

Discussion of the Six-Month Report from Stella Middle Charter Academy January 25, 2024

Overview of this Report

This agenda item provides the six-month report submitted by Stella Middle Charter Academy (SMCA) as required by the COA, documenting progress they have made toward addressing all stipulations resulting from their provisional accreditation site visit in March 2023. SMCA sponsors a teacher induction program.

Following its decision of Accreditation with Stipulations at the May 2023 meeting, the Committee on Accreditation (COA) directed SMCA to provide updates to staff with a six-month report. Information is included in this report related to how the institution has addressed the requirements of each stipulation.

Staff Recommendation

It is the staff's recommendation that the Committee on Accreditation accept this report from SMCA. Staff will continue to work with the institution to provide assistance as directed by the COA. Staff will return at a later date in 2024 for COA consideration of removal of the stipulations.

Background

An accreditation site visit for SMCA took place on March 5–7, 2023. Following discussion and deliberation of the report and its recommendations at their May 2023 meeting, the COA determined that the institution be granted *Accreditation with Stipulations*. Those stipulations included:

Within 6 months Stella Middle Charter Academy will provide evidence of:

1. a clearly defined process to identify and support candidates who need additional assistance to meet competencies; and,
2. clear, documented procedures for candidates to repeat portions of the program as needed.

Stella Middle Charter Academy 2023 Site Visit Report.

Six-month Report Contents

The table provided below is a summary of the actions taken thus far; the full report can be found on the Stella Middle Charter Academy website.

Next Steps

Stella Middle Charter Academy will submit a seventh-year report in April 2024, documenting their continued progress toward addressing stipulations resulting from their March 2023 accreditation site visit.

Summary of Steps Taken and Plans for Addressing Stipulations Stella Middle Charter Academy

(For Full Report see: [Stella Middle Charter Academy website](#))

Stipulation 1: *Stella Middle Charter Academy will provide a clearly defined process to identify and support candidates who need additional assistance to meet competencies.*

6th Month Response (Excerpt) from Stella Middle Charter Academy:

In order to create a system for identifying and supporting candidates, we put in place a two-part system. Details and evidence of these systems are provided further in the report.

For the identification of candidates, we implemented two new systems:

- Checkpoints
 - 4 times a year, program leadership will check candidate’s ILPs to ensure that they are on track to meeting program requirements.
 - If all requirements are not present at a checkpoint the mentor and candidate have two weeks to complete the requirements or upload documentation that it has been completed.

- Mentor Surveys
 - While we surveyed mentors often in the past for program feedback, we will now survey them to gather feedback on their candidate’s growth and areas of need as well.

The checkpoints were for the 23-24 school year, as follows:

Check Point #1

45 days after Enrollment

- Meeting 60 minutes per week
- Triad with Principal
- CSTP Reflection
- Semester 1 Goal

Checkpoint #2

End of Semester 1

- Meeting 60 minutes per week
- Inquiry Cycle #1
- Knowing Students Tool

Checkpoint #3

Spring Break

- Meeting 60 minutes per week
- Mid-Year Triad
- Goal #2
- Mid-Year CSTP Reflection
- Mentor Guided Module

Checkpoint #4

May

- Meeting 60 minutes per week
- Inquiry Cycle #2
- End of Year CSTP Reflection
- End of Year Panel Assignment

These checkpoints can also be found on the first tab of the ILP, entitled “Checkpoints”. The dates found on the ILP reflect candidates who enrolled at the start of the 23-24 school year. Examples of this can be seen, here, on redacted copies of candidate ILPs:

- Tab 1- Candidate who has met both checkpoints
- Tab 2- Candidate who met the first, but not the second checkpoint
- Tab 3- Candidate who did not meet the first, but met the second checkpoint
- Tab 4- Candidate who did not meet either checkpoint

The mentor and candidate are also tagged in a comment on the Google Sheet once the check is completed, so they can review the feedback.

Progress on these checkpoints is tracked by program leadership on a Google Sheet. A redacted copy of this tracking system can be found here. Minutes and progress for those candidates who have not yet met checkpoints is conducted weekly by program leadership.

For candidates who are identified as needing additional support, we implemented a new structure:

- **Collaborative Support Plan:** For the support of candidates who are determined to need more extensive support, we also implemented a formal, collaborative support plan, designed to be constructed in collaboration with the mentor and candidate for their specific needs. After each checkpoint and survey administration, the need for implementing a support plan is determined by the Induction Team upon review of the data, with the following criteria in mind:
 - Has the candidate and mentor team missed more than one checkpoint?
 - Based on the documentation of the ILP, does the mentor need support in documentation of or completing the required mentoring activities?
 - Based on the documentation of the ILP or the mentor survey, does the candidate require support in a particular area or in completing program requirements?

Once a candidate or mentor has been identified as needing more formal support, program leadership will meet with the mentor and candidate within about two weeks of this identification to support the candidate and mentor partnership moving forward. The support plans are designed to be collaborative in nature and ensure it’s still focused on the differentiated, goal-aligned work of the mentor and candidate, so the support agreed upon will differ between candidates.

The Collaborative Support Plan template can be found here.

For data on the first semester of implementation, as well as follow-up steps for collaborative support plans, please see our full report on our website, here.

Stipulation 2. *Stella Middle Charter Academy will provide evidence of a clear, documented procedure for candidates to repeat portions of the program as needed.*

During the 2023 accreditation visit, reviewers found no clearly documented procedure in place for candidates to repeat portions of the program as needed.

6th month response (Excerpt) from Stella Middle Charter Academy

As a program, we have a system set up to ensure that mentors and candidates receive support throughout the school year, and candidates who are not meeting requirements at various checkpoints receive additional support. More information can be found about this system in our response to Common Standard 2. However, there are some cases where portions of the program may need to be repeated.

A candidate may need to repeat a portion of the program if:

- They are missing any major requirements and those competencies cannot be found elsewhere in their portfolio, despite the ongoing measures and support provided to the candidate and mentor by program leadership
- We have created a formal, collaborative support plan with the mentor and candidate and they have still not shown growth and reflection on the CSTPs. Please see the response to Common Standard 2 for information on how we determine whether a candidate is placed on a collaborative support plan.

The process for repeating a portion of the program is as follows:

- After the review process, if a candidate is determined to either be missing any major requirements or has not shown growth and reflection on a CSTP, they will be asked to repeat a section of the program.
- The mentor, candidate, and program leadership will collaboratively decide on a path to completing the requirement or showing growth on the identified CSTPs, by completing a “Program Extension Completion Plan”, [seen here on page 1](#).
- If the candidate agrees, they will begin working with their mentor to complete the requirements
- If a candidate disagrees with the extension, they will complete the “Letter of Appeal”, [seen here on page 2](#).
- This Letter of Appeal will be reviewed by Program Leadership, along with Bright Star leadership and “Letter of Appeal Response”, [seen here on page 3](#), will be sent to the candidate and a final plan will be created for the candidate’s program completion.

After our site visit and since putting this policy into practice, we had one candidate during the 22-23 school year who only completed one inquiry cycle, rather than two as per the program design. During the school year, once it was noted that the candidate was not making adequate progress in completing two inquiry cycles, program leadership met with the mentor where we reviewed and planned for utilizing tools in the inquiry cycle and mapped out timelines, including a shared observation with the program director. However, by the end of the year, only one cycle was able to be completed. Program leadership met with the candidate and their mentor and explained which portions of the program,

which in this case was one inquiry cycle, they needed to complete, to which the candidate agreed. The mentor and the candidate then worked on completing this cycle during semester 1 of the 23 -24 school year, with the candidate completing the extension in December of 2023.

This system was made clear and documented in the [Program Handbook](#) on Page 9. The handbook was provided during the GLASTIC orientation, along with time to read the handbook. All candidates, mentors and site leaders participate in orientation before enrollment. This can be seen on slide 20 of the orientation slide deck, found [here](#).