

June 25, 2021

Gateway STEM Academy
12119 16th Ave S
Burnsville, MN 55337

via email only to: mahamudh@gatewaystemacademy.org,
faraha@gatewaystemacademy.org, and fellowse@gatewaystemacademy.org

Notice of Concern - Operations

Dear Mr. Mahamud, Mr. Farah, and Mr. Fellows,

This letter serves to notify you of concerns regarding the school as detailed below. A Notice of Concern falls within the range of interventions as outlined in the charter contract between Pillsbury United Communities (PUC) and the school, as filed with the Minnesota Department of Education. (See exhibit L in the charter contract)

The three main areas of concern related to the operations of Gateway STEM Academy (GSA) are website compliance, Epicenter reporting, and annual reports. The concerns with each area are described in more detail below, as well as the steps the school must take to remediate the concerns.

- **Website Compliance** – GSA’s website has been out of compliance with statute since the school has been operational. Specifically, the issues identified in the 2019 and 2020 website reviews have not been fully remediated. These reviews are attached hereto as Attachment A.
- **Epicenter Reporting** – GSA has struggled to submit items to Epicenter in a timely and completed fashion over the last two years. The annual Epicenter reporting letter from 2019 and 2020 detailing GSA’s reporting statistics and overdue submissions are attached hereto as Attachment B.
- **Annual Reports** – GSA has not produced a statutorily required annual report on time since the school has been operational. Reports are due to PUC on November 30th of each year, which is also the deadline by when to have said report posted to the school’s website. To date, no annual reports can be found on GSA’s website. Additionally, for the past 2 years for which an annual report could have been produced, GSA has not provided said report in time to review prior to the school’s required annual meeting with PUC. Thus, PUC has been unable to verify statutory compliance with said reports in a timely manner.

Steps for Remediation

- Please remediate all identified issues on the website by July 23rd, 2021. Additionally, any further issues identified in this year’s website review must be remediated by the identified deadline to meet expectations for website compliance.
- To meet expectations for Epicenter reporting, 75% of documents must be submitted on-time annually, and a school must have 95% of documents complete by June 30th of every year. GSA will receive quarterly monitoring during the 2021-2022 school year to

determine if progress is being made toward these targets. PUC will provide an update to GSA on its Epicenter timeliness and completion in the last two weeks of each quarter. If significant progress has not been made by December 15, 2021, further intervention may be required.

- GSA must provide all outstanding annual reports to PUC by July 23rd, 2021. Also, the school must submit the 2020-2021 report by November 30th, 2021.

If the remediations cannot be rectified within this period, you are required to submit a plan and timeline for remediation to be negotiated with PUC Office of Public Charter Schools.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Diaz' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Samantha N. Diaz, Director
Pillsbury United Communities – Office of Public Charter Schools
SamanthaD@pillsburyunited.org

Attachment A – Website Review Letters

**PILLSBURY
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Pillsbury United Communities
Office of Public Charter Schools
1701 Oak Park Ave North
Minneapolis, MN 55411

October 5, 2019

Letter of Concern

Dear Gateway STEM Academy,

Pillsbury United Communities- Office of Public Charter Schools (PUC- OPCS) conducted a review of [Gateway STEM Academy's](#) (GSA) website and its compliance with Minnesota Statutory requirements for charter school websites (MINN STAT 124E).

For the review, please see the Website Compliance Checklist table below. GSA has four items to remediate, items A., H., I., and L.

Please note that PUC-OPCS found two items on your website under the 'If Applicable' section. If there are other items that we missed, or other areas that are applicable to GSA of which PUC-OPCS is unaware, please notify us as soon as possible.

PUC-OPCS requires full compliance with Minnesota Statute as stated in Article VIII of the contract between Pillsbury United Communities and GSA. If the above issues are not remediated by November 8th, 2019, Pillsbury United Communities will send another notice which may result in further authorizer action.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Antonio Cardona, Larry McKenzie, Emily Edstrom Moore, & Samantha Diaz
Office of Public Charter Schools

Website Compliance Checklist
Mandatory Requirements

Item	Minn. Stat. §	Met	Not Met	Comments
A. Minutes of Board Meetings (for at least one calendar year from date of publication)	124E.07, subd. 8(b)		x	Meeting minutes are not up to date, the most recent posted are from March, 2019.
B. Board Information (names, positions, contact information)	124E.07, subd. 8(b)	x		
C. Authorizer Information (identifying who and contact information) ⁱ	124E.07, subd. 8(b)	x		Please note that the authorizer information has changed. The new information and logo for PUC can be found at the bottom of this checklist. This information must be updated before the next website review.
D. Lottery Policy	124E.11, para (b)	x		
E. Annual Report (can be combined with world's best workforce report)	124E.16, subd. 2(a)			Not yet applicable – first year of school's operation was 2018-2019
F. World's Best Workforce Report	120B.11, subd. 5 per 124E.03, subd.2(i)			Not yet applicable – first year of school's operation was 2018-2019
G. A comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the charter school during the school year (Note: This must be posted before the first day of school each year.)	120B.301(c)	x		
H. Student Bullying Policy	121A.031, subd. 3 per 124E.03, subd. 4(c)		x	

I. A link to information on how to obtain an application and application assistance for Minnesota health care programs (i.e., this link must be included on the charter school's website)	256.962, subd. 6		x	
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Further Requirements, If Applicable

Item	Minn. Stat. §	Met	Not Met	Comments
J. Directory information for members and committees having board-delegated authority Minn.	124E.07, subd. 8(b)			
K. Meeting minutes of members and committees having board-delegated authority	124E.07, subd. 8(b)			
L. The school's local literacy plan to have every child reading at or above grade level no later than the end of grade 3, including English learners	120B.12, subd. 4a per 124E.03, subd. 2(b)		x	
M. The school's restrictive procedures plan for children with disabilities (Note: If not posted to the website, paper copies	125A.0942, subd. 1 per 124E.03, subd. 3			

must be available upon request.)				
N. The school's wellness policy	121A.215 per 124E.03, subd. 2(a)			
O. Collaborative agreements and all accountability measures within collaborative agreements between schools, districts, and authorizers	124E.08(c)			
P. Policy for admission of kindergarteners and/or first grade students at an earlier age than the age(s) required by statute	124E.11, para(d)	x		
Q. Policy for purchase of group health insurance coverage (if charter school board or a co-op of teachers provides group health insurance coverage)	124E.12, subd. 5(b)			
R. Non-profit building corporation information	124E.13, subd. 3(b)(3)			

*Source: [Minnesota Department of Education- Charter School Website Compliance Checklist: A Resource for Charter Schools and Authorizers](#) and [Minnesota Statute 124E](#)

ⁱ Sample Authorizer Language:

[SCHOOL] is authorized by Pillsbury United Communities (PUC). PUC co-creates enduring change toward a just society. PUC charter schools:

- Offer bold and innovative educational strategies
- Provide an environment that promotes respect for all students and their individual identities
- Engage students in academic and authentic learning opportunities, service learning, and personal development

Contact Information:

Antonio Cardona, Director
Pillsbury United Communities
Office of Public Charter Schools
1701 Oak Park Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411
AntonioC@pillsburyunited.org

[INCLUDE YOUR SCHOOL'S LIAISON INFO]
Larry McKenzie, Charter School Liaison
LarryM@pillsburyunited.org

Samantha Diaz, Associate Charter School Liaison
SamanthaD@pillsburyunited.org

www.pillsburyunited.org

**PILLSBURY
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PILLSBURY UNITED COMMUNITIES

Pillsbury United Communities
Office of Public Charter Schools
1701 Oak Park Ave North
Minneapolis, MN 55411

September 30, 2020

Letter of Concern

Dear Gateway STEM Academy,

Pillsbury United Communities- Office of Public Charter Schools (PUC- OPCS) conducted a review of [Gateway STEM Academy's](#) (GSA) website and its compliance with Minnesota Statutory requirements for charter school websites (MINN STAT 124E).

For the review, please see the Website Compliance Checklist table below. GSA has seven items to remediate: Items C. D. E. F. G. H. I.

Please note that PUC-OPCS found two items on your website under the 'If Applicable' section. If there are other items that we missed, or other areas that are applicable to GSA of which PUC-OPCS is unaware, please notify us as soon as possible.

PUC-OPCS requires full compliance with Minnesota Statute as stated in Article VIII of the contract between Pillsbury United Communities and GSA. If the above issues are not remediated by November 6th, 2020, Pillsbury United Communities will send another notice which may result in further authorizer action.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Antonio Cardona, Larry McKenzie, Emily Edstrom Moore, Kristin Robert & Angie Tapia
Office of Public Charter Schools

Website Compliance Checklist
Mandatory Requirements

Item	Minn. Stat. §	Met	Not Met	Comments
A. Minutes of Board Meetings (for at least one calendar year from date of publication)	124E.07, subd. 8(b)	x		
B. Board Information (names, positions, contact information)	124E.07, subd. 8(b)	x		
C. Authorizer Information (identifying who and contact information) ¹	124E.07, subd. 8(b)		x	Please review the example below and update PUC's information on the website.
D. Lottery Policy	124E.11, para (b)		x	The Application and Enrollment Policy does include lottery information, but the posted policy is from Metro Tech Academy. Please replace this with GSA's approved policy.
E. Annual Report (can be combined with world's best workforce report)	124E.16, subd. 2(a)		x	No annual reports posted.
F. World's Best Workforce Report	120B.11, subd. 5 per 124E.03, subd.2(i)		x	No World's Best Workforce Report posted.
G. A comprehensive calendar of standardized tests to be administered in the charter school during the school year (Note: This must be posted before the first day of school each year.)	120B.301(c)		x	The assessment calendar from 2018-2019 is posted, the calendars for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 are missing.

H. Student Bullying Policy	121A.031, subd. 3 per 124E.03, subd. 4(c)		x	GSA has posted a Harassment and Violence Policy, this policy does not mention Bullying which is a specific statutory requirement.
I. A link to information on how to obtain an application and application assistance for Minnesota health care programs (i.e., this link must be included on the charter school's website)	256.962, subd. 6		x	

Further Requirements, If Applicable

Item	Minn. Stat. §	Met	Not Met	Comments
J. Directory information for members and committees having board-delegated authority Minn.	124E.07, subd. 8(b)			
K. Meeting minutes of members and committees having board-delegated authority	124E.07, subd. 8(b)			
L. The school's local literacy plan to have every child reading at or above grade level no later than the end of grade 3, including English learners	120B.12, subd. 4a per 124E.03, subd. 2(b)		x	
M. The school's restrictive procedures plan for	125A.0942, subd. 1 per 124E.03, subd. 3			

children with disabilities (Note: If not posted to the website, paper copies must be available upon request.)				
N. The school's wellness policy	121A.215 per 124E.03, subd. 2(a)			
O. Collaborative agreements and all accountability measures within collaborative agreements between schools, districts, and authorizers	124E.08(c)			
P. Policy for admission of kindergarteners and/or first grade students at an earlier age than the age(s) required by statute	124E.11, para(d)	x		
Q. Policy for purchase of group health insurance coverage (if charter school board or a co-op of teachers provides group health insurance coverage)	124E.12, subd. 5(b)			
R. Non-profit building corporation information	124E.13, subd. 3(b)(3)			

*Source: [Minnesota Department of Education- Charter School Website Compliance Checklist: A Resource for Charter Schools and Authorizers](#) and [Minnesota Statute 124E](#)

ⁱ Sample Authorizer Language:

[SCHOOL] is authorized by Pillsbury United Communities (PUC). PUC co-creates enduring change toward a just society. PUC charter schools:

- Offer bold and innovative educational strategies
- Provide an environment that promotes respect for all students and their individual identities
- Engage students in academic and authentic learning opportunities, service learning, and personal development

Contact Information:

Antonio Cardona, Director
Pillsbury United Communities
Office of Public Charter Schools
1701 Oak Park Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411
AntonioC@pillsburyunited.org

Emily Edstrom Moore, Associate Charter School Liaison
EmilyEM@pillsburyunited.org

www.pillsburyunited.org

**PILLSBURY
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Attachment B – Epicenter Reporting Letters

PILLSBURY UNITED COMMUNITIES

Gateway STEM Academy
12119 16th Ave S
Burnsville, MN 55337

August 19, 2019

Epicenter Information

Dear Gateway STEM Academy,

Pillsbury United Communities-Office of Public Charter Schools (PUC-OPCS) has conducted a review of your activity on Epicenter and have included the appropriate data in this document for your records.

The following statistics show how your school has complied with Epicenter requirements for the 2018-2019 academic year and how that compares to our PUC network as a whole.

School	On Time	Accurate	Complete
Gateway (Board)	29%	64%	57%
Gateway (School)	60%	78%	70%
Network Stats	41%	91%	90%

Key:

On time - Did you meet the deadline in turning in the document?

Accuracy – Is it the right document or is the uploading done correctly?

Complete – Uploading the document is done once it has been accepted.

Past due – Documents that have not been uploaded into Epicenter.

The following documents are past due:

- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – Due November 30, 2018 (July 2018 board meeting)
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – Due November 30, 2018 (August 2018 board meeting)
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – Due November 30, 2018 (September 2018 board meeting)
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – Due January 10, 2019
- Succession Plan – Due March 15, 2019
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – Due March 31, 2019



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- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – Due April 10, 2019
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – Due May 1, 2019
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – Due May 10, 2019
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – Due May 31, 2019
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – Due June 10, 2019
- Board Training Certification – June 30, 2019
- Quarterly Financial Report – Due January 30, 2019
- Annual Registration with MN Attorney General – Due April 1, 2019
- Quarterly Financial Report – Due April 30, 2019
- Staff/Employee Handbook – Due June 30, 2019

Additionally, we want to make sure the Epicenter users we have for your school are correct. Let us know if any users need to be added or deleted. For your school, we have the following:

- Abdiaziz Farah – farah@gatewaystemacademy.org

Please see attached for the documents that will need to be uploaded in the upcoming school year and the due dates.

Thank you so much for your continued efforts in submitting the necessary documents to Epicenter. It helps us stay organized and allows us to better serve your schools. Please reach out with any comments or concerns you may have about Epicenter.

Sincerely,

Antonio Cardona, Larry McKenzie, Emily Edstrom Moore, & Samantha Diaz
Office of Public Charter Schools



OFFICE OF PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS
1701 Oak Park Avenue North / Minneapolis MN 55411 / pillsburyunited.org

PILLSBURY UNITED COMMUNITIES

Gateway STEM Academy
12119 16th Ave S
Burnsville, MN 55337

August 31, 2020

Epicenter Information

Dear Gateway STEM Academy,

Pillsbury United Communities-Office of Public Charter Schools (PUC-OPCS) has conducted a review of your activity on Epicenter and have included the appropriate data in this document for your records.

The following statistics show how your school has complied with Epicenter requirements for the 2019-2020 academic year and how that compares to our PUC network as a whole.

School	On Time	Accurate	Complete
Gateway (Board)	0%	92%	37%
Gateway (School)	10%	80%	80%
Network Stats	45%	94%	90%

Key:

On time - Did you meet the deadline in turning in the document?

Accuracy - Is it the right document or is the uploading done correctly?

Complete - Uploading the document is done once it has been accepted.

Past due - Documents that have not been uploaded into Epicenter.

The following documents are past due:

Board:

- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – July 10, 2019
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – August 10, 2019
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – August 31, 2019
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – September 10, 2019
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – October 1, 2019
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – October 10 2019
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – October 31, 2019
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – December 10, 2019
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes- December 31, 2019
- Board Training Plan – December 31, 2019

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- Board Certification of Background Checks – January 31, 2020
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – January 31, 2020
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – February 10, 2020
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – March 9, 2020
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – March 30, 2020
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – May 1, 2020
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – May 10, 2020
- Board Meeting Approved Minutes – May 31, 2020
- Board Meeting Agenda and Packet – June 10, 2020

School:

- Annual Report – November 30, 2019
- Goal Reporting – November 30, 2019
- Performance Framework Reporting – December 6, 2019
- World's Best Workforce – Confirmation of Submission to MDE – December 15, 2019

Additionally, we want to make sure the Epicenter users we have for your school are correct. Let us know if any users need to be added or deleted. For your school, we have the following:

- Abdiaziz Farah – farah@gatewaystemacademy.org

Please see attached for the documents that will need to be uploaded in the upcoming school year and the due dates.

Thank you so much for your continued efforts in submitting the necessary documents to Epicenter. It helps us stay organized and allows us to better serve your schools. Please reach out with any comments or concerns you may have about Epicenter.

Sincerely,

Antonio Cardona, Larry McKenzie, Emily Edstrom Moore, Kristin Robert & Angie Tapia
Office of Public Charter Schools



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