



Charter Schools Accountability and Support
2012-2013

HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE PROMISE ACADEMY II CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW REPORT

2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

Part 1: School Overview & History

School Overview and History

Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy II Charter School (HCZ Promise II) is an elementary and middle school serving approximately 590 students¹ in grades K-8 during the 2012-13 school year. It opened in 2005-06, and is under the terms of its second charter. The school will expand to Grade 9 in 2013-14 and the projected full grade span, if approved for renewal and continued expansion, is K-12, which it is expected to reach in 2016-17.² The school is currently fully located in public³ facilities at 2005 Madison Avenue in Manhattan within CSD 5⁴, but will locate students in grades 7-9 in private facilities, also in CSD 5, at 35 East 125th Street, NY, NY 10035 in 2013-14.⁵ The plan is for students in Grades K-6 to remain in public space going forward and for students in grades 7-12 to be in the private facility.

The table below details the school's performance on the NYC Progress Report.⁶

Progress Report Grade	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Overall	B	C	B	C
Student Progress	C	F	B	D
Student Performance	A	A	A	A
School Environment	C	A	B	C
Closing Achievement Gap Points	0	0	0	1.3

Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy II Charter School enrolls new students in grade K. There were 1,184 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2012 lottery.⁷

The average attendance rate for the 2012-13 school year to date is 94.1%.⁸

On the 2011-12 NYC DOE School Survey, HCZ: Promise II scored Below Average compared to all Elementary/Middle Schools in all four satisfaction domains: Academic Expectations; Communication; Engagement; and Safety & Respect. Participation on the School Survey was above city-wide averages with 94.0% of the school's parents, 96.0% of the school's teachers, and 100.0% of the school's eligible students responding to the survey.⁹

HCZ Promise II is in its second full charter term, having been renewed for five years in the winter of 2010.

The school has two principals, Kathleen Fernald, the principal of the Upper Elementary/Middle School (grades 4-8) and Sheryl Ragland, principal of the Lower Elementary School (grades K-3).

The school is given financial, operational, and academic support from its institutional partner, community based organization (CBO) the Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ). Support includes back office support, financial contributions, fundraising, facility use, food services, and other in kind contributions. School leadership reported that in fiscal year 2012, Promise Academy II received a total of 2.7 million dollars in financial and in kind support from HCZ.

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

² NYC DOE internal data.

³ NYC DOE internal data.

⁴ NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database.

⁵ Reported by school leadership, February 2013.

⁶ NYC DOE Progress Report – <http://schools.nyc.gov/progressreport>

⁷ Self-reported information from school-submitted Data Collection Form.

⁸ Self-reported information from school-submitted Data Collection Form.

⁹ 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 Framework¹⁰.

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,

¹⁰http://www.qualitycharters.org/assets/files/images/stories/pdfs/publications/Performance_Framework_Fall_2012_Draft.pdf, page 38-59

- Student, staff, and Board turnover,
- 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:

- Richard Larios, DOE
- Gabrielle Mosquera, DOE
- Kamilah O'Brien, DOE

On April 23, 2013 Sonia Park and Richard Larios observed a Board meeting and conducted a follow-up interview with Board Chairman Kenneth Langone and Board President Geoffrey Canada.

In addition, Richard Larios and Gabrielle Mosquera conducted an academically-focused visit to the school on May 23, 2013, accompanied by the following DOE staff:

- Sara Kaufman, DOE
- Sonia Park, DOE
- Laurie Price, DOE
- Lynnette Aqueron, DOE
- Jeanie Baik, DOE

Finally, the report includes information based on a meeting on June 5, 2013 between CSAS staffers Richard Larios and Kamilah O'Brien and Mark Moyer, interim Chief Financial Officer for Harlem Children's Zone and Sharleen Morris, Director of Student Services for Harlem Children's Zone.

Part 3: Findings

Summary of Findings

Based on CSAS review, the following findings are made. To date, the school:

- has partially demonstrated academic achievement and progress (pp. 6-10).
- has a partially developed governance structure and organizational design (p. 11).
- has partially developed a stable school culture (pp. 11-12).
- is in a strong overall position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on current practices, which include significant financial and in-kind support from its institutional partner, Harlem Children's Zone (p. 13).
- is in compliance with some applicable laws and regulations but not with others (p. 14).
- plans to continue its expansion to K-12 should its charter be renewed and expansion approved and complete a move for its grades 7-12 into private space with its elementary grades remaining in their current NYC DOE space (p.15).

This review, as noted in Part 2, included a desk audit of submitted documents, an observation of a Board meeting, an academic school visit, and a meeting with the Harlem Children's Zone interim CFO.

Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?

HCZ Promise II has partially demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

- In 2011-12, the school's performance on NYS state assessments demonstrated academic achievement, as it has in previous years, but did not demonstrate progress.

Achievement:

- In 2011-12, 56.1% of its students in its tested grades (3-7) scored at Level 3 or 4 on the NYS ELA assessment and 76.4% of its students scored at Level 3 or 4 in Math.
- As in past years, the school's overall 2011-12 proficiency scores were substantially above its district of location, CSD 5. In 2011-12 the school outperformed its district by 26.4 percentage points in ELA and by 37.4 percentage points in Math.
- In addition, overall proficiency scores were higher than citywide levels of proficiency.
- The school earned a grade of A for Performance on its 2011-12 NYC DOE Progress Report (page 2), as it has in each of the years of its current charter.

Progress:

- Overall proficiency scores, however, for both ELA and Math decreased by about 4 percentage points from the prior year: 60% to 56.1% in ELA and 81.1% to 76.4% in Math.
- The school received an Overall Grade of C on its 2011-12 NYC DOE Progress Report, with a D in Student Progress (page 2). The school's Student Progress grade has varied each year of the current charter term (C, F, B, D).
- In 2011-12 the school earned 1.3 Closing the Achievement Gap points on its Progress Report.

Progress Toward Attainment of Academic Goals¹¹

- The school, according to its 2011-12 Annual Report to the New York State Education Department (NYSED), met 7 of 15 of its charter-identified Progress Toward Attainment of Academic Goals.

Representatives of the CSAS team visited the school on May 23, 2013. Based on discussion, document review, and observation the following was noted:

- Leadership reported that the school instructional model includes a Lead Teacher and Teacher Assistant in each core classroom, a Math and ELA interventionist at each grade level (Grade 4, for example, where state assessments indicated need) or shared across two grades. There are special education staff members who provide push-in/pull out support. In addition there are Lower Academy and Upper Academy ELA and Math coaches providing support through classroom observations and feedback and professional development to teachers.
- Students receive additional support through after school program, in "Boost" classes, and tiered interventions.
- The school has a substantial assessment program to which this year it added iReady assessments in ELA and Math, which are administered four times a year and are Common Core aligned.
 - The school has three Data Days for review of iReady data; leadership reports the data review helps with grouping and identifying their 8-week interventions for Tier 2 and 3 of its Response to Intervention program.
 - School leadership reported iReady assessments in third administration indicated steady progress at grades 3 and 4 with larger gains in upper grades, particularly in reading.
 - The school uses benchmark assessments in ELA (Fountas & Pinnell Independent Reading Level assessments) and Math (Math in Focus) through Teacher's College, which increased the rigor in response to Common Core standards, performance assessments at start and end of units, on-demand writing assessments, Words Their Way (in grades 3 and 4), and classroom assessments.
 - Student data is stored in Infinite Campus.
- A total of 16 classrooms were observed with school instructional leaders during the visit:

¹¹ Goal analysis is considered a neutral point for the purposes of this evaluation.

- Students in observed classes were consistently on task and responsive to instructional direction from teachers.
- All observed classrooms had at least two adults in the room, typically a lead teacher and teacher assistant, but also at times special education support staffers pushing in or Math or ELA intervention teachers assisting. Approximately a third of observed classes had a third or fourth adult providing instructional support.
- Observed classes contained between 16 and 23 students.
- Varied methods of instruction were observed in the visited classrooms, including direct instruction, discussion (turn and talk, table discussion), small group and individual projects/activities within reading, writing and math workshop model.
- Multiple adults in rooms were used to varying degrees of efficiency/effectiveness, with teach and assist and teach and monitor being most frequently observed with the second adult watching or waiting (during prolonged Do Nows or direct instruction).
- Some levels of differentiation were observed, but in most classes students were observed receiving the same instruction with the same materials. In observed reading classes different groups of readers had different level readers and during ELA and Math stations, some stations had different resources or small group instruction that varied by group.
- Rigor of tasks and questioning varied with most observed questioning focused on basic comprehension with some explain your answer prompts; about a third of classrooms where questioning was observed reached for higher level application or synthesis level questions.
- All observed classrooms had ample instructional resources, including Smartboards, with walls that were print rich with instructional and behavioral supports, as well as student work posted.
- Required special education processes, including referrals and reviews, documentation, and staff certifications are in compliance. All staff working with Students with Disabilities have access to Individualized Education Program plans (IEPs). Ten outstanding annual reviews are scheduled to be completed before the end of school.

Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy II Charter School Percent of Students Scoring at or above Level 3 - Whole School					
	<u>ELA</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School		84.6%	62.1	60.0	56.1
CSD 5*		61.7%	29.3	31.2	29.7
	<u>Math</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School		98.4%	81.4	81.1	76.4
CSD 5*		74.7%	38.4	40.0	39.0

*CSD proficiency data throughout this report represents only common testing grades, for all years presented

Percent of Students Scoring at or above Level 3 - By Grade					
Grade 3					
	<u>ELA</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School		85.7%	66.7	55.7	44.6
CSD 5*		57.9%	32.9	28.6	30.3
	<u>Math</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School		100%	82.6	77.1	59.8
CSD 5*		82.8%	38.7	34.9	36.9

Grade 4					
	<u>ELA</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School		83.3%	50.0	62.3	71.6
CSD 5*		55.8%	27.8	33.2	29.1
	<u>Math</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School		96.6%	76.3	94.3	94.0
CSD 5*		70.5%	38.1	43.2	39.6

Grade 5					
	<u>ELA</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School			66.7	57.1	55.1
CSD 5*			27.2	32.7	30.9
	<u>Math</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School			84.8	65.1	84.5
CSD 5*			38.5	42.1	41.3

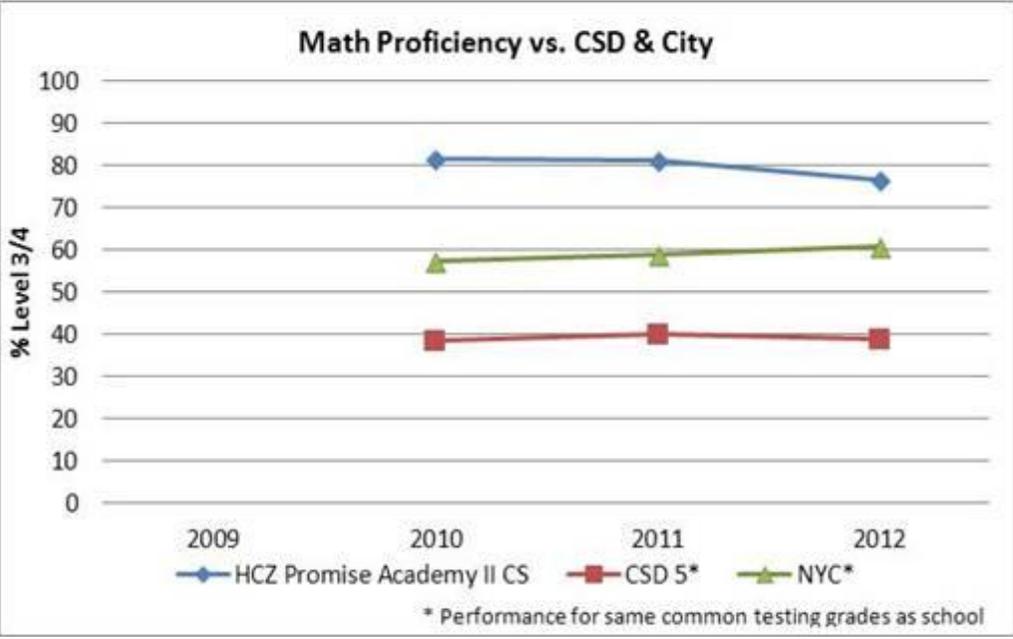
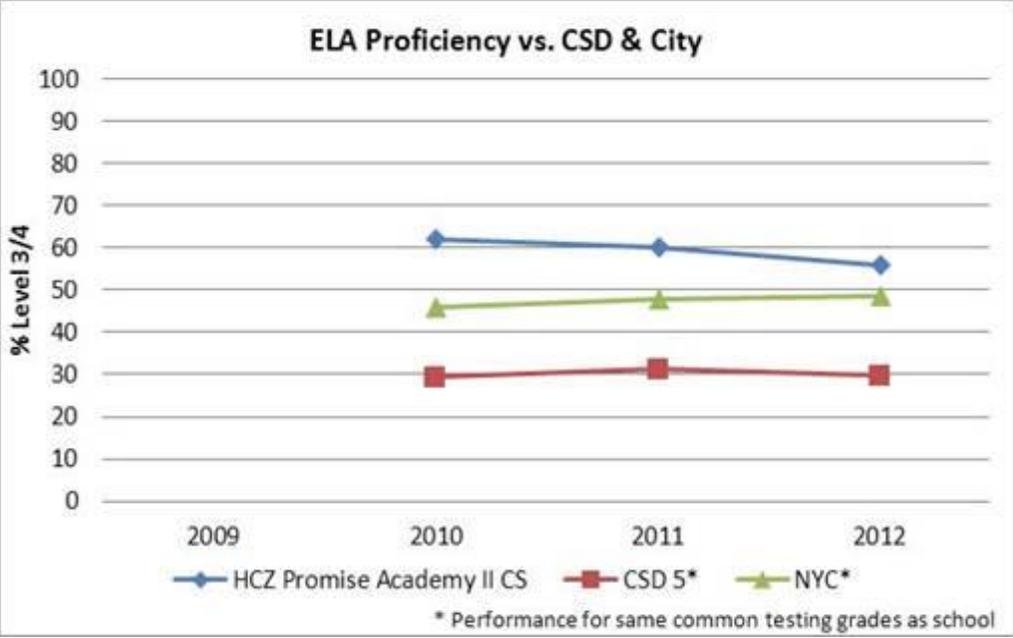
Grade 6

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
<u>ELA</u>				
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School			66.7	51.2
CSD 5*			30.1	31.6
<u>Math</u>				
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School			82.1	70.7
CSD 5*			39.7	39.5

Grade 7

	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
<u>ELA</u>				
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School				64.7
CSD 5*				26.5
<u>Math</u>				
HCZ Promise Academy II Charter School				76.5
CSD 5*				37.9

Grade 8: HCZ Promise Academy II will have its first 8th grade NYS Assessment results in 2012-13.



2011-2012 High School Regents Performance Results			
Harlem Children's Zone/Promise Academy Charter School			
Regents Exams	Average Score	% Passing	% at college ready threshold
Mathematics			
Integrated Algebra	77	98%	42%
Geometry	.	.	.
Algebra 2/Trig	82	88%	63%
ELA			
English	85	96%	91%
Social Studies			
US History	82	96%	
Global History	.	.	
1Science			
Chemistry	74	100%	
Physics	74	85%	
Earth Science	.	.	
Living Environment	.	.	
Languages			
Languages Other Than English	.	.	

Source: 2011-12 NYC DOE Progress Reports

Note: College-Ready threshold only applies to Math and ELA results; if less than 15 students take a particular Regents exam the results are not included on the PR.

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

Governance Structure & Organizational Design

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

- The Board's membership has been stable and Board votes consistently demonstrate a quorum, as indicated by meeting minutes available on the school's website¹².
- The Board has 11 Board members, including 3 officers and a parent representative.
- The officer positions outlined in the Board's bylaws are filled, as recorded in meeting minutes.
- The school's leadership team updates the Board on academic progress, with HCZ staff providing updates as well on financial and operational issues, as recorded by meeting minutes.
- The committees outlined in the Board's bylaws are active, as recorded in meeting minutes.
- The Board minutes and agenda items have been posted for inspection by the public.
- There are clear lines of accountability between Board and school leadership and Board and HCZ and school leadership and staff, as evidenced by school organization chart and performance updates to the Board.
- The Board had not held the required number of Board meetings in calendar year 2012, holding six of nine Board meetings, and from January 2013 to the time of this report, three meetings in the calendar year 2013.

School Climate & Community Engagement

The school has a partially developed school culture, with some elements strongly in place and others still developing.

- The school has had a stable school leadership team this year and throughout its current charter term.
- Student attendance for the current school year, as reported in the school's ACR data collection form, as of February 2013, is 94.1%.
- According to the school's ACR Data Collection Form, 26 students enrolled at the end of the previous school year did not return for the start of the current year.
- Participation in the NYC DOE School Survey was higher than citywide averages for Parents (94% to 53%), Teachers (96% to 82%), and Students (100% to 82%).
- The school, however, scored Below Average compared to other Elementary/Middle Schools in all four domains of the School Survey: Academic Expectations; Communication; Engagement; and Safety & Respect.
- Overall staff retention was reported by school leadership to be near 80% during the current school year.

Progress Toward Attainment of Accountability Goals¹³

- Student retention from 2011-12 to 2012-13 was 95% of students who did not leave the district returning to the school, which represents a met charter goal as reported in the school's 2011-12 Annual Report to NYSED on Progress Toward Charter Goals.
- Parent satisfaction results met goals established in the school's charter, as reported in the school's 2011-12 Annual Report to NYSED, but those for Teachers and Students did not meet charter goals.
- As reported in the school's 2011-12 Annual Report to NYSED, in 2011-12 the average student daily attendance rate was at 94%, one percent below the school's charter goal of 95%. (See above for 2012-13 attendance to date.)

¹² <http://www.hczpromiseacademy.org/>

¹³ Goal analysis is considered a neutral point for the purposes of this evaluation.

Based on interviews, observations and document review on the day of the visit, the following was noted:

- School leadership reported adding grade-level Deans to help with school culture this year and in response to results from the NYC DOE School Survey.
- School leadership also reported adding weekly character education classes, taught in the Lower Elementary School by Deans and classroom teachers together and in the Upper Elementary/Middle School by Deans, and taking measures to improve communication/collaboration between school and wraparound social services provided by HCZ to students and families.
- During the visit all observed transitions within classrooms and in hallways during the visit were orderly and efficient, with students moving freely from class to class or from one area of a room and another. One observation of inconsistent handling of a student running in the hall was noted, in which one teacher let the student run but a second teacher stopped and redirected the student to proper transition movement.
- Twelve teachers selected by the visit team were interviewed in one-on-one interviews. All interviewed staff noted an improvement in school culture and expressed appreciation for the work of the school deans on behavior and the work of the Math and ELA coaches as an instructional support.

Financial Health

Overall, the school is in a strong position to meet near-term financial obligations and is financially sustainable based on current practices, which include significant financial and in-kind support from its institutional partner, Harlem Children's Zone.

- The school is in a strong position to meet all of its liabilities in the next 12 months.
- The school is in a position to cover all its expenses for the foreseeable future without an infusion of cash.
- The school is meeting its debt obligations.
- The school has operated on a surplus of 12% over the past three years; however, 28% of its revenue comes from outside contribution. That revenue supports 12% of its programmatic expenses.
- The school has maintained a good debt to asset ratio that has declined over the past three years.
- The school has maintained a positive cash flow.
- The school has a fully funded escrow account and is in a strong position to meet its future debt obligations.
- The school is under-enrolled by 8%.
- However, on the school's most recent financial audit, a material weakness and a significant deficiency in the internal control over financial reporting was noted in numerous areas, including but not limited to its accounting staff, accounting for in-kind contributions and year-end accruals.

Based on the interview with HCZ interim CFO Mark Moyer and Director of Student Services Sharleen Morris on June 5, 2013, the following was noted:

- The CBO, which provides back office support to the school, made staffing changes to address the timeliness and quality of its financial audits, hiring the current CFO and a controller with expertise in accounting and audits for large organizations, both in the for-profit and non-profit worlds.
- The finance team has created an Audit Action Plan that is used to report monthly to the HCZ's Audit Committee and the school Board's finance committee on its response to audit findings. The team expressed confidence that all findings will be found to be resolved in the next audit.
- A monthly "soft close" to the school's books was implemented this year to improve quality control of financial data.
- Field work for next audit will begin on August 15, 2013 with financial documents preparation complete and of the required quality for review.
- According to Board leadership, HCZ's financial commitment to the school is strong in both the near- and long-term because the work of the charter schools is essential to the overall goals of the CBO. HCZ is building an endowment designed to ensure the sustainability of its contributions to Promise Academy I and II.

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

The Board and the school are in compliance with some applicable laws and regulations and out of compliance with others.

- The Board is in compliance with:
 - The Board's membership size falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws.
 - All Board members have submitted conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms and do not demonstrate conflicts of interest.

- The Board is out of compliance with:
 - The Board has not held the required number of Board meetings. The Board's bylaws state that 9 regular meetings shall be held each year in addition to its annual meeting in June. The Board held 5 regular meetings and 1 annual meeting in 2012.

- The School is in compliance with:
 - The school has appropriate staff with AED/CPR certification and has met the NYC Department of Health requirement for immunization completion rate of 98.8%.
 - The school has submitted appropriate insurance documentation.
 - The school has submitted appropriate teacher certification documentation and is compliant with state charter law requirements for teacher certification.
 - The school has submitted appropriate documentation for staff fingerprint documentation and all staffers have received clearance.

- The School is out of compliance with:
 - The school's independent financial audit was submitted several months after the November 1 deadline outlined in the NYS Charter Schools Act.
 - The school submitted several CSAS Accountability Reporting Requirements past their deadlines. Late submitted documents include the staff handbook, lottery policies and procedures, and a copy of the NYSED Annual Report Goals.

Based on interviews with Board leadership on April 23, 2013, and CBO financial leadership on June 4, 2013, the following was noted:

- Board leadership committed to complying in 2013 with conducting the number of meetings required in its bylaws.
- The Board and CBO's financial leadership have taken steps to ensure that the school's independent financial audits will be submitted on time in 2013.

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

According to school leadership, the school's plans for the next charter term, if renewed, include:

- To continue grade expansion until the school reaches its full proposed grade span as a K-12, which it would reach in the 2016-17 school year.
- In the fall of 2013, the school will move grades 7-9 into a private facility at 35 East 125th Street, HCZ's main building. As the school grows to its full grade span, the additional secondary school grades would be located in the private facility. The current DOE facility will continue to host the school's elementary grades, K-6.
- The school will continue to adjust and refine its instructional program to ensure alignment with New York State Common Core State Standards.

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