



GIRLS PREPARATORY  
**ACADEMY**  
KANSAS CITY

### **Bottom Line Up Front**

There has been disagreement about whether and how the MSIP6 standards (the 6th cycle of school performance standards) should be applied to charter schools. Our sponsor and the charter association are both advocating that the standards are redundant or may even displace the proper role of the sponsor in holding charter schools accountable.

What this means for us: we recommend not participating in the Comprehensive School Improvement Planning (CSIP) process, which would be duplicative of requirements for our sponsor. DESE has informed sponsors that charter schools are not required to participate in CSIP.

Please read below for additional context on the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP), Annual Performance Reports (APRs), and the nature of this disagreement.

### **Comparison Annual Performance Reports (APRs)**

- [KC Girls Prep](#)
- [EMKS](#)
- [KIPP KC](#)
- [Northeast MS](#)
- [Scuola Vita Nuova](#)
- [University Academy](#)

### **Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP)**

- [Overview](#)
- [Comprehensive guide](#)

### **Letter from the Missouri Charter Public School Commission**

[Here](#) is a letter MCPSC sent to DESE “voicing [their] concerns about how charter school performance is represented on the APR and in the MSIP 6 Guide. [They] will continue to defend

the autonomy of charter schools to operate as established by the General Assembly in the Missouri Statutes.”

### **Historical Context for MSIP and Charter School LEAs (from the MO Charter Public School Association)**

In 1998 when charter schools were codified into Missouri law legislators made it abundantly clear that charter schools were not to be held accountable to the State's MSIP evaluation process designed for school districts. 160.405.4(6) states, "No charter school shall be considered in the Missouri school improvement program review of the district in which it is located for the resource or process standards of the program."

Instead, charter schools were to be held accountable to a legal performance contract with their Sponsor with a sharper focus on academic, financial, operational, and governance performance. 160.405 also included a provision stating, "Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed as permitting a charter school to be held to lower performance standards than other public schools within a district; however, the charter of a charter school may permit students to meet performance standards on a different time frame as specified in its charter."

In the early 2000's, when charter schools advocated and won the legal right to serve as their own LEAs interpretation of the above language came into question. If charter schools are their own LEAs were they now subject to MSIP? Legal counsel weighed in (on numerous occasions) that the answer was, no. The spirit of the law was charters were to be held to a higher standard through a legal performance contract with their Sponsor not the State's district accreditation process.

Approximately 10 years ago the debate on charter schools being held to MSIP and the MSIP Annual Performance Report (APR) waged on. MO DESE agreed that charters would not be held to MSIP Process and Resource Standards but would still publish an Annual Performance Report (APR) for each charter LEA noting their academic performance based on the State's MSIP metrics. Charter schools came to the table and agreed to a change in statute that a Sponsor would include in their legal performance contract the academic metrics in the State's Annual Performance Report.

Fast forward to 2022 and in the design of MSIP6 the determination by MO DESE that charter schools would be strongly encouraged to subscribe to the MSIP6 non-academic standards (CSIP) and, if a charter school LEA opted to not subscribe to these non-academic standards it would be noted in their Annual Performance Report resulting in a lower score (based on fewer points). As we know, APR reports are public and media fodder thus a charter LEA not subscribing to CSIP sets them up to be skewered in the press regardless of whether they are providing a higher

quality education to their students meeting the terms of their Sponsor's legal performance contract.

**KCGPA's Participation in the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan (CSIP) component of MSIP6**

DESE has informed sponsors that charter schools are not required to participate in CSIP.

We recommend not participating because of the significant volume of work needed to complete the CSIP. Much of this work is duplicative of our annual compliance and reporting workstream for our sponsor, the MO Charter Public School Commission.

If we do not submit a CSIP, DESE will reduce the number of total points available to the charter, thus generating a greater percentage of our APR points from academic performance.