Operator Renewal: Independence Local I High School

Presentation to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners
March 12, 2019
Overview

• City Schools’ renewal process assesses the performance of operator-run schools every 3 to 5 years to ensure that our portfolio of schools continues to offer high-quality educational options to Baltimore City students.

• The Renewal Rubric includes the key areas of measurement identified in the Board’s charter school policy (IHB):
  
  o Student Achievement
  o School Climate
  o Financial Management and Governance

• Independence Local I High School went through the operator renewal process in SY2017-18 and was granted a one-year conditional renewal.
Renewal Timeline

Renewal applications submitted by schools
- September 6, 2018

The Charter and Operator-led Advisory Board (also known as the New and Charter School Advisory Board) reviewed the renewal materials and made recommendations to the CEO
- September-October 2018

Recommendations presented to the Board of Public School Commissioners at a public meeting
- November 14, 2017 – Normal Cycle
- February 26, 2019 – Independence Local I High School

Special Board work session to allow for comment from school operators
- November 20, 2018 – Normal Cycle
- February 26, 2019 - Designated time for Independence Local I High School

Board votes on renewal recommendation
- January 8, 2019 – Normal Cycle
- March 12, 2019 – Independence Local I High School
### Independence Local I High School

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<tr>
<th>Name of Operator/Organization:</th>
<th>Baltimore Teacher Network</th>
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<td>Address:</td>
<td>1300 W. 36th Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renewal Recommendation:</td>
<td>Renew contract for remainder of 3-year term through June 30, 2021, retaining conditions</td>
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<td>School Type:</td>
<td>Charter, serving grades 9-12</td>
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Conditions for renewal were set in six areas where the school was found to be deficient:

- **Special Education Practices – Met**
  - School has implemented procedures to improve special education processes and compliance
  - School resolved previous compliance issues and currently has no new compliance concerns
  - School is working with Office of Special Education to ensure they are implementing proper processes and delivery of services
  - Students report satisfaction with school and comfort in asking for extra assistance; parents report that students show higher levels of investment in academics than at other schools
Independence Local I High School

Name of Operator/Organization: Baltimore Teacher Network

Address: 1300 W. 36th Street

Renewal Recommendation: Renew contract for remainder of 3-year term through June 30, 2021, retaining conditions

School Type: Charter, serving grades 9-12

Conditions for renewal were set in six areas where the school was found to be deficient:

- **College and Career Readiness – Partially Met**
  - 11th and 12th graders at the school are participating in programs to prepare them for college admissions
    - Processes are in place to ensure high participation in PSAT/SAT and Accuplacer
    - Essay writing workshops, college visits, career fairs
    - College prep courses are part of master schedule
  - However, school is not currently implementing its Environmental Studies CTE program
    - School is looking to hire faculty to restart program
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Conditions for renewal were set in six areas where the school was found to be deficient:

- **4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate – Partially Met**
  - School has hired a guidance counselor who did a full review of all student schedules
  - Students not on track to graduate either take credit recovery classes which have been added to school’s master schedule or, if they are two or more years below grade level, they are referred to AOPs
Independence Local I High School

Name of Operator/Organization: Baltimore Teacher Network

Address: 1300 W. 36th Street

Renewal Recommendation: Renew contract for remainder of 3-year term through June 30, 2021, retaining conditions

School Type: Charter, serving grades 9-12

Conditions for renewal were set in six areas where the school was found to be deficient:

- **Chronic Absence – Met**
  - School holds family-focused retreats and events to communicate expectations for attendance and engage families to meet them
  - Principal and staff play an active role in encouraging good attendance practices and communicating with families when students miss school
  - School has established strong climate that students report encourages regular attendance
  - In SY2018-19, school has improved attendance rate over previous years
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Conditions for renewal were set in six areas where the school was found to be deficient:

- Cohort Retention – Partially Met
  - School has hired staff to focus on climate and family engagement
  - Students report a high level of satisfaction with the school climate and with staff
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Conditions for renewal were set in six areas where the school was found to be deficient:

- **Overall Academic Rigor – Partially Met**
  - Project Based Learning is a focus of instruction and staff development
    - Staff attending trainings at Buck Institute
  - Operator leverages other schools in its network for professional development
    - However, the PD must be more aligned to increasing academic rigor
  - Rigor of classroom instruction must improve
    - Classroom observation showed are not yet fully aligned to Common Core standards, which remains an area of concern
    - School has largely new staff that is still developing
Comments or Questions?
Angela Alvarez, Executive Director
Office of New Initiatives
OperatorRenewal@bcps.k12.md.us

Trevor Roberts, Specialist
Office of New Initiatives
OperatorRenewal@bcps.k12.md.us
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