



Charter School Renewal Report  
Charter Schools Office  
2011-2012

**NYC CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL FOR ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING  
AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES  
ANNUAL SITE VISIT REPORT**

**MARCH 2012**

## Part 1: Executive Summary

### **School Overview and History:**

The NYC Charter High School for Architecture, Engineering and Construction Industries (AECI) is a high school serving approximately 389 students from ninth through twelfth grade in the 2011-2012 school year.<sup>1</sup> The school opened in 2008 with grade 9. The school is under the terms of its first charter, which expires February 11, 2013. The school has no plans for further expansion.<sup>2</sup> The school is currently housed in a private facility in District 7.<sup>3</sup>

The school enrolls new students in grades 9-11. There were 19 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2011 lottery.<sup>4</sup> The student body includes 95.4% Free and Reduced Lunch students, compared to 66.3% citywide; 12.4% special education students, compared to 19.8% in the district; and 12.9% English language learners, compared to 18.4% in the district.<sup>5</sup> The average attendance rate for the 2011-2012 school year to date was 90%.<sup>6</sup> The school scored Average on the Communication section of the NYC DOE School Survey in 2010-2011, Below Average on the Academic Expectations and Safety & Respect sections, and Well Below Average on the Engagement section; 53% of the school's parents responded to the survey, 90% of the school's teachers, and 88% of the school's students.<sup>7</sup>

The school will receive its first graded NYC DOE Progress Report in Fall 2012. In 2010-2011, 86% of tested students passed the Comprehensive English Regents exam, 57% passed the Integrated Algebra exam, 78% passed the Geometry exam, 46% passed the Global History exam, 61% passed the U.S. History exam, and 49% passed the Living Environment exam.<sup>8</sup> The high school has not yet had a graduating cohort. The school is in good standing with state and federal accountability.<sup>9</sup>

AECI is partnered with Victory Education Partners, an education management organization (EMO). The EMO provides academic support and evaluation, back office support, curriculum assessment and student assessment data gathering, among other financial supportive services. Working with and through the network, AECI manages student information via DOE's Automate the Schools (ATS) and collects per pupil funding through DOE. The annual budget is created by the Board of Trustees of the school. AECI is solely responsible for complying with all requirements of grants for the School, the School's governing charter, and all applicable laws.

### **Annual Review Process Overview:**

The New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Charter Schools Office (CSO) conducts an annual site visit of charter schools authorized by the NYC DOE. The site visit is designed to address 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, we also ask about the school's plans for its next charter term. The visits are conducted by representatives of the CSO and last the duration of one school day. The annual site visit begins with a meeting with the school leadership team. Afterward, the reviewers visit classrooms and hold brief meetings with available administrators and teachers. Areas of evaluation include, but are not limited to: academic goals and mission; curriculum and instruction; school culture and learning environment; assessment utilization; parent engagement; government structures and

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<sup>1</sup> Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 2/17/2012

<sup>2</sup> NYC DOE ATS system and charter agreement

<sup>3</sup> NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database

<sup>4</sup> Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 2/17/2012

<sup>5</sup> NYC DOE ATS system as of 4/3/2012

<sup>6</sup> Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 2/17/2012

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

<sup>8</sup> New York State Report Card – <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/>

<sup>9</sup> New York State Education Department - [www.nysed.gov](http://www.nysed.gov)

organizational design; community support; special populations; and safety and security. The site visit is intended to provide a snapshot of the school and reflects what was observed at the time of the visit.

The following experts participated in the review of this school on March 20, 2012:

- Daree Lewis, Director of Oversight, NYC DOE CSO
- Gretchen Tonnesen, Analyst, NYC DOE CSO
- Simeon Stolzberg, Consultant

## Part 2: Findings

### Areas of Strength:

- The school has established a warm, safe and orderly environment that is conducive to learning.
  - On the day of the visit, students in observed classes were attentive and respectful. Teachers had procedures and protocols in place, and students appear to have internalized them. For instance, teachers quickly gained students' attention when they needed to provide instructions and students raised their hands and waited to be called upon.
  - Transitions between classrooms were quiet and efficient, with staff monitoring students in the hallways. Schedules were adjusted mid-year to reduce needed movement through the building.
  - The school has implemented an Advisory program that provides students with a small group setting in which to discuss issues and develop a personal connection with an adult.
  - School leaders reported that as a result of moving the school into a single facility, they have developed a more unified culture with fewer behavior incidents. A new dean of students coordinates his work with the school's social worker and counselors.
  - Staff also noted that increased opportunities for extra-curricular activities have engaged students and built a sense of community.
  
- The school has devoted significant resources to supporting teachers and other staff.
  - Two new assistant principals have been hired to provide more consistent supervision and support for staff. Each is devoted to specific subject areas, and teachers appreciated their availability, feedback and suggestions. There is also some evidence that this has provided opportunities for more differentiated development for teachers.
  - The principal and assistant principals visit most classes regularly and provide a combination of informal and formal feedback. "Walk Throughs" use a one-page protocol and result in written comments and suggestions. Formal observations are conducted three times per year and include face-to-face conferences to discuss teacher performance and growth.
  - Victory Education Partners provides a regional academic director who delivers support and leadership development to the school. She is on campus once per week.
  - The school has included substantial time in its schedule for staff meetings and staff development, including grade team, department and whole school meetings. Grade teams meet weekly to plan Advisory lessons, discuss individual students and examine data. Department meetings provide opportunities to vertically align curriculum and instruction from grade to grade.
  - Students are released early on Fridays for staff development, which is organized by school leaders with an annual calendar of topics. Staff also reported opportunities to provide input in the professional development program. Topics reportedly covered this year include unit and lesson planning, question and assignment rigor, and differentiated instruction. Some training is differentiated by teacher experience; for example, a session was held specifically for new teachers to orient them to PowerSchool and use of data.
  
- The school is developing a coherent curriculum and aligning it state standards and its mission.
  - Teachers have developed curriculum maps and unit plans for each class. Some coordination of the curriculum across subjects is occurring, though it appears to be through informal discussions among teachers. Both school leaders and teachers noted efforts to begin aligning the curriculum to Common Core standards.
  - With direction from the school board's academic committee, the school recently revised its charter in order to develop four thematic classes, one for each grade, to address the school's focus on architecture, engineering and construction. The newly hired teachers

- are developing the innovative curriculum from scratch and making some efforts to coordinate it with other subjects.
  - As part of its college preparatory focus, the school has introduced two Advanced Placement courses and is increasing student participation in dual enrollment courses. School leaders are working with Monroe College to offer a dual enrollment class at the school this spring.
  - The school's social worker develops the curriculum for twice weekly advisory classes, which are facilitated by all staff. The curriculum incorporates career and college awareness.
- The school has devoted significant resources to meeting the needs of at-risk students.
  - The staff includes a social worker, guidance counselors, two Title 1 coaches in English and math, and a special education teacher.
  - Support for struggling students is provided through both push-in and pull-out services.
  - The school has implemented an "X Period" after school on Wednesday to provide targeted support to struggling students. Some students are assigned to X Period while others voluntarily attend for assistance. Additional interventions are provided on other days after school.
  - The school has implemented Castle Learning, an online program that provides students with individualized lessons in core subjects. The program provides staff with assessment data to inform instruction and interventions. Students can also access the program from home.
  - New classes have been created for students who failed their Regents exams. In addition, the school will be starting its Saturday program in April to provide Regents preparation classes.
  - The Pupil Personnel committee meets regularly to coordinate meeting the needs of students with disabilities and communication with the Committees on Special Education (CSE). A special education consultant provides support for the social worker and special education teacher.
- The school has systems in place to collect and analyze student performance data and uses to improve student achievement.
  - Teachers administer a range of formative and summative assessments to evaluate student mastery of key standards. Assessments include unit tests, mock Regents, Do Nows and Exit Tickets, writing prompts and rubrics. The Castle Learning supplemental online program also produces student performance data.
  - Based on incoming students' 8th grade scores, some students are placed into introduction to Algebra classes, and then take Integrated Algebra during 10th grade.
  - Administrators and teachers conduct item analysis to identify specific content and skills for re-teaching and remediation and identify students for interventions.
  - The school has provided staff development in the use of data and provides meeting time for teachers to examine results that inform planning.
  - Rubrics and substantive feedback were evident in student writing products displayed in classrooms.

#### **Areas of Growth:**

- The school should continue to enhance the rigor of instruction across all classes.
  - Students were for the most part consistently engaged by learning activities and on task in classrooms observed by evaluators. Students frequently volunteered answers and grappled with assignments.
  - Lessons were consistently purposeful and organized, but some classes demonstrated more challenging objectives than others. The level of questioning also varied across classes. In some classes, teachers asked open-ended questions and challenged students to explain their answers and demonstrate conceptual understanding. However, the quality of questioning was sometimes diminished by teachers who provided

inadequate time for responses or had a tendency to start paraphrasing student responses before they had been fully articulated. In other classes, teachers focused more on recall or procedural knowledge, and it was not evident that all students had developed conceptual understanding. The school should continue to focus professional development and coaching on designing and delivering rigorous instruction.

- Given relatively short class periods, not all lessons maximized time on task. For example, in some classes instructions or set-up could have been more efficient with more clearly written directions or prepared graphic organizers rather than students waiting for assistance or copying from the board. In one class students were given a challenging writing prompt at the end of the period: “Can a poem stand on its own without background knowledge of the poet?” However, students were given very little time to write before the teacher started asking them to share their response. A number of classes felt rushed at the end and had limited conclusion activities to summarize the lesson or explain next steps. The school should continue to focus on lesson plans and classroom observation feedback to support teachers’ development in this area.
- The school should continue to enhance a professional culture devoted to ongoing improvement.
  - Being located in separate buildings limited the cohesion of the staff and their ability to vertically align curriculum and instruction. Now that the school is in one space, it has the opportunity to use department and whole staff meetings to enhance vertical alignment and expose novice teachers to mentoring by more experienced teachers.
  - Teacher turnover, some during the school year, has limited the impact of staff development. With 17 new teachers this year, the school has a large number of teachers who are novices and/or new to the program. This required devoting significant time and energy to developing their basic pedagogical and classroom management skills. Going forward, higher teacher retention could allow the school to maximize its staff development efforts; thus, the school should focus on hiring practices and a professional work environment that support faculty stability.
  - The school has moved to an instructional leadership team of a principal and two assistance principals. Though most staff appreciated the consistency of their presence and support, their roles and responsibilities are not yet completely clear to staff. The school should continue to clarify those roles.
- The school is encouraged to explore ways to provide more subject-specific support to teachers.
  - Given the relative inexperience of a large proportion of the faculty, school leaders appropriately devoted much attention to basic pedagogy and classroom management, leaving less time and resources for subject-specific professional development.
  - Because of the small size of the school, there are only one or two teachers for each course, limiting opportunities for peer support found in larger schools. The school should consider opportunities for staff to meet or communicate with teachers in other schools.
  - Teachers noted the use of consultants in previous years who provided subject-specific guidance and training. Teachers noted that, though they generally appreciate the consistent level of support, the assistant principals do not have expertise in all of the areas they supervise. Consequently, feedback is often on teaching general skills rather than content. The school should explore opportunities for teachers to develop content knowledge and subject-specific pedagogical skills.
- The school should enhance communication with stakeholders regarding school-wide accountability goals to align its improvement efforts.
  - The school has clear, measurable goals and metrics that the administration is clearly monitoring. For example, they noted an increased focus on tracking cohort performance. School leaders described their focus on college readiness and exposure to careers, as well as implementation of programs to meet their goals, such as new classes, Saturday Academy, and Castle Learning.
  - Nevertheless, while staff are generally focused on raising Regents and course pass rates, teachers did not articulate a focus on measuring progress towards quantitative

benchmarks or final goals. In addition, they did not demonstrate urgency regarding the role of these goals in the school's accountability system. The school should enhance its use of school-wide data and accountability goals in professional development and coaching.

- The school should continue to work to improve its daily attendance rate.
  - The school's accountability goal is for an average daily attendance rate of 95%. However, it reported a current rate of 90%. School leaders did note their intention to hire an attendance person to focus on at-risk students.
  
- The school should continue to work to enroll and retain a student population that reflects the schools in its district.
  - Students with disabilities comprise 12.4% of school enrollment, compared to 19.8% in the district.
  - English language learners comprise 12.9% of school enrollment, compared to 18.4% in the district.

## Part 3: Essential Questions and Accountability Framework

### The CSO 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 Office (CSO) 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