



Charter Schools Accountability and Support  
2012-2013

**THE RENAISSANCE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR INNOVATION  
ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW REPORT**

**2012–2013 SCHOOL YEAR**

## Part 1: School Overview & History

### School Overview and History

The Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation is a high school serving approximately 339 students<sup>1</sup> in grades 9-11 during the 2012-2013 school year. It opened in 2010-2011, and is under the terms of its first charter. The school's projected full grade span upon renewal and approval is 9-12, which it's expected to reach in 2013-2014.<sup>2</sup> The school is located in public<sup>3</sup> facilities in Manhattan within CSD 4.<sup>4</sup>

To date, the school has not yet received a NYC DOE Progress Report.

Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation enrolls new students in grades 9 - 11. There were 156 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2012 lottery.<sup>5</sup>

The average attendance rate for the 2012-2013 school year to date is 88%.<sup>6</sup>

On the 2011-2012 NYC DOE School Survey, the school scored Below Average on the Safety & Respect section, Average on the Communication section, Average on the Engagement section, and Below Average on the Academic Expectations section. Forty-two percent of the school's parents, 95.0% of the school's teachers, and 82.0% of the school's eligible students responded to the survey.<sup>7</sup>

The current school leadership, Nicholas Tishuk, Principal and Co-founder, has been at the school for three years.

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<sup>1</sup> Enrollment based on ATS data from 3/8/13.

<sup>2</sup> NYC DOE internal data.

<sup>3</sup> NYC DOE internal data.

<sup>4</sup> NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database.

<sup>5</sup> Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form.

<sup>6</sup> Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form.

<sup>7</sup> NYC DOE School Survey – <http://schools.nyc.gov/survey>.

## Part 2: Annual Review Process Overview

### Rating Framework

The New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Charter Schools Accountability & Support Team (CSAS) performs a comprehensive review of each NYC DOE-authorized charter school to investigate three primary questions: is the school an academic success; is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization; and is the school in compliance with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations? To ascertain matters of sustainability and strategic planning, CSAS inquires about the school's plans for its next charter term.

This review is conducted by analyzing student performance data and collecting and evaluating school-submitted documents during the 2012-2013 school year. The report outlines evidence found during this review.

As per the school's monitoring plan, CSAS may also conduct a visit to a school. Visits may focus on academic outcomes, governance, organizational structure, operational compliance, fiscal sustainability or any combination of these as necessary.

In addition, a school's charter goals are reviewed. The progress that a school has made towards achieving its goals at this particular point during its charter period is noted. However, as this is an interim review before the end of the charter term, progress towards goals is not used as part of this evaluation.

### Essential Questions

#### *Is the school an academic success?*

To assess whether a school is an academic success, CSAS considers performance measures, including, but not limited to the following:

- Overall NYC DOE Progress Report score,
- New York State ELA and Math results and/or New York State Regents exams,
- ELA and Math proficiency compared to the district for elementary and middle schools, and graduation rates compared to the city for high schools,
- New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) or other approved alternate assessments, and
- Performance data pertaining to college and career readiness.

Academic success is rated as **Demonstrated, Partially Demonstrated, or Not Yet Demonstrated**. If a school does not yet have a NYC DOE Progress Report, it is rated as Not Yet Demonstrated.

#### *Is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization?*

To assess whether a school is a fiscally sound, viable organization, CSAS focuses on three areas: Governance Structure & Organizational Design, School Climate & Community Engagement, and Financial Health. This includes an analysis of the school's audited financial statements, based on the NACSA (National Association of Charter School Authorizers) Financial Framework<sup>8</sup>.

CSAS also considers a variety of supporting materials and data, including but not limited to the following:

- Board of Trustee bylaws,
- Board of Trustee meeting minutes,
- Annual Reports submitted by schools to New York State Education Department (NYSED),
- NYC DOE School Survey,
- Data collection sheets provided by schools,
- Student, staff, and Board turnover,

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<sup>8</sup>[http://www.qualitycharters.org/assets/files/images/stories/pdfs/publications/Performance\\_Framework\\_Fall\\_2012\\_Draft.pdf](http://www.qualitycharters.org/assets/files/images/stories/pdfs/publications/Performance_Framework_Fall_2012_Draft.pdf), page 38-59

- Authorized enrollment numbers, and
- Annual financial audits.

A school's Governance Structure & Organizational Design and Climate & Community Engagement are rated as **Developed, Partially Developed, or Not Yet Developed**. A school's Financial Health is rated to indicate whether there are concerns about the near-term financial obligations and the financial sustainability of the school.

***Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable law and regulations?***

As it pertains to compliance, CSAS identifies areas of compliance and non-compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

**Staff Representatives**

The following staff representatives participated in the review of this school's documents as detailed above and conducted a monitoring visit to the school on May 14, 2013:

- Andrea McLean, DOE
- Keisha Womack, DOE
- Simeon Stolzberg, Consultant

## Part 3: Findings

### Summary of Findings

Based on CSAS review, the findings are as follows. To date, The Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation:

- has not yet demonstrated academic achievement and progress (p. 6-7).
- has a partially developed governance structure and organizational design (pg. 8).
- has partially developed a stable school culture (pg. 8).
- is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on current practices (pg. 9).
- is in compliance with some applicable laws and regulations, but not others (pg. 10).
- plans to grow into its approved grade span of serving grades 9-12 (pg. 11).

This review included a desk audit, a self-evaluation completed by the school, a visit and follow up communication via phone and email. CSAS visited the school on May 14, 2013.

## **Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?**

To date, The Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation has not yet demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

- At the time of this report, the school did not have a 2011-2012 NYC DOE High School (HS) Progress Report grade or proficiency data.
- Based on 2011-2012 HS Progress Report data, Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation students took Regents exams in Integrated Algebra, Global History and Living Environment with the following test-taker results:
  - Integrated Algebra, 49% passing,
  - Global History, 50% passing,
  - Living Environment, 53% passing.
- According to the school's 2011-2012 High School Progress Report:
  - 76.9% of its students in their first year completed 10+ credits,
  - 60.6% of its students in their second year completed 10+ credits,
  - The school only served grades 9 and 10 at the time of the 2011-2012 HS Progress Report.

### Progress Towards Attainment of Academic Goals<sup>9</sup>

- According to the 2011-2012 Annual Report to New York State Education Department (NYSED) the school has not yet met any of its twelve academic charter goals.
  - The school is in its third year of operation and the majority of its goals are to be measured by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> year.

Representatives of the CSAS team visited the school on May 14, 2013. Based on discussion, document review, and observation the following was noted:

- CSAS representatives observed ten classrooms, including instruction in The Learning Center.
  - In most classrooms, a range of co-teaching strategies, including team teaching, lead and assist, and station teaching were observed.
  - In some classrooms, single general education teaching was observed.
  - In most classrooms, questioning that asked for basic recall or challenged students to demonstrate understanding (i.e. explain or restate) was observed.
  - In most rooms observed, checks for understanding were done primarily through questioning, observing and exit tickets.
  - In some classrooms, differentiation strategies, such as small group instruction, targeted assistance in The Learning Center and classes that utilized student assistants were observed.
    - The school reports The Learning Center serves students who require long and short-term support in the form of small group and individualized instruction.
  - In most rooms observed there was evidence of effective behavioral management.
    - In some classes observed, students were not consistently engaged in learning tasks and were not always effectively redirected.
  - Based on classroom observation debriefs, all lessons observed consisted of instruction that aligned with the school's instructional goals.
  - Based on the leadership meeting, school leadership indicated a desire to move towards more student-centered learning; however, this was not evident in classroom observations during this visit.
- CSAS representatives conducted interviews with six teachers.
  - All interviewed teachers reported the use of data and assessments.
    - Teachers report interim assessments have been created based on Regents questions and a scanning machine allows for quick collection and analysis of results.

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<sup>9</sup> Goal Analysis is considered a neutral point and is not used as part of the evaluation.

- Teachers report the school also administers mock Regents exams. Assessment results are used to develop data plans.
- All teachers reported a teacher evaluation system was in place.
  - The school has adapted the Marshall framework. Teachers are observed and provided feedback as well as conduct self-evaluations.
  - The school and teachers report the evaluation policy was changed this year to four times per year due to the increase in new teachers.
- All teachers reported opportunities to participate in professional development, both internal and external.
  - Teachers report a major focus on co-teaching as well as rigor.
  - Teachers report developing individual growth plans.
- Some teachers reported having limited time for planning.
- Most teachers reported intervention programs for at-risk students were in place.
  - The Learning Center provides small group instruction for a set of struggling students. The school is also implementing behavior intervention programs and establishing a culture of support.
- Based on the school's self-evaluation and the leadership meeting, it is noted that the school:
  - Has made changes in staffing; evidence of those changes was visible in interviews and observations, and
  - Is attempting to address deficiencies in ELL recruitment and services.

## **Essential Question 2: Is the School a Fiscally Sound, Viable Organization?**

### **Governance Structure & Organizational Design**

To date, the Board of Trustees has a partially developed governance structure and organizational design.

- Officer positions outlined in the Board's bylaws are filled.
- The Board has appropriate and timely access to legal counsel.
- The Board has clear lines of accountability from school leadership to the Board as evidenced Principal reports, as recorded in meeting minutes and the school's organizational chart.
- The Board has held nine meetings during the 2012-2013 school year as evidenced by meeting minutes submitted to CSAS. One meeting was missed due to Super Storm Sandy.
  - The Board's bylaws state the Board should conduct six meetings during the academic school year.
- The Board has six active members, which aligns to the number of members outlined in the Board's bylaws.
- The Board has active and functioning committees, including an Educational Support committee, Finance committee, Fundraising committee and a Career Tracks committee.
  - As evidenced in meeting minutes, the Finance committee reports regularly and is the only committee noted to report to the Board.
- The Board has submitted reporting requirements to CSAS.
- The Board has been stable, experiencing no turnover since the last school year.
- The Board inconsistently demonstrates a quorum as recorded in meeting minutes.
  - Three months of meeting minutes did not make a quorum (January, February and March 2013).

### **School Climate & Community Engagement**

The school has partially developed a stable school culture.

- The school's student turnover is 4.3%<sup>10</sup>
- The school's staff response rate on the 2011-2012 NYC DOE School Survey was 95%, compared to the citywide average of 82%.
  - The school's parent response rate was 42%, compared to the citywide average of 53%.
  - The school's student response rate was 82%, compared to the City average of 82%.
- The school's administrative staff turnover is 29%.
- The school's instructional staff turnover is 44%.
  - The school reports 6 instructional staff members relocated out of New York State.
- On the 2011-2012 NYC DOE School Survey, the school scored Below Average on the Safety & Respect section, Average on the Communication section, Average on the Engagement section, and Below Average on the Academic Expectations section.

Progress Towards Attainment of Academic Goals.<sup>11</sup>

- The school's attendance rate of 88% is lower than the school charter goal of 95%.

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<sup>10</sup> ACR Data Collection Form, February 2013

<sup>11</sup> Goal Analysis is considered a neutral point and is not used as part of the evaluation.

## **Financial Health**

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on current practices.

- The school is in a strong position to meet all its liabilities over the next 12 months.
- The school is currently meeting its debt obligations.
- The school has a strong cash flow, which has trended upward.
- The school can cover nearly four months of expenses without an infusion of cash.
- The school is operating at a surplus indicating an ability to create a strong reserve to support ongoing growth.
- The school is currently co-located with a NYC district school and therefore does not have any lease payments.
- The school is within 93% of its enrollment target.
- The school received a clean audit with no material findings on its most recent audit financial statement.

### **Essential Question 3: Compliance with Charter and All Applicable Laws and Regulations**

The school is compliant with some applicable laws and regulations.

To date, the Board of Trustees is in compliance with the below:

- Board member size falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws.
- The Board makes board minutes and agendas available upon request to the public prior to or at Board meetings by posting them on the school's website.
- Board has provided CSAS with submission of accountability reporting documents.
- Board has held the required number of Board meetings, nine out of six meetings have been held.
  - One meeting was missed due to Super Storm Sandy.

The Board is out of compliance with:

- Board does not have appropriate liability insurance for officers.

To date, the school is in compliance with the below:

- The school has submitted required documentation for staff fingerprint clearance and all staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.
- The school submitted required documentation and proof of teacher certification.
- The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents.
- The school has submitted a school safety plan which has been shared with the entire school community.
- The school is in compliance with NYS Section 917 law in regards to AED/ CPR certification.
- The school's immunization rate is above the 98.8% threshold established by the NYC Department of Health.

## **Essential Question 4: What are the School's Plans for the Next Charter Term?**

As reported by the school leadership and the Board of Trustees, the following is noted:

- The school plans to grow into its approved grade span of serving grades 9-12.

## Part 4: Essential Questions and Accountability Framework

### The CSAS Accountability Framework

To help NYC DOE authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the NYC DOE's Charter Schools Accountability and Support (CSAS) has developed an Accountability Framework build around four essential questions for charter school renewal:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization?
3. Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable law and regulations?
4. What are the school's plans for its next charter term?

#### 1. Is the School an Academic Success?

##### 1a. High Academic Attainment and Improvement

Schools that are academic successes have many of the characteristics below:

- Meet absolute performance goals
- Meet student progress goals
- Are closing the achievement gap for at risk students, including special needs and ELL students
- Are surpassing performance of DOE identified peer-schools
- Are surpassing performance district and city proficiency or better averages
- Are meeting other rigorous academic and non-academic goals as stated in school's charter

Evidence for success might include, but not be limited to, the following depending on school configurations:

- Grades 3-8 NYS ELA Results (absolute performance, individual student progress, comparative performance to similar schools, home district or city averages, progress for at-risk populations)
- Grades 3-8 NYS Math Results (absolute performance, individual student progress, comparative performance to similar schools, home district or city averages, progress for at-risk populations)
- Grades 4 and 8 NYS Science Results (absolute performance, individual student progress, comparative performance to similar schools, home district or city averages, progress for at-risk populations)
- Grades 8-12 NYS Regent Exam Results
- When applicable, NYSAA or other approved alternate assessments results
- HS 4- and 6-Year Graduation Rates (absolute and progress, overall, for at-risk student populations)
- Grades 8-12 College Readiness Credit Accumulation
- Percentage of Students Applying to and Being Admitted to College
- Percentage of Students Taking AP Courses and/or Percentage of Students Passing AP Courses
- Results on state accountability measures
- Charter School Academic and Non-Academic Goals
- NYC Progress Reports

##### 1b. Mission and Academic Goals

Schools with successful missions and goals have many of the characteristics below:

- Have an animating mission statement that staff, students and community embrace
- Set ambitious academic and non-academic goals that entire school community knows and embraces
- Have processes for regular monitoring and reporting on progress toward school goals
- Have processes for adjusting strategies in support of goals as appropriate in response to monitoring data

Evidence for successful missions and goals might include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Mission statement, charter, external documents (parent and family handbooks, school website, etc.)
- Annual reports, school improvement plans, leadership board reports
- Board agendas and minutes
- Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction surveys
- Participation at parent-teacher conferences, school advocacy events, participation in academic goal related programs

### **1c. Responsive Education Program**

Schools with successful education programs have many of the characteristics below:

- Are self-reflective and examine practice based on outcomes against goals
- Have well-thought out curricular programs that are aligned with NYS learning outcomes as described by state standards and the new Common Core Curriculum.
- Use instructional models and resources consistent with school mission and that are flexible in addressing the needs of all learners
- Have defined strategies that they can measure and monitor for closing the achievement gap
- Offer defined opportunities for remediation and acceleration
- Implement a coherent and effective interim assessment system (e.g., use of formative, interim, and summative assessment data) for monitoring progress, predicting performance, and adjusting instruction
- Have an effective process for supporting improved classroom instruction, including frequent observation and feedback
- Have effective strategies and quality instructional programs for addressing students with special needs and ELLs
- Use a defined process for evaluating curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals

Evidence for successful education programs, in addition to positive results, may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- Instructional planning documents (alignments, scope and sequences, curriculum maps, unit and lesson plans, etc)
- Student/teacher schedules
- Classroom observations
- Student Intervention / Response to Intervention program description and resources
- Interim assessment results
- Student and teacher portfolios
- Data findings; adjusted lesson plans
- Self-assessment documentation
- Professional development plans and resources

### **1d. Learning Environment**

Schools with successful learning environments have many of the characteristics below:

- Have a strong culture that connects high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to give their best effort academically and socially
- Use a comprehensive approach to student management, including positive behavioral expectations and a clear discipline policy to build and sustain a safe, orderly, and supportive classroom environment
- Provide for safe, respectful, efficient transitions, hallways, cafeteria, yard, etc.
- Have classrooms where academic risk-taking and student participation is encouraged and supported
- Provide opportunities for students to actively engage in their own learning and in the life of the school

- Have a formal or informal character education, social development, or citizenship program that provides opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens

Evidence for successful learning environments may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- School mission and articulated values
- Student management plan (code of conduct, school values, discipline policy, positive incentive system, etc.)
- Student attendance and retention rates
- Student discipline data
- DOE School Survey student results
- DOE School Survey parent and teacher safety and respect results
- Self-administered satisfaction survey results
- Leadership, staff, and, if appropriate, student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Scheduled student engagement opportunities (e.g., student advisory, internships, student government, student led conferences, peer tutoring, peer mediation, etc.)

## 2. Is the School a Fiscally Sound, Viable Organization?

### 2a. Governance Structure and Organizational Design

Schools with successful governance and organizational design structures have many of the characteristics below:

- Operate with a clearly articulated governance structure, compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations
- Have a capable Board of Trustees with appropriate blend of skills and experiences to provide oversight and strategic direction to fulfill the mission and goals of its charter
- Have a Board that is fully compliant with all applicable laws and regulations, particularly but not limited to open-meeting laws and conflict of interest regulations
- Have developed a succession plan for board and school leadership, consistent with the charter and Board by-laws, to ensure continuity of direction and leadership over time and despite circumstance
- Implements a school leadership structure that is aligned with charter and that is sufficient to fulfill school's mission and achieve its accountability goals; it also has clear lines of accountability for leadership roles, accountability to Board, and, if applicable, relationship with a charter management organization
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Implemented a process for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's organization and leadership structure
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provide regular feedback on instruction to teachers

Evidence for school governance and organizational design may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- School charter
- Board by-laws, roster, trustee resumes, meeting agenda and minutes
- Annual conflict of interest forms
- Staff roster, job descriptions, staff handbook, operations manual
- School calendar, professional development plan

### 2b. School Climate and Community Engagement

Schools with a sustaining school climate and engaged parent and community support have many of the characteristics below:

- A healthy professional school climate that is collaborative, student centered, and open to parents and community support
- An effective process for recruiting, hiring, supporting, and evaluating leadership and staff
- A flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- An effective way of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including the DOE School Survey
- Effective home-school communication practices to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Strong community-based partnerships and advocacy for the school

Evidence for school climate and community engagement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- DOE School Survey satisfaction parent, teacher, and, if appropriate student results
- Student retention and wait list data
- Staff retention data
- Leadership, staff, parent, student interviews
- Student and staff attendance rates
- Parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences
- Parent association meeting calendar and minutes
- Community partnerships and sponsored programs

### **2c. Financial and Operational Health**

Schools that are responsible stewards of public funds and effective, sustaining organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- Consistently meet its student enrollment and retention targets
- Annual budgets that meets all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- School leadership and Board that oversee financial and operational responsibilities in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to decision-making
- Boards and school leadership that maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- Consistently clean financial audits
- If applicable, strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of chartered school design and academic program
- A safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations

Evidence for a financially sound, viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School budget, P&Ls, and monthly/quarterly cash-flow reports
- Appropriate insurance documents
- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- Financial audits
- Financial leader(s) resume and accountability documents
- Operational policies and procedures
- Operational org chart
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- School safety plan

## **3. Is the School in Compliance with its Charter and All Applicable Law and Regulations?**

### **3a. Approved Charter and Agreement**

Schools in substantial compliance with their charter and agreement have:

- Implemented the key features of their charter as described in the original charter and as modified in approved revisions to their charter, including but not limited to mission, academic program, school organization, grade configuration, enrollment, goals, etc.
- Ensure that update-to-date charter is publicly available to staff, parents, and school community
- Implemented comprehensive academic, behavioral, oversight, management, and operational policies and procedures that are substantially aligned with the charter and the school's stated mission and vision

Evidence for a school's compliance with the terms of its charter and charter agreement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Authorized charter and signed agreement
- Charter revision request approval and documentation
- School mission
- School policies and procedures
- Site visits
- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership/board interviews

### **3b. Applicable Federal and State Law**

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law have:

- Met all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Comparable enrollment of FRL, ELL and Special Education students to those of their district of location *or* are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages
- Implemented school policies related to student discipline and promotion and retention that are fully compliant with laws and regulations related to students with disabilities and due process regulations
- Conducted independently verified fair and open lottery and manage with integrity enrollment process and annual waiting lists
- Employed instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and certification requirements

Evidence for compliance with applicable federal and state law may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School reporting documents
- School's Annual Report
- Student recruitment plan and resources
- Student management policies and promotion and retention policies
- Student discipline records
- Lottery policy, resources, and records; enrollment procedures and records
- Staff roster, fingerprint clearance for all staff, certification status of all instructional staff

### **3c. Applicable Regulations**

Schools in substantial compliance with applicable regulations have:

- Safe and secure facilities with no significant compliance concerns with applicable regulations
- Consistently clean annual audits, up-to-date escrow accounts, and have completed all other financial reporting as required
- Boards that meet requirements for size, meeting frequency, public notice, applicable open-meeting and conflict of interest regulations, as well as complying with NYC DOE CSO's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members.
- Informed NYCDOE CSO, and where required, received CSO approval for changes in significant partnerships, such as dropping/replacing a management organization
- Effectively engaged parent associations

Evidence for compliance with applicable regulations may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School or building safety plan; appropriate inspection documents
- Annual audits, escrow accounts, other financial reporting documents
- Board roster, calendar, agenda and minutes, conflict of interest documents, notification of changes/approval of new member request documents
- Charter revision requests, revised or new contracts
- Parent association calendar of meetings, identified officers, parent association agenda and minutes, parent satisfaction survey results
- Interviews

#### 4. What Are the School's Plans for its Next Charter Term?

##### 4a. School Expansion or Model Replication

In anticipation of a new charter term schools may be considering various growth options: replication, expansion to new grades or increased enrollment or altering their model in some significant way.

Successful schools generally have processes for:

- Conducting needs/opportunity assessments
- Forming Board and leadership committees or subcommittees to investigate options, develop action plans, ensure capacity and resources are aligned, etc.
- Engaging school community in articulating charter revisions (or a new charter in cases of replication) to address the proposed growth plans
- Ensuring that the final proposal is ambitious but realistic in its plans
- Creating a well-reasoned and documented prospective for the school's new charter term and, if applicable, a new charter proposal (for replication)

Evidence for likely success in planning for school growth in a new charter term may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Application Part I: Retroactive Analysis, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Application Part II: Prospective Analysis, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and Board interviews

##### 4b. Organizational Sustainability

Successful schools consistently perform despite change. While there is no single path for ensuring sustainability, successful schools often have the following features:

- School anticipates organizational opportunities/needs and plans for resource development (human resource policies for growing your own talent, for example, or fundraising or budget management to take care of anticipated capital needs and to mitigate risks for the unexpected, or board development to bring new talent or specific needs-based expertise to the school)

Evidence for organizational sustainability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Board roster and resumes
- Board committees and minutes
- School organization chart
- Staff rosters
- Staff handbook
- Leadership and staff interviews
- Budget

##### 4c. School or Model Improvements

Successful schools are thoughtful about the continued appropriateness of school design features and elements of their models. They:

- Review performance carefully and even if they don't make major changes through expansion or

replication, they are careful to adjust elements to ensure continued and improved success.

- Develop plans to improve the school learning environment, including improving their facilities to expand program offerings and/or developing new partnerships to further the school's mission.

Evidence for successful improvements to a school's program or model may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Application Part I: Retroactive Analysis, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Application Part II: Prospective Analysis, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and board interviews
- MOUs or contracts with partners