



Charter School Renewal Report
Charter Schools Accountability and Support
2011-2012

HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE PROMISE ACADEMY I CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL SITE VISIT REPORT

MAY 2012

Part 1: Executive Summary

School Overview and History:

Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy I Charter School is an elementary/middle/high school serving approximately 940 students from kindergarten through eighth grade and eleventh through twelfth grade in the 2011-2012 school year.¹ The school opened in 2004 with kindergarten and grade 6. (The school revised its charter in 2007 to grow to its projected K-12 expansion more organically, with the intent that the existing cohorts that started in middle school would graduate out. The current 11th and 12th graders began as 6th graders at Promise Academy I. In 2012-13, the school will serve grades K-9 and Grade 12. In 2013-14, the school will serve grades K-10 and will expand from there to reach K-12 by the 2015-16 school year, should it be renewed following the expiration of its current charter.) The school is under the terms of its third charter, which expires August 10, 2014.² The school is currently housed in 3 locations: grades K-3 are located in a Department of Education (DOE) facility in District 5, which is co-located with P.S. 175 Henry H Garnet; grade 4 is located in a private facility in District 5; and grades 5-8 and 11-12 are located in a separate private facility in District 5.³

The school is internally divided into four smaller "schools," each with its own principal: Lower Elementary (grades K-4), Upper Elementary (grades 5-6), Junior High (grades 7-8), and High School (currently grades 11-12).

The school typically enrolls new students in kindergarten, but students were accepted from the waitlist in grades 2, 6 and 8 in the 2011-12 school year. There were 401 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2011 lottery.⁴ Because of the Harlem Children's Zone unique wraparound social support system, students apply for the Kindergarten lottery when they are three, if selected for Kindergarten when they turn five, they can apply with a preference for a seat in one HCZ's pre-K programs. The student body includes 86.8% Free and Reduced Lunch students, compared to 78.4% in the district; 12.8% special education students, compared to 16.7% in the district; and 1.5% English language learners (ELL), compared to 10.9% in the district.⁵ The average attendance rate for the school year 2011-2012 to date was 95%.⁶ The school scored Above Average on the Communication section of the NYC DOE School Survey in 2010-2011, and Average on the Academic Expectations, Engagement, and Safety & Respect sections; 69% of the school's parents responded to the survey, 97% of the school's teachers, and 90% of the school's students.⁷

The school earned a 'C' on the Elementary/Middle School NYC DOE Progress Report in 2010-11, a 'B' in 2009-10, and a 'B' in 2008-09. The school has not yet earned a grade on the High School NYC DOE Progress Report.⁸ The school outperformed its Community School District in each of the last three years on the state ELA and Math exams. The school outperformed the city averages in one of the last three years on the state ELA exam, and in each of the last three years on the state Math exam.⁹ In 2010-2011, 100% of tested students passed the Comprehensive English Regents exam, 90% passed the Geometry exam, 79% passed the Global History exam, 95% passed the U.S. History exam, 62% passed the Living Environment exam, and 66% passed the Earth Science exam.¹⁰ The high school has not yet had a graduating cohort. The school is in good standing with state and federal accountability.¹¹

Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy I Charter School is part of the Harlem Children's Zone network, a non-profit community based organization (CBO) that is the school's charter management

¹ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 4/1/2012

² NYC DOE ATS system and charter agreement

³ NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database

⁴ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 4/1/2012

⁵ NYC DOE ATS system as of 4/3/2012

⁶ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 4/1/2012

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

⁸ NYC DOE Progress Report – <http://schools.nyc.gov/progressreport>

⁹ NYC DOE website – <http://schools.nyc.gov/> (search: test results); District and city averages are for the grade levels corresponding to the school's testing grades in specified years

¹⁰ New York State Report Card – <https://reportcards.nysed.gov/>

¹¹ New York State Education Department - www.nysed.gov

organization (CMO). HCZ provides a variety of services and supports to Promise II. It provides back office support, food services, fundraising, and staffing and direct financial support. Parents and students have access to the CBO's various social services and access to the HCZ facility. The school pays no fee to HCZ. The CBO is committed to continuing its support

Annual Review Process Overview:

The New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Charter Schools Accountability and Support (CSAS) office 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 CSAS 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 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 May 17, 2012:

- Gabrielle Mosquera, Director of Oversight, NYC DOE CSAS
- Richard Larios, Senior Director, NYC DOE CSAS
- Debra Schwartzman, Senior Director, NYC DOE CSAS
- Scott Torres, Director of Operations, NYC DOE CSAS
- Lynnette Aqueron, Senior School Improvement Specialist, NYC DOE Division of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners
- Laurie Pendleton, Consultant to NYC DOE CSAS

Part 2: Findings

Areas of Strength

- The school has a strong, coherent and comprehensive instructional program.
 - On the 2011 NYS Math assessments, the percentage of Promise I students scoring at Level 3 or above significantly exceeded the percentage of CSD 5 students scoring at that level at all common tested grades (3-7). Promise I students scoring at proficient (Level 3 or above) in the Math assessment exceeded city-wide averages of proficiency at all common tested grades (3-7) except for grade 4, where 60.8% of Promise I students scored proficient compared to 62.3% city-wide.
 - On the 2011 NYS ELA assessment, the percentage of Promise I students scoring proficient exceeded the percentage of CSD 5 students scoring proficient at all common tested grade levels, except grade 7. In two of five tested grades (3 and 6), Promise I students scoring proficient exceeded city-wide averages.
 - The high school is focused on preparing students at all levels for the Regents exams and SATs. School leadership stated that at the time of the visit 99% of high school students had passed either the Living Environment or Earth Science Regents Exam.
 - Instruction in observed classrooms on the day of the visit appeared more consistent in focus, rigor, and execution than was noted by ASV team members who had visited the school this year and last.
 - Teacher content knowledge in observed classrooms appeared strong, particularly but not exclusively in junior high and high school mathematics and science classes.
 - Instructional aims were posted in most, if not all, of observed classrooms with many with appropriate grade level rigor.
 - Useful print resources were evident in the classrooms and students consistently referred to them for support.
 - School leadership reported a number of instructional adjustments, some common to all Promise I academies, other unique to a particular one, including the following:
 - The school's stated increased focus on writing across the curriculum and the use of non-fiction texts in response to Common Core expectations was in evidence in observed classrooms where students were asked to write responses to questions and create subject appropriate written pieces.
 - The Lower Elementary leadership identified an "all-star" team of teachers to work with struggling students in ELA and Math one hour a day during and after the school day. Teachers were identified based on classroom observations.
 - The Upper Elementary made curricular changes, replacing its math program with enVision Math and implementing the MacMillan/McGrawHill's Treasures Reading and Language Arts program and the Great Source Inside Writing program to provide teaching staff with more rigorous and Common Core supportive curriculum materials. They also wrote their own science and social studies curricula.
 - The Junior High doubled the length of its ELA periods, reduced teacher to student ratios by increasing instructional staff, and, by adding intervention teachers created an additional ELA class period for intervention.
 - In the High School, the ELA elective this school year focused on informational texts. Next year's incoming 9th graders will participate in AVID summer institute to prepare them for college prep high school program.
- The learning environment throughout the school was positive and focused on high expectations for both behavior and academics.
 - School leadership reported that it has adjusted curriculum and benchmarks in English Language Arts to meet the increased rigor of the New York State Assessments.
 - A hallway assembly at the elementary school was positive and energetic, and engaged students and staff.

- Transitions in the hallways were controlled, with students following expectations for behavior and responding positively to redirection when necessary.
- Student artwork was displayed throughout the school.
- The tone in observed classrooms was respectful and positive, both between teachers and students and among students, and was also focused on productivity and learning.
- In classrooms observed, there were common structures in place to engage students, including frequent use of accountable talk and turn-and-talk strategies.
- The school provides deliberate and substantive outreach and support to its lowest-performing students.
 - Each classroom observed had at least two teachers and in most classes staff was being used effectively to support students and to provide small-group instruction.
 - The Upper Elementary offers an additional hour of remediation or enrichment in mathematics every day.
 - The Upper Elementary school also added two math and two ELA intervention teachers who meet with students on a daily basis to provide direct instruction. Saturday Academy and after-school programs target struggling students and address their identified needs.
 - Three additional special education instructors have been added to the Junior High staff to support students with learning challenges.
 - Additionally, the Junior High has reduced its class size from 20 to 15-18 students and added an additional certified teacher in each classroom to meet student needs.
 - The Junior High has integrated an intervention period into the day to provide targeted instruction in reading to groups of no more than 8 students at a time.
 - Teacher lesson plans include strategies for providing differentiation and a number of classrooms provided differentiated materials and assignments for students.
- Special education program and systems are strong and in good order.
 - The special education expert on the visit team reported that the school had a good relationship with its local Committee for Special Education (CSE).
 - The school's records and case management were well maintained.
 - The school's special education team are all appropriately certified and capably supported by two coordinators, one school-based and the other working at the "district" level, across both schools, to ensure compliance support and leadership.
- The school reported improved use of student achievement data for instructional grouping and monitoring progress.
 - Students at the elementary level are assessed in reading every month. In addition, students in the 3rd and 4th grade are assessed using NYSTP ELA practice assessments. Students are assessed in Mathematics using the Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Math In Focus in Kindergarten through grade 4, with additional assessments in Grades 3 and 4 using the NYSTP practice exams. The school also uses Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessments to measure student reading levels.
 - The Upper Elementary tracks student performance on bi-weekly and bases its intervention and enrichment instruction on these measures. The 5th and 6th graders are also assessed using New York State Practice ELA and Math exams periodically.
 - Teachers indicated during interviews that they use data from multiple sources including exit slips, in-class assessments, and homework to determine student needs and areas of focus for lesson planning. Item analysis of these multiple assessments provides the basis for small-group instruction and re-teaching.
 - School leadership is knowledgeable about interim and long-range goals and the school's progress towards meeting those goals.
- The school evidences strong expectations for students to attend college and provides support for students' college transition.
 - At the time of the visit, all of the high school's 12th graders were graduating and had been accepted into college.

- The school plans to provide counselors and mentors who will continue to follow their alumni to ensure they will be successful in college.
- The school has provided informational meetings for parents to help them navigate college acceptance and financial aid.
- The school has established a Senior Seminar program for students to share their concerns regarding college with school and Harlem Children's Zone staffers, and plans to offer pre-college programming during the summer for transitioning students.
- The relationship with the Harlem Children's Zone ensures resources, both human and material are abundant and has served the school well.
 - HCZ provides a full "district central office" suite of back office and operational support services so that the school's principals can focus on the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms and student achievement.
 - HCZ provided Promise II with \$6.2 million in the 2011 fiscal year¹². These additional funds help the school in a variety of ways with staffing and instructional resources to address needs and to provide additional supports for students and families. The funding also supports the operational needs of the school, again allowing more of the school-generated per pupil funding to be used for educational support.
 - The low instructional staff-to-student ratios help ensure that students have access to significant attention and support.
 - HCZ, through fundraising and board endowments, is in a strong financial position and has the financial well-being to continue to provide its partner schools with the financial support they have to date into the future.
 - During teacher interviews, instructors commented on the abundance of resources available to them.
 - Classrooms had a variety of resources and technology use was in evidence.

Areas of Growth

- The school should continue to refine its instructional resources and practices to accelerate progress for all students.
 - While the school has consistently outperformed the district in ELA and Math, and the city in all but one grade in Math, its proficiency levels in ELA were below city-wide averages in grades 4, 5, and 7, three of the five common tested grades.
 - The school's Student Performance grades over the past three Progress Reports have been largely positive ("A" in 2009, "C" in 2010, and "B" in 2011), its Student Progress grades have been weaker ("D" in 2009, "C"s in 2010 and 2011). Student Progress assesses individual increases in student NYS assessment results as compared to the gains other students who received the same score as they did. The more students who show gains greater than others in their individual peer group the stronger the Student Progress grade.
 - While on the day of the visit observed classrooms generally used instructional staff effectively, the school should continue to identify best practices in the use of co-teachers to ensure this resource leads to more sophisticated instructional targeting of small group and individual students.
 - Although the content was rigorous in most of the classrooms visited, instruction was mostly teacher-dependent and the balance between teacher talk and student work would have benefited with more student processing and practice of intended learning, including more student-to-student interaction.
 - Although students in observed class were almost always on-task and responsive to teacher direction, student engagement in classrooms visited was inconsistent. The school should encourage teachers to employ more strategies that provide meaningful peer to peer interaction and deeper levels of student engagement.

¹² Self-reported on school's Annual Site Visit Self-Evaluation April 2012

- Teachers interviewed commented on the need for additional vertical and cross-curricular alignment tied to curriculum work on Common Core.
- The school should continue to refine its use of data.
 - Leadership and staff have embraced the use of data to support instruction and monitor student progress and use data to effectively group students and target students for intervention help. The school is encouraged to enhance its use of data to more specifically and frequently target individual learning needs, allowing for more flexible grouping and differentiation, not just by time and attention in small groups but by the targeted content, instructional activities, and skills. In many observed classrooms, students received same instructional content and had same activities with a different level of teacher attention depending on group size and assigned adults.
 - Teachers should be encouraged to use planning time and expertise of co-teachers to collaborate in including more data and more targeted differentiation into their planning and instruction.
 - Instructional staff should identify ways for students to take ownership of their achievement data by creating goals and tracking their own progress.
- The school should continue to identify and norm effective practices across its grade configurations.
 - On the day of the visit there was inconsistency in the posting and use of aims in the classroom.
 - Teachers interviewed in the Upper Elementary shared that the video-taping of lessons and subsequent analysis was very helpful. The school may consider expanding this process to other academies.
- The school should consider ways to enhance its use of instructional technology to support effective instruction and individualized learning.
 - SMART boards in observed classrooms was most commonly used by teachers to present content to students and the school should consider how professional development might help develop additional strategies for SMART board use, including ways to effectively and efficiently involve students in their use.
 - The school is encouraged to ways to identify effective strategies for involving students in more meaningful use of all of its robust instructional technology tools. Instructional leaders and teacher planning groups, for example, can be used to identify best practices that can be shared out or identify external professional development opportunities for effective tech users to attend and turnkey promising strategies and techniques.
- While financial health of the school and overall operations appear sound, school has struggled with some operational compliance matters and needs to review its processes and procedures to ensure that the routine happens routinely.
 - The school's last two financial audits have been submitted extremely late, with the most recent one, due in November 2011 per New York charter law, not yet submitted at the time of the visit in May.
 - HCZ and the school's appropriate leadership/staff should take measures to ensure that the 2012 audit is delivered on time.
- The school is encouraged to consider the sustainability of its current staffing structure.
 - The school appears to have high teacher turnover (approximately 58% in the 2010-11 school year).¹³ Although the school's leader team suggests the turnover was due to a lack of fit with the school's expectations; the school should consider exploring reasons for staff departure to identify possible areas of concern.
- The school should continue to should continue to enact measures to be in full compliance with the 2010 amended Charter Schools Act as it relates to recruitment and retention of Special Education students, students eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch, and ELL students. The school's

¹³ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 4/1/2012: 85 of 147 instructional staff from previous year either let go or chose not to return

proportions of two of these high-needs groups is strong, with the percentages of students eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch (86.8%) and Special Education students (12.8%) being comparable or close to comparable to those of the District 5 (78.4% for Free or Reduced Price Lunch; 16.7%, for Special Education).

- However, the school's student population currently includes 1.5% English language learners (ELL) which is significantly lower than the district average of 10.9% ELL.

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