

# Family Meeting

City on a Hill Charter Public Schools

January 16, 2019

New Bedford, MA



## What is a charter renewal and why does it matter?

- ▶ All Charter Public Schools are authorised by the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for 5-year terms.
- ▶ During the 5th year of the term, DESE looks at a variety of factors to evaluate the school's performance and if it should be renewed for another 5-year term.
- ▶ During this review process, there are four possible outcomes:

01	Unconditional Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school's charter is renewed for an additional 5-year term, with the expectation that results will continue.</li></ul>
02	Renewal with Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school's charter is renewed for an additional 5-year term, with a set of conditions that must be met by the end of that term.</li></ul>
03	Renewal on Probation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school's charter is probationary renewed for a time shorter than a typical 5-year term, with a set of conditions that must be met by the end of a timeline as set by DESE.</li></ul>
04	Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The school's charter is not renewed, and the school must close based on guidelines set by DESE.</li></ul>

## What is the renewal process?

1

### August 2018 - Application

The COAH New Bedford and COAH Network Leadership Team collaborated to submit a renewal application to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) on August 1, 2018.

2

### October 2018 - Site Visit

On October 15-16, a team of reviewers visited COAH NB on behalf of DESE. They observed classes, reviewed documents, and met with students, families, teachers, administrators, and COAH Board members.

3

### Early January 2019 - Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner reviewed the evidence gathered by the October visit, our track record over the past four years, and our application. With this, he made the recommendation to the Board of Education to renew our charter with probation.

4

### Late January 2019 - Board of Education's Decision

At their coming meeting on January 22, 2019, the Board of Education will review the Commissioner's recommendation and vote on the final decision as to whether to accept or amend it.

## Why is Commissioner Riley recommending renewal on probation?

- ▶ According to the letter he sent to the State Board on Friday, January 11, Commissioner Riley expressed “concerns regarding whether the school is operating in a manner faithful to its mission and key design elements and concerns regarding the school’s academic performance.”
- ▶ These are the same concerns we brought to your attention in letters in September and December and have taken action to address. You can read more about those action steps on our website:
  - ▶ [September 27, 2018](#)
  - ▶ [December 6, 2018](#)

03

Renewal on Probation

- The school’s charter is probationary renewed for a time shorter than a typical 5-year term, with a set of conditions that must be met by the end of a timeline as set by DESE.

## Does this mean COAH New Bedford is closing?

- ▶ No, COAH New Bedford is not closing. This is the time for us to come together as a COAH New Bedford community and work together to meet the ambitious probationary conditions recommended.
- ▶ These conditions are consistent with the work we have already undertaken as a community to help make our school stronger. Further, Commissioner Riley indicated in his letter that he has confidence in our turnaround plan and the steps that we are taking.
- ▶ Nevertheless, there is much work to do and you, your student and the entire City on a Hill community must come together to execute on our plans to improve and do whatever it takes to reach our goals.

03

Renewal on Probation

- The school's charter is probationary renewed for a time shorter than a typical 5-year term, with a set of conditions that must be met by the end of a timeline as set by DESE.

## What are some of the conditions of our probation?

- ▶ There are a total of five conditions, ranging from submitting our Board meeting agendas, materials and minutes to engaging an outside consultant to evaluate our academic program by the end of April 2019.
- ▶ The most important condition, however, is that we make significant academic progress on our MCAS scores in the upcoming round of tests.
  - ▶ As a practical matter, this means that when our 10th graders take their MCAS tests in March (ELA), May (Math) and June (Science), our 2019 scores must show substantial improvement over the prior year.

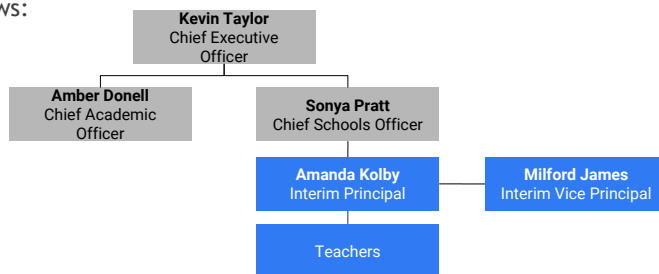
03

Renewal on Probation

- The school's charter is probationary renewed for a time shorter than a typical 5-year term, with a set of conditions that must be met by the end of a timeline as set by DESE.

## What other changes are coming to COAH New Bedford?

- ▶ Gail Keith has chosen to step down as Principal of COAH NB. We are thankful for the investment she made in the lives of our students, families and staff over the past 18 months.
- ▶ We intend to run a full search for a Principal.
- ▶ In the interim, the COAH New Bedford Leadership Team will be structured as follows:



## What if I still have questions after this meeting?

- ▶ You can always feel free to contact Kevin or any of his direct reports:
  - ▶ Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer - [ktaylor@cityonahill.org](mailto:ktaylor@cityonahill.org)
  - ▶ Sonya Pratt, Chief Schools Officer - [spratt@cityonahill.org](mailto:spratt@cityonahill.org)
  - ▶ Amber Donell, Chief Academic Officer - [adonell@cityonahill.org](mailto:adonell@cityonahill.org)
  - ▶ Jackie Hayes, Chief of Staff & General Counsel - [jhayes@cityonahill.org](mailto:jhayes@cityonahill.org)
  - ▶ Nadine Abraham, Chief of Strategy & Operations - [nabraham@cityonahill.org](mailto:nabraham@cityonahill.org)
  - ▶ Liz Dignan, Senior Director of Finance - [edignan@cityonahill.org](mailto:edignan@cityonahill.org)
  - ▶ Jordan Pina, Executive Assistant - [jpina@cityonahill.org](mailto:jpina@cityonahill.org)

**Next Family Meeting:** March 5, 2019