized intervention to target the skill deficits. Data collected during Tier I and II are used to support a referral form to The Student Success Team. The team then facilitates bi-monthly meetings to discuss each student. These meetings include School Administrator (Principal/LEA), general education teacher, and all interventionists. Plans are then created to provide Tier III intervention in the targeted areas. For Students who do not progress to the desired level of achievement in response to these specific interventions may be referred for a comprehensive evaluation and considered for eligibility for Special Education services under IDEA. Data collected from Tier I, II, and III are included when making the eligibility determination. It is noted that at any time during this process, IDEA allows parents to request a formal evaluation to determine Special Education eligibility.

*\*\*For Tier II and Tier III literacy intervention, the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) system is utilized.*



## Improvement Results Obtained

### Leadership and Staffing

During these first four years, The Biome School has grown in many ways. It has increased its grade levels from a K-1 school to a K-5 school and from 60 children to 210 children. For the first two years of our existence, The Biome School struggled to attract an experienced principal and teachers. During our first two years of operation, our teaching staff consisted of all new teachers, and our principal had no prior leadership experience.

In 2017, Dr. Pamela Retzlaff was promoted from the interim principal, having served in the role for five months, to the principal. Dr. Retzlaff's thirty years of school leadership marked a turning point in the development of our school and improvement in our staff. The staff has increased to accommodate the growth in population, including 11 Classroom Leaders, five Special Educators, including a Social Worker, two Reading specialists, and teachers of Music, Adaptive Thinking (art and tech), and Mind & Movement. We are in our third year of including AmeriCorps members as part of the teaching team. Their focus is on providing Social Emotional Learning instruction and tutoring in reading and math. All but one staff member is a certified teacher with an advanced degree or working on a master's degree. *(See table 1: Staff Experience Demographics)*

<b>Avg. Years of Experience</b>	<b>Number of Advanced Degrees</b>	<b>Staff Certifications Count</b>
15 years	23	63

Learning from our initial struggles hiring experienced school leadership, we were forward-thinking and aggressive in developing a succession plan for our current principal who will retire after the 2019 – 2020 school year. We have hired an incoming principal with 20+ years of leadership experience. Our incoming principal will join The Biome Community in April 2020 to ensure a smooth transition through the summer and into the 2020 – 2021 school year.

### Teaching and Learning

We are striving to create a culture of literacy at The Biome that not only supports and advances our reluctant, struggling readers but pushes our strong, capable readers to reach their full potential. Our goal is to provide learning opportunities that support the growth of capable, confident, and eager readers.

**Improvements in Literacy Materials and Opportunities:**

- We have improved our understanding and practice regarding routine and consistency. In routine and consistency, children find safety and security. Their minds can be free not to worry about what comes next, but what new things they will learn.
  - Our classrooms follow consistent schedules, routines, and procedures for our students throughout the day, but most importantly, throughout the literacy block.
  - The literacy block throughout the grades is considered an ‘untouchable’ time block. Protecting instructional time reinforces the belief that literacy is vital to our student’s success and that literacy instruction is prioritized.
  - The Schlafly library staff visits The Biome twice a month to bring books for the learners so they can check out. They are also supporting the teacher leaders and curriculum through their out-reach program. We are privileged to supply this needed library experience.
  - Reading Garden, located in our new annex building, has been accumulating books of various levels through donations. The space will continue to grow and serves as a resource to learners and staff in the future by working as a lending library.
  - Through and UMSL mini-grant, we acquired \$15,000 in classroom books and leveled texts. An overwhelming amount of these funds went to supply the learners in grades 3-5 with appropriate texts for their classrooms and instructional use. These texts strongly represent our population, which supports learners’ interest in reading. Through additional donor investments of \$15,000, we have invested in culturally relevant literacy materials for our students.
  - Through Donor’s Choose funds, we acquired much needed appropriate lower leveled text. These new texts have repetitive sentence structures, lots of sight words, and understandable story structures. Our emergent readers were in great need of appropriate books for instructional purposes.

**Improvements in Classroom Instruction:**

Our classroom leaders have been instrumental in assuring that all instructional needs are in place, whether it’s furniture, equipment, materials, resources, or curriculum development. The administration and instructional staff collaborate and are engaged in all facets of the delivery of instruction. Our academic team has built a strong foundation for addressing classroom needs and providing professional development and support for everyone within our learning community.

The heart of literacy instruction is in the classroom. Classroom teacher leaders need curriculum resources, supplies, and, most importantly, expertise in the area of literacy to change the tertiary of the current status of many of our learners. We engage in ongoing assessment to drive instruction and support our teachers in understanding methods to instruct our learners effectively.

Recent improvements include:

- Increased literacy instruction time from 90 minutes of small group reading time, to approximately 160 minutes of literacy instruction.
- Increased literacy instruction from small group reading to now include more methods that support all the components of reading.
- A writer's workshop has been incorporated across all the grade levels.
- Increased use of instructional literacy coaches to provide support to include all teachers at all grade levels (not just teachers new to The Biome), especially at the beginning of the year, but continually as the year progresses.
- Kindergarten and first-grade classes have adopted a systematic, explicitly taught phonics program. Research has shown phonics to be a great deficit across the country. Our diagnostic assessment tools also show this to be an area of weaknesses in our learners.
- Adoption of a word study program in grades 2-5 that focuses on the study of word structures and spelling is used to assist our learners with these missing skills in the more intermediate classes.

#### **Improvements in Intervention:**

Unfortunately, there are learners who lack the skills necessary for learning. For these learners, we are intervening with additional support.

- The Biome has adopted a program titled, Leveled Literacy Intervention.
- The Leveled Literacy Intervention program provides daily, intensive, small group instruction which supplements the classroom literacy teaching.
- The program includes phonics, reading, and writing.
- This intervention is used by reading specialists, reading interventionists (the literacy team), **and** special education teacher leaders to provide a seamless approach to our reading and writing intervention at The Biome.
- Additionally, learners receiving reading support with the literacy team are supplied with additional leveled texts to be read at home, so they can practice their newly learned skills with their families.



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## Additional Steps Strategies

### Attendance

The Biome School has traditionally produced a strong attendance percentage for our students and during the 2018 – 19 school year we exceeded the 90/90 attendance goal. This improvement was due to increased focus on communicating early and often with parents who failed to meet attendance expectations. This year, we have added a social worker to continue partnering with parents and assists them in meeting attendance requirements. However, we want to also hold them accountable for attendance issues that will impact their child's ability to learn.

### Parent Engagement, Satisfaction, and Interventions

The Biome School conducts a Biannual Annual Survey of to gain a better understanding of both the strengths and improvement areas of the school as perceived by the parents and guardians of The Biome's learners. This survey data is used to improve the facilities, academic programming, support services, opportunities for parent engagement, and overall culture at The Biome.

In April of 2019, parents and guardians of learners attended a focus group dinner with President and CEO of The Biome, Bill Kent. The conclusion of this section will summarize concerns voiced by a variety of families and the ongoing and planned interventions.

### Summary of Major Themes

- **Environment & Facilities**  
The survey data indicates that parents and guardians of learners at The Biome **are satisfied with the appearance, cleanliness, and overall warmth of staff members** upon entry into the school, as indicated by **96%** of responses. Parents and guardians report that they feel safe when dropping off their learners at the school.
- **Teachers**  
**The majority (91%)** of responses indicate that parents and guardians **are satisfied with their learner's teacher**, believing that **they treat their child fairly and with respect (96%)**; however, **15% of parents and guardians are unsatisfied with the frequency of updates** about their learner's strengths and progress. While several survey participants express their appreciation of their learner's teachers, others commented that there are,



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“inconsistent... communication methods,” between the learners’ parents and guardians and their teachers.

- ***Principal***  
**The majority (96%) of parents and guardians report feeling satisfied with the Principal, and 100% of participants indicated that they feel the principal treats them with care and respect.**
- ***Educational Services***  
**The majority 91% of parents and guardians at The Biome are satisfied with educational services provided by the school. Many survey participants state that they value the hands-on, engaging education that their learner receives; however, some disagree that the learning environment meets their child’s specific needs and 8% believe that their child is not being adequately challenged.**
- ***Values & Character Building***  
**The majority (96%) of parents and guardians agree that their learners are becoming more confident, skilled learners with positive behaviors. Overall, survey participants agree that their child is learning positive behaviors at The Biome. However, 27% indicated that they neither agree nor disagree that there is a positive difference in their child’s behavior because of the school’s values and character program. One guardian reflected on their learner’s increased negative behaviors and inquired what the school is doing to discuss and prevent bullying. Additionally, when asked whether their learner is developing Growth Mindset, a key approach to learning at The Biome, 38% of parents and guardians indicated that they do not know about Growth Mindset.**
- ***Enrichment Classes***  
**The majority (92.3%) of parents and guardians are satisfied with the enrichment classes provided by The Biome staff. While some guardians comment that they would like to see their learners provided with more adaptive thinking activities, several others praised the school for holistic engagement, such as The Biome’s mind and movement activities.**
- ***Parent/Family Education & Engagement***  
**Overall, satisfaction with parent and family education and engagement is high at 90%; however, 31% of parents and guardians indicate that they are not receiving an adequate amount of helpful information from The Biome regarding child development, health and nutrition, and other similar topics. One survey participant suggested that parents and guardians receive event notifications earlier. Overall, parents and guardians**



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commend The Biome staff in keeping students engaged in and out of school and expressed appreciation for parent involvement.

- ***Extra Supports***

Parents and guardians seem uncertain about what supplementary resources are available at The Biome. **While 56% of parents and guardians indicate agreement that the Biome school provides adequate supports** to families and learners, **39% neither agree nor disagree that these supports are available.** These outcomes suggest that many parents and guardians lack knowledge of resources that The Biome provides. Further, it appears that there is a communication gap between The Biome and learners' parents and guardians regarding information about services that support family needs and their child's learning and behavior needs.

### **Conclusion and Interventions**

In an effort to gather information about parent and guardian satisfaction from as many families as possible, The Biome has collected quantifiable data through these surveys, as well as informal, qualitative data through in-person parent feedback. In April of 2019, parents and guardians of learners gathered to discuss their thoughts and concerns about The Biome with President and CEO Bill Kent. Reflections common to both this meeting and the current survey include the desire for a nurse on staff; increased engagement opportunities for families; improved communication between The Biome and/or teachers and learners' families; and the addition of extracurriculars and afterschool programs.

Following the April meeting, The Biome initiated the **Parent School Alliance**, which aims to build a culture of high expectations and learning, provide parent learning opportunities to equip them to fully participate in their child's educational outcomes and advocacy, and provide a space for additional parent voice within our school community. Additionally, we are establishing partnerships to bring additional support to our students and families.



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## MODIFICATIONS TO THE BIOME SCHOOL

### Grade Expansion Changes

The Biome School was chartered as a K-8 School in 2014. On November 27, 2018, The Biome Board of Directors unanimously approved the resolution to not expand to middle school. This decision was made after a year of research and feedback from other charter schools and educational professionals. As an organization that carefully and routinely reviews its progress and applies the lessons learned, we determined that:

- Diverting our resources to launch a middle school, which we determined to be a different academic model, would divert our limited resources from improving our elementary program.
- Acquiring new facilities would require significant financial debt that we are not willing to assume.
- Our students deserve a fully functioning middle school versus a developing model.

### Leadership and Staffing

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## Facilities

The growth of our student population, facility needs, and realization that we were not yet prepared to launch a capital campaign presented an exciting challenge that we have solved. This year The Biome opened a seven-room annex building, measuring 7,616 ft<sup>2</sup>, to our property on the northwest corner of Olive and Taylor.

### **We accomplished the following goals with our new Annex:**

- Continued our tradition of providing excellent learning environments for our children
- Provided a cost-effective method to meet our facility needs for the next seven years
- Supported our growing enrollment through grade five
- Reduced upfront construction cost
- Eliminated the need to acquire large sums of debt and crippling debt service

Additional facility improvements include a meeting room/library, a new playground that consists of a walking track, vertical gardens, climbing structure, mini-farm to raise our chickens, and new greenhouse to be used as a tool in our science curriculum.



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## PROJECTION OF THE BIOME'S GOALS

The Biome is a community that prides itself on continual learning. The Biome School Board of Directors and staff leadership updates its strategic plan on a semi-annual basis, most recently, in April 2018. Our vision for the continued development of our school is anchored in the school's strategic initiatives, which are as follows:

### **Strategic Initiative One: Student Learning**

**We will meet or exceed the academic achievement targets by creating a world-class educational program.** The Biome's academic achievement targets are set and monitored in partnership with our sponsor. (See Appendix V: Performance Contract for Next Term 2021-2025.)

While The Biome has worked hard to ensure the alignment of our curriculum to MO State Standards, we plan to increase rigor within our academic model beginning at kindergarten and first grade in the 2020 – 2021 school year and in grades 2 – 5 in subsequent years.

In addition to academic targets, we are working to ensure that The Biome's students will be dynamic and creative thinkers, socially and emotionally equipped to learn, and contributors to their communities within and outside of their school. A strong foundation of literacy and math in the early grades (K-2) will ensure that The Biome's students are prepared to excel at the next stage of their academic careers.

#### Additional Action Steps:

- A. Become fully staffed in our education areas, with all personnel needed to address social and emotional learning needs. Fill any skill gaps that exist.
  - i. In addition, we want to add the necessary support staff nursing, counseling, and sports activities to develop student leadership
- B. Continue to define our internal learning standards and how we evaluate success.
  - i. Especially in the areas of creative thinking and social emotional development
- C. Continue the development of our scope and sequence of learning and pre-post standards
- D. Ensure that parents are incorporated into the culture. They must buy-in to our value proposition and we want them to be a proud part of The Biome community
- E. Ensure all classroom leaders are using collaborative project-based learning to the full capacity.
- F. Implement curriculum throughout all lessons consistently and explicitly on an individualized basis.
- G. Continue building strong community partnerships to improve learning opportunities for students.



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### **Strategic Initiative Two: Stakeholder Satisfaction**

**We will meet or exceed stakeholder satisfaction targets and support student learning by developing a successful brand and establishing strong partnerships.** The most important of these partnerships is the parent/school partnership.

In 2020, The Biome will launch The Incredible Years program.

“The Incredible Years is a series of interlocking, evidence-based programs for parents, children, and teachers, supported by over 30 years of research. The goal is to prevent and treat young children's behavior problems and promote their social, emotional, and academic competence. The programs are used worldwide in schools and mental health centers, and have been shown to work across cultures and socioeconomic groups.”

Additionally, we have invested in partnerships to provide family counseling, which falls outside of the scope of our mission and capacity. Through a new community partnership we will support and improve parent knowledge and emotional readiness to support their student's readiness at home and at The Biome.

### **Strategic Initiative Three: Employee Development**

**We will meet or exceed talent acquisition and retention targets by providing a high-quality physical plant, individualized personal development and talent management, and collaboration and team building opportunities.** Additionally, we will support classroom autonomy (that falls within teaching expectations), and a culture of learning based on a growth mindset.



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The Biome has and will continue to invest in the professional development of our staff. Currently The Biome provides classroom leaders with more than 100 hours of professional development opportunities, both group and individualized.

Additionally, we have developed a dynamic mentorship program that exceeds state requirements. As part of our commitment to growth mindset we believe that improving the professional skills of our staff is an ongoing endeavor.

Action Steps:

- A. Develop mathematics and science professional development to match the effectiveness of the current literacy professional development.
- B. Continue the development of our literacy professional development.

#### **Strategic Initiative Four: Fiscal Responsibility**

**We will meet or exceed the fiscal responsibility targets by aligning performance expectations and resources, building a culture of fundraising, maximizing the use of existing assets, and practicing financial discipline.**

Action Steps:

- A. Develop long-term positive annual cash flow measured by maintaining an Ending Cash fund Balance that is no less than 8% in year one and no less than 14% by year five.
- B. Build an endowment of \$1 million.
- C. Create a multi-year capital plan to support future facility expansion/improvement needs.