

MEMORANDUM

TO: School Committee Members

FROM: Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Superintendent

DATE: May 13, 2020

RE: Recommendation of Approval of Charter Renewal Application - Boston Green Academy

Boston Green Academy (BGA), a Horace Mann charter school serving grades 6-12 and located at 20 Warren Street in Brighton, seeks to submit an application to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for renewal of its charter for an additional five (5) year period. BGA received its initial charter in 2011, and was approved for a five-year renewal in 2016. If approved, BGA's charter would be renewed for the period 2021-2026.

DESE bases its decision to renew a charter "upon the presentation of affirmative evidence regarding the faithfulness of the school to the terms of its charter, including the extent to which the school has followed its recruitment and retention plan and has disseminated best practices in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, s. 89(dd); the success of the school's academic program; and the viability of the school as an organization." 603 CMR 1.11.

Pursuant to G.L. 71, § 89(dd), "a charter for a Horace Mann charter school shall not be renewed by the board without a majority vote of the school committee and local collective bargaining unit in the district where said charter school is located . . . ."

BGA's application is enclosed. After conducting a review of BGA's application, we recommend approval of its charter renewal application to DESE for the period of 2021-2026. We have determined that the application shows BGA's progress over the past five-year charter period. Despite BGA continuing to fall among the lowest performing 10% of schools in the state, BGA has seen increases in its graduation rates and a lowering of its dropout rates. Although BGA has average growth on academic statewide tests, BGA should continue to implement strategies to improve achievement and close opportunity gaps. BGA should also continue to seek ways to meet the needs of its students with disabilities and to increase its school diversity, especially for African American students. Finally, BGA will continue its focus on green and sustainable education, including its Career and Technical Education program in Environmental Science and Technology. Headmaster Matthew Holzer and BGA Board Chair Alexander Chu will be available to answer questions regarding the application.

