

Evaluation Rubric

The University of St. Thomas (St. Thomas) Accountability System, including the Evaluation Framework and Evaluation Rubric will be used on an annual basis to evaluate schools, and whenever formal decisions are made about the effectiveness of a charter school in meeting its stated mission and objectives as well as the expectations set forth in its contract.

The Accountability System will be used by authorizing program staff and by the St. Thomas Charter School Authorizing Board to assess authorized schools' suitability for Contract Renewal, program expansion, and to evaluate any charter school seeking a change of authorizer.

Please note that the rubric below represents a template that will be modified to enable UST to appropriately evaluate each of its authorized schools.

SECTION I – IS THE LEARNING PROGRAM A SUCCESS?

1.1 3rd Grade MCA Reading Proficiency: Are students proficient in reading?

1 = Does not meet standard	Less than 40% of are proficient in reading.
2 = Approaching standard	40-55.0% of students are proficient in reading.
3 = Meets standard	55.1%-75.0% of students are proficient in reading.
4 = Exceeds standard	More than 75% of students are proficient in reading.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: Enter the number that most closely matches your assessment: 2

Comments/Evidence: 45% of third grade students at Cornerstone Montessori scored as proficient in reading. This is another significant increase in proficiency and equal to the state proficiency of 46.1%.

2025

Rating: Enter the number that most closely matches your assessment: __1__

Comments/Evidence: 25% of third grade students at Cornerstone Montessori scored as proficient in reading. This is another significant decrease in proficiency and well below the state proficiency of 46.5%.

Data Source: Minnesota Department of Education *School Report Card*, Test Data spreadsheets

1.2 MCA Proficiency: Are students performing as well as or better than the state, the resident district, and demographically comparable schools on MCA math and reading exams?

1.2a Reading

1.2b Mathematics

1 = Does not meet standard	More than 10 percentage points below comparison groups
2 = Approaching standard	6-10 percentage points below comparison groups
3 = Meets standard	Within 5 percentage points of comparison groups
4 = Exceeds standard	Exceeds comparison group by more than 5 percentage points

	Reading Proficiency	Score (see criteria for 1-4 above)	Weight	Points earned
Charter School (CS)	47.2.7%	x		
Average of demographic match schools	32.8%	4	37.5%	1.5
Resident district	34.93%	4	37.5%	1.5
State	47.6%	3	25%	.75
			100%	Reading Total: 3.75
	Math Proficiency	Score (see criteria for 1-4 above)	Weight	Points earned
Charter School (CS)	19.4%	x		
Average of demographic match schools	25.86%	1	37.5%	.375
Resident district	29.75%	1	37.5%	.375
State	42.6%	1	25%	.25
			100%	Math Total: 1

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

1.2a Reading: 3.75

1.2b Mathematics: 1

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 2.375

Comments/Evidence: CMES demonstrated mixed academic performance on the 2025 MCA assessments, although improvement in both Math and reading should be noted. Reading proficiency is essentially equal to the statewide average (47.2% vs. 47.6% statewide), while mathematics proficiency declined to 19.4%, well below the statewide average of 42.6%. The school continues to implement instructional supports, including UFLI, Heggerty, LETRS implementation, and Montessori-aligned interventions to improve mathematics outcomes.

2025

1.2a Reading: 1

1.2b Mathematics: 1

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 1

Comments/Evidence: CMES demonstrated below average academic performance on the 2024 MCA assessments in Math and reading.

Source: MCA data available on MDE website or school self report if cell size is too small, Test data spreadsheets

1.3 MCA Proficiency, State Demographic Comparison by Race/Ethnicity and FRL: Are student demographic groups (with tested cell sizes greater than 10) performing as well as or better than the statewide average for that student group? Note that for schools with greater than 70% of students qualifying for FRL, demographic categories will also be filtered by FRL status. All relevant demographic groups will be individually scored per the rubric targets below and averaged to produce a score for each subject area (math/reading). The overall score for the metric is then produced by averaging the subject area scores.

1.3a Reading

1.3b Mathematics

1 = Does not meet standard	Demographic group falls more than 10 percentage points below the state average for that group.
2 = Approaching standard	Demographic group falls 6-10 percentage points below the state average for that group.
3 = Meets standard	Demographic group falls within 5 percentage points of the state average for that group.
4 = Exceeds standard	Demographic group is exceeding statewide performance for that group by more than 5 percentage points.

	Charter % Proficient	State % Proficient	% of Charter Student Population	Score
Math Proficiency	19.5%	45.2%		1
All		Included for information only	Included for information only	N/A – Included for information only.
Demographic Group 2 – Latine	7.1%	22.4%	Included for information only	1
Average of math scores for each demographic group: 1				
	Charter % Proficient	State % Proficient	% of Charter Student Population	Score
Reading Proficiency	47.3%	49.6%		3
All		Included for information only	Included for information only	N/A – Included for information only.
Demographic Group 2 - Latine	28.6%	28.7	Included for information only	3
Average of reading scores for each demographic group: 3				

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

1.3a Reading: 3

1.3b Mathematics: 1

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 2

Comments/Evidence: Reading proficiency (47.3%) is just below the statewide proficiency percentage of 49.6%. Math proficiency scores continue to be well below the state average (45.2%) and have dropped by nearly half since 2023 (19.5% of children proficient this year. Each grade level faces the ongoing impacts of Covid. Additionally, in the 4th grade, nearly 50% receive special education services, further impacting MCA results.

2025

1.3a Reading: 3

1.3b Mathematics: 1

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 2

Comments/Evidence: The Hispanic subgroup was the only group large enough for scores to be included. In reading, Cornerstone performed on par with the state with Cornerstone 3.1% lower than the state. In math, Cornerstone's scores were 13.5% lower than the state.

Source: MCA data available on MDE 'MN Report Card'

1.4 MCA Progress : Are students maintaining or moving toward proficiency? Note: Maintaining proficiency is defined as students who were proficient (meeting or exceeding) remaining in either the meeting or exceeding category. Moving toward proficiency is defined as a student moving up one or more 'levels' (does not meet to partially meets; partially meets to proficient, etc.).

1.4a Reading

1.4b Mathematics

1 = Does not meet standard	Less than 35% of students are maintaining or moving toward proficiency.
2 = Approaching standard	35-50% of students are maintaining or moving toward proficiency.
3 = Meets standard	51.1-65% of students are maintaining or moving toward proficiency.
4 = Exceeds standard	More than 65% of students are maintaining or moving toward proficiency.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

1.4a Reading: 3

1.4b Mathematics: 1**Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 2**

Comments: Reading progress remained a relative strength, with 60.5% of students improving or maintaining achievement levels which is in line with the state percentage. Mathematics progress remained an area of concern, with 31.2% of students improving or maintaining achievement and 68.8% declining or remaining below standard. The state average was well above this at 55.9%. Continued implementation of mathematics interventions and professional learning remains appropriate.

2025

1.4a Reading: 3**1.4b Mathematics: 1****Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 2**

Comments: In reading, 60.5% of students were maintaining or moving toward proficiency which exceeded the state percentage of 47.8%. In math, the percentage for Cornerstone was 31.2%, which was below the state percentage of 42.8%

Source: MCA data available on MDE website or school self report if cell size is too small, Test data spreadsheets

1.5 MCA Growth (Comparison Group): Are students making progress at the same or better rate as the state, resident district, and their demographically comparable schools? Note that this measure uses the Minnesota Department of Education's definition of growth as a student maintaining at a level above "Does Not Meet" or increasing their proficiency level on the MCAs from the most recent prior year of testing data to the current year of testing data.

1.5a Reading**1.5b Mathematics**

1 = Does not meet standard	More than 10 percentage points below comparison groups
2 = Approaching standard	6-10 percentage points below comparison groups
3 = Meets standard	Within 5 percentage points of comparison groups
4 = Exceeds standard	Exceeds comparison group by more than 5 percentage points

	Reading Growth	Score (see criteria for 1-4 above)	Points earned
Charter	60.5%		
Resident district	47.8%	3	3
State	59.6%	3	3
			Reading Total: 3
	Math Growth	Score	Points earned

		(see criteria for 1-4 above)	
Charter	31.2%		
Resident district	36.8%	3	3
State	55.9%	1	1
			Math Total: 2

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

1.5a Reading: 3

1.5b Mathematics: 2

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 2.5

Comments/Evidence: In reading, the percentage of students who improved or maintained proficiency exceeded the resident district by a large margin and was slightly above the state average. In math, the percentage continues to lag well behind state averages, but again significantly outpaces the resident district.

2025

1.5a Reading: 4

1.5b Mathematics: 2

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 3

Comments/Evidence: In reading, the percentage of students who improved or maintained proficiency was 72.4% which exceeded the resident district (47.5%) and the state (61%). In math, the percentage of 37.5% was slightly higher than the resident district (36.7%) but below the state (56.4%).

Source: MCA data available on MDE website or school self report if cell size is too small, Test data spreadsheets

1.6 Are students performing at or above target levels, as measured using the school's selected standardized assessments?

1.6a Reading

1.6b Mathematics

Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School will be using the Fastbridge Assessment

1 = Does not meet standard	Assessments indicate that a minimal proportion of tested students performed at or above target levels (less than 40%).
2 = Approaching standard	Assessments indicate that an inadequate proportion of tested performed at or above target levels (40%-50%).
3 = Meets standard	Assessments indicate that an adequate proportion of tested performed at or above target levels (50.1%-65%).
4 = Exceeds standard	Assessments indicate that a high proportion of tested students performed at or above target levels (more than 65%).

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

1.6a Reading: 3

1.6b Math: 1

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 2

Comments: CMES used FastBridge as its primary internal assessment system to monitor student achievement and guide instructional decision-making. According to the SY25 Annual Report, Spring 2025 FastBridge results indicate that 51.5% of students were at low or no risk in reading, meeting the evaluation rubric's "Meets Standard" threshold. In mathematics, 33.3% of students were at low or no risk, indicating that math achievement remains an area for continued improvement. The school uses FastBridge results throughout the year to identify students needing intervention, inform Tier 1 instruction, and guide targeted support from literacy and math specialists. While overall math performance remained below expectations, the Annual Report notes stronger performance in the upper grades, with 75% of sixth-grade students at low or no risk in reading and 56.3% at low or no risk in math, demonstrating the cumulative impact of the Montessori program over time.

2025

1.6a Reading: 4

1.6b Math: 3

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 3.5

Comments: On the Fastbridge Assessment, 69% of students performed at or above target levels in reading and 54% in math. Both of these percentages exceeded the results of the previous year.

Source: Annual Report, End of year report, Test data spreadsheets

1.7 Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using the school's selected standardized assessments?

1.7a Reading

1.7b Mathematics

CMES will be using the Fastbridge Assessment

1 = Does not meet standard	Analysis indicates that a minimal proportion of tested students made expected gains (less than 40%).
2 = Approaching standard	Analysis indicates that an inadequate proportion of tested students made expected gains (40%-50%).
3 = Meets standard	Analysis indicates that an adequate proportion of tested students made expected gains (50.1%-65%).
4 = Exceeds standard	Analysis indicates that an adequate proportion of tested

students made expected gains (more than 65%).

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

1.7a Reading: 3

1.7b Math: 1

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 2

Comments: 51.5% of students made expected gains in Reading and 33.3% made the expected gains in Math. Taken together, the evidence supports Approaching Standard (2): CMES has an effective growth-monitoring system and evidence of longitudinal improvement, but the overall FastBridge results—particularly in mathematics—do not yet demonstrate consistently strong gains across the student population. However, 6th grade scores demonstrated strong proficiency in both math and reading, and there are clear trends that as children spend more time at Cornerstone, their proficiency increases.

2025

1.7a Reading: 2

1.7b Math: 3

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 2.5

Comments: 45% of students made expected gains in reading and 58% made the expected gains in math.

Source: Annual Report, End of year report, Test data spreadsheets

**1.8 Is the school meeting state and authorizer-established targets for graduation rate?
This goal will not apply to the school based on the grades served.**

Goal not applicable due to grades served.

Source: MDE Data Analytics Request

**1.9 Does students' performance on post-secondary readiness assessments (i.e.: ACT, SAT, Accuplacer) reflect college and career readiness?
This goal will not apply to the school based on the grades served.**

Goal not applicable due to grades served.

Source: MDE Website (SLEDs), Annual report

1.10 Is the school meeting its school-specific academic goal(s)? Each school has at least one measurable school-specific goal based on its mission statement. If the school has more than one goal, scores will be averaged.

- a. CMES will outperform the State on the Science MCA for grade 5.**
- b. CMES will earn an annual AMI accreditation rating of “Recognized”.**

1 = Does not meet standard	School has clearly not met any of its school-specific academic goals.
2 = Approaching standard	School is making progress toward meeting all its school-specific academic goals.
3 = Meets standard	School has met its school-specific academic goals.
4 = Exceeds standard	School has met all school-specific academic goals and clearly exceeded expectations for one or more of those goals.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating:

- a. 2**
- b. 4**

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 3

Comments: Cornerstone’s results on the Science MCA (38.9%) were lower than the state (53%). Both are increases over the previous year. CMES is making progress with a 3.1% growth. AMI accreditation goal, which the Annual Report indicates was fully recognized with all teachers Montessori trained.

2025

Rating:

- c. 2**
- d. 4**

Enter the overall score produced by the average of these two scores: 3

Comments: Cornerstone’s results on the Science MCA (36.8%) were lower than the state (45%) which is unusual as Cornerstone generally outperforms the state in Science.

In the annual accreditation, Cornerstone was fully recognized and one of the lead guides was also accepted into the AMI training of trainers program.

Source: Annual report

1.11 Are English Learners (ELs) performing at or above the state average for ELs as measured by the percentage of the school's identified ELs who reached or went past their target on the ACCESS/Alternate ACCESS assessment?

1.11a: Reading

1.11b: Math

1 = Does not meet standard More than 10 percentage points below state EL performance.

2 = Approaching standard 6-10 percentage points below state EL performance.

3 = Meets standard Within 5 percentage points of state EL performance.

4 = Exceeds standard Exceeds state EL performance by more than 5 percentage points.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

1.11a: Reading: N/A

1.11b: Math: N/A

Overall Rating: N/A

Comments: The number of EL students completing the ACCESS was too small to be reported.

2025

1.11a: Reading: __N/A__

1.11b: Math: __N/A__

Overall Rating: __N/A__

Comments: The number of EL students completing the ACCESS was too small to be reported.

Source: MDE website

1.12 Are students receiving special education services performing at or above the state average for students receiving special education services as measured by MCA/MTAS proficiency?

1.12a: Reading

1.12b: Math

1 = Does not meet standard More than 10 percentage points below state special education performance.

2 = Approaching standard 6-10 percentage points below state special education performance.

3 = Meets standard Within 5 percentage points of state special education performance.

4 = Exceeds standard Exceeds state special education performance by more than 5 percentage points.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

1.12a: Reading: 4

1.12b: Math: 2

Overall Rating: 3

Comments: 30% of students receiving special education services were proficient in reading, which exceeds the state average by 14.2 points. 14.3% of students receiving special education were proficient, 10 points below the state average in Math.

2025

1.12a: Reading: __4__

1.12b: Math: __1__

Overall Rating: __2.5__

Comments: 30% of students receiving special education services were proficient in reading which exceeds the state average by 7.7%. 20% of students receiving special education services partially met standards for math, but none of the students were proficient.

Source: MDE website

1.13 Early Learning: Are preschool and/or prekindergarten students performing at or above target levels on their final assessment, as measured using the school's selected preK and/or kindergarten readiness assessments?

This goal does not apply based on the grades served.

Source: Annual Report, School Selected Assessment Data Spreadsheet

1.14 Does the school's learning program exemplify the mission and vision of the school?

1 = Does not meet standard	The learning program does not exemplify the mission and vision of the school in policy or practice, and school leadership and/or the Board do not recognize the need to synchronize the two.
2 = Approaching standard	The learning program does not exemplify the mission and vision of the school. School leadership and the Board recognize the need to synchronize the two.
3 = Meets standard	The learning program exemplifies the mission and vision of the school. Staff are able to articulate this through daily teaching.
4 = Exceeds standard	The learning program exemplifies the mission and vision of the school. Staff are able to articulate this through daily teaching. Board, academic, and operational decisions are made with the school's mission in mind.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)**Rating: 4**

Comments: CMES continues to exemplify its mission and vision through the consistent implementation of a high-fidelity AMI Montessori program focused on educating the whole child and serving children from culturally and economically diverse backgrounds. Evidence from site visits, quarterly reports, the Annual Report, and the 2024–2027 Strategic Plan demonstrates that classroom instruction, governance, professional development, and organizational decision-making remain closely aligned with the school's mission. During site visits, students were consistently engaged in purposeful, learner-centered instruction, staff demonstrated a deep understanding of Montessori philosophy, and school leaders and the Board made academic and operational decisions guided by the strategic priorities of Access, Community, Equity, and Sustainability. The school's commitment to continuous improvement, family engagement, and maintaining Montessori fidelity continues to reinforce its mission in both policy and daily practice.

2025**Rating: 4**

Comments: Cornerstone is living the mission and vision. This is clearly observed during site visits, through board documents and quarterly reports. When visiting the school, the commitment of students, teachers, staff, leadership and parents is observable and reinforced in discussions with all stakeholders. Classroom observations showed students engaged and teachers invested in the learning. It is clear that the true Montessori model is being followed and students are enjoying learning. There is a thoughtful approach to professional development and to the use of data to support students. Cornerstone continues to demonstrate a proactive approach and a strong commitment to strengthening the school community.

Source: Site visits, ongoing correspondence, strategic plan or other documentation

1.15 Are students accepted to and enrolling in post-secondary programs at a high rate? Note: Post-secondary programs can include training in the trades, vocational programs, and 2 and 4 year college programs.

This goal will not apply to the school based on the grades served.

Source: MDE Sleds Data, Annual Report (School reported data)

1.16 Are students equitably accessing college and/or career preparation opportunities (e.g. AP, IB, CIS, PSEO, Honors, apprenticeships, internships) at high rates?

This goal will not apply to the school based on the grades served.

Source: MDE SLEDs Data, Annual Report (School Reported Data Chart)

SECTION 2: FINANCIAL VIABILITY – DOES THE SCHOOL EXHIBIT STRONG FISCAL HEALTH?

2.1 Does the school have an active finance committee that meets regularly and reports to the full board?

1 = Does not meet standard	The school has no active finance committee
2 = Approaching standard	The school's finance committee meets only as needed and only to review financials and/or the finance committee does not report its findings to the full board.
3 = Meets standard	The finance committee meets monthly, examines financial statements, and provides a thorough report of its findings to the full board.
4 = Exceeds standard	The finance committee meets at least monthly and examines financial statements, as well as short and long-range financial issues. Thorough reports of findings are provided to the board.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 4

Comments: The Finance Committee continues to meet monthly and reviews current financial statements, enrollment trends, cash flow, budget assumptions, audit findings, and long-range financial planning. Committee reports are provided to the full Board, demonstrating strong financial oversight and proactive fiscal planning.

2025

Rating: 4

Comments: The school has an active finance committee that meets at least monthly and keeps a close eye on enrollment and all financial issues affecting the school.

Source: Monthly board packets; Annual Report, Site visits

2.2 Does the board have a fund balance policy that includes fund balance goals over time?

1 = Does not meet standard	The school board does not have a fund balance policy
2 = Approaching standard	The school board has a fund balance policy but it does not include established goals over time
3 = Meets standard	The school board has a fund balance policy including goals over time
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 3

Comments: The Board maintains a comprehensive Fund Balance Policy (Policy 703) establishing a minimum general operations reserve of 20% of annual budgeted expenditures, with clearly defined actions when the balance falls below 20%, approaches 22%, or exceeds 30%. The FY25 Annual Report demonstrates that the Board actively monitors compliance with this policy, reporting an audited year-end fund balance of \$1,036,144 (31.9%), well above the established minimum. This reflects consistent implementation of the policy and ongoing financial oversight.

2025

Rating: 3

Comments: The fund balance policy stipulates a 20% minimum fund balance.

Source: Monthly board packets; Board policy manual, Quarterly Report

2.3 Does the school have a clean audit with no major findings?

1 = Does not meet standard	The audit is not “clean” OR has at least one of the following: (1) a material weakness on internal controls, (2) a finding on compliance with state law, or (3) three or more other findings
2 = Approaching standard	The audit has two findings, other than internal controls or compliance, but is considered “clean”
3 = Meets standard	The audit is “clean” and has one finding, other than internal controls or compliance
4 = Exceeds standard	The audit has no findings and is “clean”

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 4

Comments: CMES again received an unmodified ("clean") financial audit with no material weaknesses or findings. Financial controls and accounting practices continue to demonstrate strong fiscal stewardship.

2025

Rating: 4

Comments: The school has a clean audit with no findings.

Source: Annual financial audit

2.4 Does the school establish and maintain a balanced budget?

- Budget is approved and provided to UST before June 30;
- Includes a cash flow projection for the year showing positive cash flow;
- Is adjusted in a timely fashion when needed;
- Meets established fund balance policy goals; and
- Does not require major* program cuts)?

**Major program cuts are defined as cuts that impact a school’s ability to deliver its core programming to students in a way that negatively impacts student experience.*

1 = Does not meet standard	A budget is not approved by June 30; the budget is not adequately detailed; no cash flow projection is established; lower than expected enrollment requires major budget adjustments; or the budget does not meet the fund balance policy goals set forth by the board.
2 = Approaching standard	A detailed budget is approved before June 30 but may not include a cash flow projection for the year; established budget may require adjustment due to lower than expected enrollment; budget meets the fund balance policy goals set forth by the board.

3 = Meets standard	The detailed budget is approved before June 30 and includes a cash flow projection for the year; established budget is based on realistic enrollment; and is adjusted if needed. The budget meets the fund balance policy goals set forth by the board and allows for maintenance of core programming.
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE
SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)	
Rating: 3	
Comments: The Board approved a balanced budget prior to June 30 that included conservative enrollment assumptions and cash flow projections. Financial performance was monitored throughout the year and adjusted as necessary while maintaining the school's core Montessori programming.	
2025	
Rating: 3	
Comments: A detailed budget is approved prior to June 30 with a conservative enrollment projection.	
Source: Monthly board packets, UST site visits, UST meetings with business manager(s)	

2.5 Budgeted Enrollment Realization: Does the school's target ADM (as established by initial board-approved budget) match its actual ADM? (Calculated as actual ADM divided by budgeted ADM.)	
1 = Does not meet standard	Enrollment realization is 90% or less.
2 = Approaching standard	Enrollment realization is 90-95%.
3 = Meets standard	Enrollment realization is greater than 95%.
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE
SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)	
Rating: 3	
Comments: CMES met and slightly exceeded its budgeted enrollment target. The FY25 budget was based on 132.0 ADM, while the school achieved an actual ADM of 133.4, resulting in an enrollment realization rate of approximately 101.1%. The school's enrollment projections continue to be realistic and support sound financial planning.	
2025	
Rating: 3	

Comments: The school's target ADM was 138 and the actual ADM was 136 for an enrollment realization of 98%.

Source: Monthly board packets, Quarterly Report, UST site visits, UST meetings with business manager(s)

2.6 Does the school have sufficient cash on hand to meet its near-term obligations?

1 = Does not meet standard	The school has fewer than 30 days cash on hand.
2 = Approaching standard	The school maintains 30-59 days cash on hand.
3 = Meets standard	The school maintains a minimum of 60 days cash on hand or is meeting the cash on hand requirements of its bond covenants, whichever is greater.
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 3

Comments: CMES maintained 60.74 days of cash on hand at the close of FY25, exceeding the 60-day threshold established in the evaluation rubric. The school continues to demonstrate prudent cash management practices and maintains sufficient liquidity to meet its near-term financial obligations.

2025

Rating: 2

Comments: The audited cash on hand was 51.8 days.

Source: Annual Report, Auditor Report, Financial Statements, Board policies

2.7 For established schools (in operation for at least 4 years) does the school have a sufficient fund balance?

1 = Does not meet standard	The school's fund balance is less than 10% of annual expenditures.
2 = Approaching standard	The school's fund balance is between 10-15% of annual expenditures.
3 = Meets standard	The school's fund balance is more than 15% of annual expenditures.
4 = Exceeds standard	The school's fund balance is more than 20% of annual expenditures AND overall academic outcomes fall within the 'meets standard' range.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)**Rating: 4****Comments:** The audited fund balance in FY25 was \$1,036,144, or 31.9% of annual expenditures, exceeding the Board's minimum 20% fund balance goal.**2025****Rating: 4****Comments:** The fund balance in SY24 was 34.5%.**Source:** Annual Report, Auditor Report, Financial Statements, Board policies**2.8 Is the school meeting bond covenants (if applicable)?**

1 = Does not meet standard	The school is not meeting one or more bond covenants.
2 = Approaching standard	The school is meeting all bond covenants in the current year, but has been out of compliance with one or more covenants in the past three years.
3 = Meets standard	The school has consistently met all bond covenants.
4 = Exceeds standard	Not Applicable

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)**Rating: 3****Comments:** CMES does not have outstanding bond obligations or applicable bond covenants. The school leases its facility.**2025****Rating: 3****Comments:** The school continues to meet all bond covenants.**Source:** Annual Report, Auditor Report, Financial Statements, Board policies

SECTION 3: IS THE ORGANIZATION EFFECTIVE AND WELL RUN?

3.1 Do all board members meet the statutory requirements for initial and ongoing training on board roles and responsibilities, governance, finance and employment practices?	
1 = Does not meet standard	Three or more board members are/have been out of compliance during the school year.
2 = Approaching standard	Two or fewer board members are/have been out of compliance during the school year.
3 = Meets standard	All board members meet training requirements
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE.
SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)	
Rating: 3	
Comments: Board members remain current on all required governance, finance, employment, and ongoing annual training requirements. Training records indicate consistent participation throughout the year and reflect the Board's commitment to continuous improvement.	
2025	
Rating: 3	
Comments: All board members meet training requirements and participate in ongoing training throughout the school year.	
Source: Monthly board packets, UST site visits, Statement of compliance sheet	

3.2 Does the board understand and comply with the Open Meeting Law and maintain orderly records including its bylaws, policies, board/committee minutes, and board packets?	
1 = Does not meet standard	The board does not understand the requirements of the Open Meeting Law and has been out of compliance more than once in the last year and/or the board does not maintain its records in an orderly fashion
2 = Approaching standard	The board exhibits working knowledge of the requirements of the Open Meeting Law and has been out of compliance no more than once in the last year and maintains its records properly, with minor exceptions.
3 = Meets standard	The board understands and meets the requirements of the Open Meeting Law and maintains its records in an orderly fashion.
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE
SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)	
Rating: 3	

Comments: Board meetings consistently comply with Open Meeting Law requirements. Minutes, board packets, policies, committee documentation, and governance records are maintained in an organized and accessible manner.

2025

Rating:

Comments: Through board observations and conversations with various board members, it is clear that the Board understands and follows Open Meeting Law.

Source: Board minutes, ongoing correspondence, UST site visits

3.3 Are all the school's educational staff appropriately licensed?

1 = Does not meet standard	At least one educational staff is not appropriately licensed or does not hold appropriate and current waivers or variances.
2 = Approaching standard	At least one educational staff has been on a waiver or variance for more than one year.
3 = Meets standard	All educational staff are appropriately licensed.
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 3

Comments: Educational staff are appropriately licensed, and the school continues to monitor licensure status throughout the year. When necessary, staffing assignments are supported by appropriate approvals and oversight.

2025

Rating:

Comments: All staff members are appropriately licensed. Two staff members are out of field special education teachers.

Source: MDE STAR Discrepancy Reports (self-reported data, crosscheck with licensure file checks) D-1

3.4 Does the school complete criminal background checks in accordance with MN Statute and UST expectations?

1 = Does not meet standard	The school cannot certify that it completes criminal background checks of staff and the board.
2 = Approaching standard	The school certifies that it completes criminal background checks of the staff but not the board.
3 = Meets standard	The school certifies that it completes criminal background checks of staff and the board, as required by school policy.
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE
SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)	
Rating: 3	
Comments: The school completes criminal background checks for all staff and board members.	
2025	
Rating: 3	
Comments: CMES completes criminal background on all new staff and board members as well as volunteers who have contact with students.	
Source: UST site visit, board chair interview, background check policy	

3.5 Is the school compliant with other applicable law? Note that this measure includes, but is not limited to: • Meeting admissions and enrollment practice/policy requirements • Meeting governance model requirements • Meeting Title IX regulations (e.g. policies/procedures, trainings, Title IX Coordinator)	
1 = Does not meet standard	The school is not in compliance with other applicable law.
2 = Approaching standard	NOT APPLICABLE
3 = Meets standard	The school is in compliance with other applicable law.
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE
SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)	
Rating: 3	
Comments: The school continues to demonstrate compliance with applicable charter school laws, including governance, admissions, enrollment, and reporting requirements. Quarterly reports indicate continued attention to policy review and legal compliance, including updates related to Title IX and other statutory requirements.	
2025	
Rating: 3	
Comments: The school is compliant with applicable law and has updated the enrollment policy to conform with MN Statutes. In checking the school webpage, the Title IX Coordinator was not listed and reporting forms and policies for Title IX were not readily available. Due to statutory changes, CMES should look at updating the Title IX resources available on the website.	

Source: Website compliance check, Quarterly Report, UST site visit, board chair interview

3.6 Do all board members exhibit understanding of the role of the board and utilize nonprofit governance best practices including:

- **Understanding of board and school leader roles (governance vs. management)**
- **Annual board self-evaluation**
- **Annual school-leader evaluation**
- **Annual approval of professional development plan for school leader (if applicable)**
- **Annual evaluation of Educational Service Provider (CMO/EMO) if applicable**
- **Orientation process for new members**
- **Regular Strategic planning (at least once every five years)**

1 = Does not meet standard	At least some board members do not understand the role of the board and the role of the school leader. Board policies and practices are not transparent or not present. Board meetings often address issues not central to the role of the board and/or fail to address core functions such as leader evaluation and school financial/academic health.
2 = Approaching standard	Some board members, but not all, exhibit understanding of their roles as board members and the role of the school leader. Board policies and practices are not always transparent and/or are not fully developed. The board inconsistently addresses issues central to its role such as leader evaluation, leader professional development plan approval (if applicable), and school financial/academic health.
3 = Meets standard	The Board exhibits understanding of its role and the role of the school leader. The board policies and practices are generally transparent and systems are in place to maximize effectiveness of the board, including an orientation process for new members, annual board self-evaluation, annual leader (and EMO/CMO if applicable) evaluation, annual approval of leader development plan (if applicable) and a plan for conducting and tracking initial and ongoing training. The board engages in regular strategic planning. The board is able to adequately sustain its membership through recruitment efforts.
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 3

Comments: The Board continues to demonstrate a strong understanding of governance responsibilities and maintains clear distinctions between governance and school management. Annual board self-evaluations, Head of School evaluations, strategic planning, new member orientation, and ongoing board development are well established. The Board remains actively engaged in long-term strategic planning centered on Access, Community, Equity, and Sustainability.

2025

Rating:

Comments: The board and school leader have a good understanding of their roles and work well together. The board engages in strategic planning and undergoes annual trainings based on areas of need including training in financial matters in October as part of the audit presentation. The governance committee provided ongoing training at board meetings.

Source: Site visits, ongoing correspondence, board minutes, interview with board chair

3.7 Does the board regularly review, update, and approve its bylaws and policies such that they maintain compliance with state law and current best practices?

1 = Does not meet standard	Board policies and/or bylaws are outdated and not reviewed regularly.
2 = Approaching standard	Board policies and/or bylaws are reviewed and approved as needed, but are not comprehensively reviewed on a regularly scheduled basis.
3 = Meets standard	Board policies and bylaws are reviewed for content and legal compliance, updated, and approved on a regularly scheduled basis, no less than once every three years.
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 3

Comments: Board policies and bylaws are updated and reported on a regular basis.

2025

Rating:

Comments: The board policies are regularly reviewed and updated as well as the bylaws.

Source: Board minutes, board policies, Governance binder, Quarterly Report, UST site visit

3.8 Does the board submit a complete board packet (including agenda, minutes, director report, other relevant documents, check register, cash flow sheet, enrollment report, balance sheet and income and expense report), to be received by all members of the board, school leadership, and UST at least three days prior to all board meetings?

1 = Does not meet standard	Board packets are not submitted on time AND are incomplete
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2 = Approaching standard	Board packets are submitted on time (more than 75 percent of the time) but incomplete OR not submitted on time (less than 75 percent of the time) but complete
3 = Meets standard	Board packets are submitted on time (more than 75 percent of the time) and complete
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE
SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)	
Rating: 3	
Comments: Board packets are always submitted in a timely manner and are complete.	
2025	
Rating: 3	
Comments: Board packets are consistently submitted on time and are complete.	
Source: Monthly board packets; Board materials tracking document (G-1 CS info)	

3.9 Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to English Learners (ELs)? This includes: • Following MN Standardized Statewide EL Procedures for identification • Following MN Standardize Statewide EL Procedures for entrance and exit. • Maintaining an established EL program with a written plan for service at all grade and proficiency levels • Securing appropriate staffing levels with staff who hold appropriate licenses and have knowledge of current legislation and research based best practices for serving EL students. • Supplying relevant professional development to all staff • Ensuring that information on student EL status is available to all classroom teachers • Providing staff with appropriate training.	
1 = Does not meet standard	The school is <u>not</u> fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ELs and requires substantial improvement
2 = Approaching standard	The school is fulfilling all of its legal obligations regarding ELs but requires some improvements
3 = Meets standard	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ELs and requires no considerable improvements
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE
SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)	
Rating: 3	

Comments: CMES continues to fulfill its legal obligations related to English Learner services. During FY25, 18 students qualified for EL services, with individualized instruction provided primarily through one-to-one support integrated into Montessori lessons and student-directed learning. The school maintains a comprehensive Language Instruction Educational Plan (LIEP), follows Minnesota's standardized procedures for EL identification, placement, and exit, administers the ACCESS assessment annually, and exits students when they meet the state benchmark of a 4.5 composite ACCESS score. Documentation indicates that classroom teachers have access to EL information and that services are coordinated to support student success.

2025

Rating: 3

Comments: There are currently 18 students who qualify for EL services. The support is generally 1:1 which is primarily support on work from Montessori lessons or interest driven-research. Students are exited from the EL program when the composite ACCESS scores are 4.5 at a minimum.

Source: UST site visits, Reference EL Packet, Formalized complaints at MDE, or Critical Elements review (SP-1)

3.10 Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to students with individual education plans (IEPs)? This includes:

- **Having a school-specific TSES manual that is board-approved.**
- **Engaging a special education director who is actively involved in working with special education staff and school leadership.**
- **Securing appropriate staffing levels with staff who hold appropriate licenses and have knowledge of current legislation and research based best practices for serving students with IEPs.**
- **Contracting with entities to provide effective services to students when necessary.**
- **Completing annual IEP meetings on time.**
- **Having been subject to no investigations related to special needs students that resulted in findings.**
- **Having no findings related to special education funding on annual financial audit.**
- **Providing staff with appropriate training.**

1 = Does not meet standard	The school is not fulfilling its legal obligations regarding students with special needs and requires substantial improvement
2 = Approaching standard	The school is fulfilling all of its legal obligations regarding students with special needs but requires some improvements
3 = Meets standard	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding students with special needs and requires no considerable improvements
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 3

Comments: CMES continues to fulfill its legal obligations related to special education services through a comprehensive, board-approved Total Special Education System (TSES), an active Child Find process, and appropriately licensed staff. During SY25, approximately 30% of enrolled students qualified for special education services, reflecting a continued increase in student need. The school maintained a robust staffing model that included three licensed special education teachers, one school social worker, 12 paraprofessionals, a contracted Special Education Director, an ECSE teacher, and a Due Process Coordinator to ensure timely evaluations, IEP implementation, and delivery of related services. Weekly special education team meetings and ongoing collaboration with the Special Education Director support consistent implementation of services and compliance with state and federal requirements.

2025

Rating: 3

Comments: The special education numbers have increase dramatically in the past year. In SY23, 15.2% of students qualified for special education services and in SY24, that number increased to 28.8%. There has also been an increase in the needs of the students including 4 students in Federal Setting 3 and 3 – 4 students with high Federal setting 2. Cornerstone has 3 full-time special education teachers, one full time social worker and 12 paraprofessionals. They also employ 2 contracted teachers through Twin Cities Education Consultants – 1 ECSE instructor and 1 Due Process Coordinator.

Source: Quarterly report, UST site visits, Reference: special education investigation search on MDE website and special education training materials; Special education director interview

3.11 Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to the delivery of a quality Prekindergarten instructional program. This includes:

- Ensuring Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening is completed.
- Securing appropriate staffing.
- Supplying relevant professional development to all staff.
- Implementing culturally responsive comprehensive child assessment/s.
- Utilizing the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs).
- Supporting an effective transition to Kindergarten.
- Referring students to community-based resources as needed.

This goal does not apply based on the grades served

Source: Site Visits, Interviews, Quarterly Reports

3.12 Does the school have a high attendance rate?

1 = Does not meet standard	The attendance rate is less than 85 percent
2 = Approaching standard	The attendance rate is between 85 and 89.9 percent
3 = Meets standard	The attendance rate is 90-94.9 percent
4 = Exceeds standard	The attendance rate is more than 95 percent

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 1

Comments: Per the MDE report card, the consistent attendance rate for CMES was 69.8% which is an increase from the previous year. This percentage falls short of the state average of 75.5%. It should be noted that Operation Metro Surge negatively effected attendance. This is supported by a decrease in attendance during the period of the immigration crackdown. CMES is commended for going above and beyond in their efforts to assure that their students had access to the school, including efforts to get students to the school safely.

2025

Rating: 1

Comments: Per the MDE report card, the consistent attendance rate for CMES was 64.2% which is an increase from the previous year. This percentage falls short of the state average of 74.5%,

Source: Annual reports, MDE website (data downloads)

3.13 Is the school able to maintain a high percentage of teacher retention?

1 = Does not meet standard	Fewer than 70 percent of teachers remained at the school last year (excluding retirements).
2 = Approaching standard	Between 70 and 84 percent of teachers remained at the school last year (excluding retirements).
3 = Meets standard	More than 85 percent of teachers remained at the school last year (excluding retirements).
4 = Exceeds standard	Over the course of the contract (or at least 3 years) teacher retention has consistently remained high (>85 percent)

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 2

Comments: Based on the FY25 Annual Report, 15 of 18 licensed instructional staff (83.3%) returned for the 2025–26 school year. Although this reflects continued staffing stability and retention of the majority of

instructional staff, the retention rate falls below the 85% threshold for a "Meets Standard" rating under the evaluation rubric.

2025

Rating: 2

Comments: Teacher retention for SY24 was lower than normal with 78% of teachers returning.

Source: Annual report

3.14 Are the school's teachers and staff participating in a broad base of professional development in service of students' academic and behavioral needs and supportive of the school's mission? Types of development opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- **Required health and safety trainings.**
- **IX training processes.**
- **Supporting students with IEPs.**
- **Supporting English Learners.**
- **Mission-related.**
- **Equity and cultural relevance.**

1 = Does not meet standard	The school a limited number of training opportunities. Participation in professional development is low, with less than 50% of staff participate in the opportunities.
2 = Approaching standard	The school offers a menu of development opportunities that include required trainings. Participation in most or all of these trainings is presented as optional resulting in low participation (less than 50% of staff participate).
3 = Meets standard	The school offers a menu of development opportunities that include required trainings as well as learning opportunities that forward the school's academic, behavioral and mission-related priorities. Participation is mandated for required trainings.
4 = Exceeds standard	The school offers a robust menu of development opportunities that include required trainings as well as learning opportunities that forward the school's academic, behavioral and mission-related priorities. Including opportunities for subject-area and curriculum-specific trainings. Participation is mandated for required trainings.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 4

Comments: CMES continues to provide a comprehensive professional development program aligned with its Montessori mission and student needs. Staff participate in required trainings related to health and safety, special education, English Learners, equity, and instructional practice, while also engaging in Montessori-specific professional learning. Professional development is purposeful, ongoing, and directly connected to instructional improvement and organizational goals.

2025

Rating: 4

Comments: The school offers relative professional development for staff that is mandated for all staff. The trainings for SY24 included Disability Sensitivity, Building Resilient Schools and Homes, Anti-Racism and trainings on Mental Health.

Source: Annual report (Professional Development Tracking Chart)

3.15 Does the school generally retain its students from October 1st through the close of the school year?

1 = Does not meet standard	Student retention rates are more than 10% below the school's agreed-upon target rates.
2 = Approaching standard	Student retention rates are 5-10% below the school's agreed-upon target rates.
3 = Meets standard	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student retention rates are within 5% or above the school's agreed-upon target rates
4 = Exceeds standard	NOT APPLICABLE

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 3

Comments: 128 of 133 students remained for the entire school year which is an attrition rate of 96%.

2025

Rating: 3

Comments: 132 of 138 students remained for the entire school year which is an attrition rate of 95%.

Source: Annual report, renewal application

3.16 Does the school exhibit a high level of parent satisfaction as measured by the following?

3.16a The percentage of parents surveyed who “agree” or “strongly agree” that they are satisfied with the school overall. (*“Overall, I am satisfied with how my child is supported at Cornerstone Montessori Elementary School”*).

3.16b Survey response rate

1 = Does not meet standard

3.16a Less than 70% of parents surveyed indicate they are satisfied with the school overall.

3.16b The school’s survey response rate was less than 20%.

2 = Approaching standard

3.16a 75-85% of parents surveyed indicate they are satisfied with the school overall.

3.16b The school’s survey response rate was 20-24%.

3 = Meets standard

3.16a 85.1-95% of parents surveyed indicate they are satisfied with the school overall.

3.16b The school’s survey response rate was more than 25-30%.

4 = Exceeds standard

3.16a 95% or more of parents surveyed indicate they are satisfied with the school overall.

3.16b The school’s survey response rate was greater than 30%.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

3.16a Rating: 4

3.16b Rating: 3

Overall Rating: 3.5

Comments: 92.6% of responding parents indicated they were satisfied with the support their child receives at CMES, demonstrating a high level of parent satisfaction with the school's educational program. The annual parent survey had a 25% response rate. Additional survey results indicate that 96.3% of respondents reported overall satisfaction with CMES and 88.9% would recommend the school to other families.

2025

3.16a Rating: 4

3.16b Rating: 2

Overall Rating: 3

Comments: The response rate for the parent survey was 23%. 96.3% of respondents indicated that they would recommend Cornerstone to others and 92.5% indicated that they were satisfied with the support their child receives at school.

Source: Annual report, School parent satisfaction survey--overall satisfaction indicator

3.17 Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning? This includes:

- **Providing adequate security.**
- **Meeting health and safety code requirements.**
- **Providing accessibility for all students.**
- **Ensuring the facility, furniture and equipment is clean and well-maintained.**
- **Providing appropriate sized spaces for enrollment and student-teacher ratios.**
- **Layout and design meet the academic and social needs of students, teachers, staff, families and the community.**

1 = Does not meet standard

The facility requires much improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. Significant health and safety requirements have not been met OR the school lacks many conditions such as the following: a) a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; b) a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; c) adequate maintenance and security; d) well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; e) accessibility to all students.

2 = Approaching standard

Significant health and safety requirements are being met, but the facility needs some improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. It partially – but not fully – provides conditions such as the following: a) a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; b) a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; c) adequate maintenance and security; d) well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; e) accessibility to all students.

3 = Meets standard

Significant health and safety code requirements are being met AND the facility generally provides a safe environment that is conducive to learning, based on conditions such as: a) a design well-suited to meet the

	curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; b) a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; c) adequate maintenance and security; d) well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; e) accessibility to all students.
4 = Exceeds standard	All health and safety code requirements are being met AND the facility generally provides a safe environment that is conducive to learning, based on conditions such as: a) a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; b) a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; c) adequate maintenance and security; d) well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; e) accessibility to all students. Additionally, the facility meets the mission of the school.
SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025) Rating: 4 Comments: CMES demonstrates an exceptional commitment to family engagement through comprehensive communication systems, intentional opportunities for parent participation, and meaningful use of family feedback. Families receive regular bilingual communications through email, text messaging, newsletters, classroom updates, and digital photo albums, and interpretation is provided for conferences and school events. During SY25, the school conducted both an annual parent satisfaction survey and a mid-year family engagement survey that received 33 responses. Feedback from families was reviewed by the Board's Equity and Advancement Committees and used to expand engagement opportunities for future school years. Family participation remains exceptionally strong, with nearly 100% attendance at parent-teacher conferences, high participation in classroom observations, and strong attendance at community events such as the Ice Cream Social, Fall Festival, and student work-sharing activities.	
2025 Rating: 4 Comments: The school and surroundings meet the needs of the students and provide opportunities for outdoor activities. The facility is safe and is adequate for the type of programming necessary to meet the mission and vision of the school.	
Source: Authorizer observation	

3.18 Does the school have systems and structures in place, including an effective multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), to effectively identify and support students needing academic and/or behavioral supports in a timely fashion? This includes:

- **A clear process to identify students needing support, understood and implemented consistently.**
- **A robust system of tiered supports.**
- **Timely execution of these supports.**

- **Use of data to evaluate the effectiveness of supports and the system.**
- **Effective communication between stakeholders (teachers, school staff, families, and students).**

1 = Does not meet standard

The school does not have adequate systems to identify students needing supports. When students are identified the systems in place move slowly, taking weeks or months to execute the eventual support. Communication within systems is poor and internal/external stakeholders (teachers, school staff, parents, students) do not always receive timely or adequate communication.

2 = Approaching standard

The school has systems to identify students needing supports, but they may not always work as designed. When students are identified the systems in place move at a moderate pace, taking several weeks to a month to execute the eventual support. Communication within systems is patchy and internal/external stakeholders (teachers, school staff, parents, students) receive communication, but it may not always be timely or adequate.

3 = Meets standard

The school has systems to identify students needing supports, which work reliably and are understood and used regularly by individuals throughout the system (teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, counselors, parents, etc.). When students are identified the systems in place move efficiently, taking days or weeks to execute the needed support. Communication within systems is reliable and internal/external stakeholders (teachers, school staff, parents, students) receive all necessary communication in a clear and timely fashion.

4 = Exceeds standard

The school has systems with built in redundancies (multiple opportunities for reporting) to identify students needing support. The systems work reliably and are understood and used regularly by individuals throughout the system (teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, counselors, parents, etc.). When students are identified the systems in place move efficiently, taking hours or days to execute the needed support unless mandated timelines are longer. Communication within systems is reliable and internal/external stakeholders (teachers, school staff, parents, students) receive all necessary communication in a clear and timely fashion.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

Rating: 4

Comments: The school has established systems to support students with academic and behavioral needs. Literacy and math specialists provide targeted interventions informed by FastBridge assessment results, teacher observations, and classroom performance, while a full-time school social worker delivers behavioral and social-emotional supports.

The school continues to employ both a literary and math specialist who work with students who are struggling which is indicated through Fastbridge assessments as well as teacher observations and classwork. A full-time school social worker works with students who need behavioral support.

Throughout the documents, CMES demonstrates that MTSS is not simply a written plan—it is embedded in daily practice. Staff consistently use assessment data to identify students needing support, interventions are delivered through multiple tiers, and collaboration among teachers, specialists, and administrators is routine. The site visit also noted a collaborative culture focused on student success and continuous improvement.

2025

Rating: 3

Comments: The school continues to employ both a literary and math specialist who work with students who are struggling which is indicated through Fastbridge assessments as well as teacher observations and classwork. A full-time school social worker works with students who need behavioral support.

Source: Quarterly report, Site visits, ongoing correspondence, interviews

3.19 There are opportunities and structures in place for families to engage in their child's education that include the following:

- 3.19a Processes to communicate academic performance and other pertinent school information that are accessible to families including the consideration of language needs (e.g. conferences).
- 3.19b Processes to elicit feedback from families are accessible and seek to reach the broader school community including consideration of language needs. Feedback processes include but are not limited to an annual survey.
- 3.19c Opportunities for parents/guardians to support their child's education and/or the school (e.g. volunteering, parent organization, family events).

1 = Does not meet standard

- a. The school does not have a plan to communicate academic performance and other pertinent school information. Communication is not available in languages other than English.
- b. The school does the school have a plan to elicit feedback from families or the plan reaches only a limited set of families.
- c. Less than 25% of families/guardians participated in any engagement opportunity.

2 = Approaching standard

- a. The school has a plan to communicate academic performance and other pertinent school information, however the implementation of this plan is inconsistent or in the development phase.
- b. The school has a plan for eliciting feedback from families representing the broad school community, however, implementation of this plan is inconsistent or in the development phase.
- c. Between 25.1 - 40% of families/guardians participated in an engagement opportunity.

3 = Meets standard

- a. The school has a comprehensive plan to communicate academic performance and other pertinent school information with families, which is consistently executed. The plan includes an awareness of the language preferences and needs of families and strategies for providing communication multiple languages as needed.
- b. The school has a comprehensive plan to elicit feedback from all families. The plan includes an awareness of the language preferences and needs of families, strategies for providing communication multiple languages as needed and methods for ensuring representation from the broad school community.
- c. Between 40.1 - 55% of families/guardians participated in an engagement opportunity.

4 = Exceeds standard

- a. The school has a comprehensive plan to communicate academic performance and other pertinent school information with families, which is executed with fidelity. School survey data and interviews with families provide evidence of parent satisfaction with home-school communications.
- b. The school has a formalized process to elicit feedback from families reflective of the broad school community, which is executed with fidelity. The school is able to demonstrate how family feedback is reviewed and utilized in a timely manner. School survey data and interviews with families provide evidence of parent knowledge of and satisfaction with feedback opportunities.
- c. More than 55% of families/guardians participated in an engagement opportunity.

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

3.19a Rating: 4

3.19b Rating: 3

3.19c Rating: 4

Overall Rating: 3.67

Comments: CMES demonstrates a clear commitment to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and equitable learning environment. The school's mission centers on serving children from culturally and economically diverse backgrounds, and the 2024–2027 Strategic Plan prioritizes Access, Community, Equity, and Sustainability through measurable organizational goals. Enrollment and communication practices are designed to be accessible to families through bilingual communication, Spanish translation, and multiple communication formats. The Board actively incorporates family and staff feedback into strategic planning and has established Equity and Advancement Committees to strengthen engagement. The Strategic Plan also identifies increasing staff diversity and expanding equitable access as ongoing organizational priorities.

2025

3.19a Rating: 4

3.19b Rating: 3

3.19c Rating: 4

Overall Rating: 3.67

Comments: Parent are involved in their child's education at Cornerstone and the school works to provide numerous opportunities for them engage. A major goal for SY 24 was to increase communication with families around children's academic experiences in the classroom. To support this goal, there was a return to sending monthly newsletters with photos and updates. Parent engagement is high on the school board with parents holding three seats.

Source: Site visits, ongoing correspondence, interviews

3.20 Is the school committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and equitable environment that is open to all students? This is evidenced by the following:

3.20a. Marketing/outreach targets socioeconomically and racially diverse populations, which includes having materials available in multiple languages.

3.20b. Enrollment policies and practices are accessible and transparent. Supports are available to families as needed to navigate the application and enrollment process.

3.20c. The school demonstrates a commitment to cultivating a board and staff that is reflective of the student population.

1 = Does not meet standard

- a. The school's marketing strategy marginalizes or ignores students from diverse backgrounds and/or those who are low income. Materials are only available in English.
- b. Enrollment policies and practices are not transparent and/or result in accessibility barriers for low income students and students of color.
- c. The board and staff are not representative of the students the school serves.

2 = Approaching standard

- a. The school's marketing strategy includes a plan to recruit students from diverse backgrounds and/or those who are low income. However, implementation of the plan is inconsistent and materials are only available in English.
- b. Enrollment policies and practices are transparent. However, families encounter challenges navigating the enrollment process.
- c. While the board and/or staff are not representative of the students the school serves, the school is committed to recruiting board members and staff who are representative and has identified recruitment strategies to this end.

3 = Meets standard

- a. The school’s marketing strategy includes an actionable plan to recruit students from diverse backgrounds and/or those who are low income. The plan is actively utilized. Materials are available in multiple languages.
- b. School enrollment policies and practices are clear and easily navigated by families. Methods for accessing support for families needing assistance are readily apparent.
- c. The school employs strategies to recruit and retain board members and staff who are representative of the student population. Board and staff composition reflect these efforts.

4 = Exceeds standard NOT APPLICABLE

SY 2025-2026 (Based on academic results from SY2025)

3.20a Rating: 3

3.20b Rating: 3

3.20c Rating: 3

Overall Rating: 3

Comments: The school's commitment to equity and inclusion is reflected in its intentional efforts to serve students from culturally and economically diverse backgrounds within the East Side community. This commitment is evident in the diversity of its student population and is supported by targeted marketing and outreach strategies designed to engage a broad range of families.

2025

3.20a Rating: 3

3.20b Rating: 3

3.20c Rating: 3

Overall Rating: 3

Comments: The school’s commitment to equity and inclusion is embedded in the mission “to support children from culturally and economically diverse backgrounds living in or near St. Paul’s East Side...” This commitment is reflected in the diverse student population it serves. Through intentional marketing strategies, CMES reaches out to a wide range of communities.

Source: Quarterly report, Site visits, ongoing correspondence, interviews