



Charter Schools Accountability and Support
2012-2013

CHALLENGE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW REPORT

2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

Part 1: School Overview & History

School Overview and History

Challenge Preparatory Charter School (Challenge Prep) is an elementary school serving approximately 348 students¹ in grades K-3 during the 2012-2013 school year. It opened in 2010-2011, and is under the terms of its first charter. The school's projected full grade span, if approved for renewal and continued grade expansion, is K-8, which it's expected to reach in 2014-2015.² The school incubated for most of its first two years of operation in a DOE space but is now located in private³ facilities at 7-10 Hartman Lane, Far Rockaway, NY 11691 in Queens within CSD 27.⁴

The school has not yet received a NYC DOE Progress Report but will receive its first in the fall of 2013 for the 2012-2013 school year.

Challenge Preparatory Charter School enrolls new students in grades K-3. There were 449 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2012 lottery.⁵ In 2012-13, the school, in collaboration with the NYC DOE, expanded its enrollment to take an additional section of students at grades 1, 2, and 3.

The average attendance rate to date for the 2012-2013 school year is 93%.⁶

On the 2011-2012 NYC DOE School Survey, the school scored Above Average compared to other Early Childhood Schools citywide on the Academic Expectations, Community, and Engagement sections and Average on the Safety & Respect section. Participation was above citywide averages, 76.0% of the school's parents and 100.0% of the school's teachers responded to the survey.⁷

The current school principal, LaToiya Tolliver-Revell has been at the school since the school opened. For the 2012-2013 school year the school added the positions of CEO and AP of Curriculum/Instruction, Dr. Les Mullings and Petreno Morris-Hylton, respectively.

The school suffered significant direct damage due to Super Storm Sandy and was closed an additional eight days due to the effects of the storm on the Rockaways, from October 29th to November 14th. The storm also affected students and staff, significant numbers of whom were re-located as consequence of damage to homes and local power and transportation.

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

⁶ Self-reported information from school-submitted Data Collection Form.

⁷ 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 Framework⁸.

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,

⁸http://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 noncompliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Staff Representatives

The following staff representatives participated in the review of this school's documents as detailed above and/or conducted a finance-based monitoring visit to the school on May 6, 2013:

- Richard Larios, DOE
- Kamilah O'Brien, DOE
- Gabrielle Mosquera, DOE
- Jose Castro, NACSA Fellow

Part 3: Findings

Summary of Findings

Based on CSAS review, the following findings are made. To date, Challenge Preparatory Charter School:

- has not yet demonstrated academic achievement and progress (p. 6).
- has a developed governance structure and organizational design (p. 7).
- has developed a stable school culture (p. 7).
- is in a weak position to meet near-term financial obligations but is financially sustainable based on current practice; it is also noted that the school, which suffered significant damage in the fall of 2012 due to Super Storm Sandy, managed the financial consequences of the storm's damage (p. 8).
- is compliant with applicable laws and regulations (p. 9).
- has plans to expand to middle school (p. 10).

This review included a desk audit and a financially focused visit and follow up communication via email. CSAS visited the school on May 6, 2013.

Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?

To date Challenge Preparatory Charter School has not yet demonstrated academic achievement and progress.

- The school has not yet received a graded NYC DOE Progress Report.
- The school did not participate in the NYS Assessment system until the spring of 2013 when its first third grade cohort did so, and therefore has no state assessment results at the time of this report.

Progress Toward Attainment of Academic Goals⁹

- According to its Annual Report to NYSED, the school met 2 of 3 of its applicable academic charter goals.

Based on document review, the following was noted:

- The school leadership reported that they met their three mid-year internal assessment goals for the 2012-2013 school year.
 - DIBELS – 76% of scholars reached proficiency on the DIBELS Benchmark Middle of Year assessment. The internal goal was 75%.
 - Reading 3D (Text Reading and Comprehension) – 77% of scholars performed at or above proficiency by the middle of year Reading 3D assessment. The internal goal was 75%.
 - Pearson Envisions Math Benchmark – 79% of scholars performed at or above the benchmark level of 75% by the middle of year Pearson Envision Benchmark.
- In response to the previous years running record data, the school expanded the Reading Rescue Intervention Program by training 10 additional staff members as Reading Rescue tutors. The school reported significant gains, 11.7 on average, among the students who participated.
- The school implemented a Response to Intervention program during the current school year to provide behavioral and academic support and help reduce the number of suspensions and holdovers.

⁹ Goal analysis is considered a neutral point for the purposes of this evaluation.

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

Governance Structure & Organizational Design

The Board of Trustees has a developed governance structure and organizational design.

- The Board has been stable in membership since school's founding. Les Mullings, founding Board Chair was hired by the school's Board to become the school's Chief Executive Officer in July of 2012. In November 2012, the CEO resigned from the Chair position and became a non-voting *ex officio* member of the Board. Linda S. Plummer, previously Board Secretary, was elected Board Chair to succeed.
- With the resignation of Board Member David Hooks to run for public office, the Board has 6 voting members and one non-voting member.
- The Board meets monthly and has met monthly since July 2012 through the time of this report, excluding December. Additionally, minutes show that one board meeting (January 2013) was changed to an informational meeting because the Board did not have a quorum on that occasion. Quorum was reached at all other Board meetings, as recorded in meeting minutes on the school's website¹⁰.
- 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 as well as financial and operational issues, as recorded by meeting minutes.
- The committees outlined in the Board's bylaws are active, as recorded in meeting minutes.
- There are clear lines of accountability between Board and school leadership and school staff as evidenced by the school's organization chart and school leadership's monthly updates on academic and operational performance to the Board and its committees, as recorded in Board meeting minutes.
- The Board makes minutes and agenda items available to the public upon request prior to or at Board meetings by posting them on the school website.

School Climate & Community Engagement

The school has developed a stable school culture.

- The school's leadership has remained stable since the school's founding. The school recently added, as noted above, the position of CEO, which was filled by Dr. Les Mullings.
- The school reported that 96% of teachers returned from the previous year and that virtually all of its founding staff continue to work at the school.
- Student enrollment is stable, with 2% of students choosing not to return at the end of the 2011-12 school year or leaving during the current school year.
- NYC DOE School Survey results were Above Average for Academic Expectations, Communication, and Engagement and Average for Safety & Respect. Participation on the School Survey was above citywide averages for Parents (76% to 53%) and Teachers (100% to 82%).
- According to the school's ACR Data Collection Form, the school's average daily attendance as of February 2013 was 93%. The decline from previous years' attendance can be attributed to the effects of Super Storm Sandy.

Progress Toward Attainment of Accountability Goals¹¹

- According to its Annual Report to NYSED the school met its attendance goal of 95% with a 2011-12 average daily attendance of 96%. (See above for 2012-13 average daily attendance to date.)

¹⁰ <http://www.challengeprepcharter.org/>

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

Financial Health

Currently, the school, which suffered significant damage to its private facility due to Super Storm Sandy, is in a weak position to meet near-term financial obligations but is financially sustainable based on current practices.

- Challenge Prep cannot cover its liabilities over a 12 month period, however is in a slightly upward trend over the past two years.
- The school does not have enough cash on hand to cover more than two days' worth of expenses, the minimum is 30 days.
- The school is not in a strong position to cover its long term debt.
- The school is meeting its enrollment, indicating a stable revenue stream.
- The school is meeting its debt obligation.
- The school is operating with a small surplus.
- Challenge Prep has a good debt to asset ratio indicating that they own more than they owe.
- The school has consistently generated a positive, although small, cash flow.
- The school received a clean financial audit with no material findings.

Based on document review and an interview during the May 6th visit to the school, the following was noted:

- The school is located in a low lying area and its newly constructed private facility was heavily damaged during Super Storm Sandy, which had direct impact on the school's budget.
 - The school had to replace damaged kitchen equipment, classroom furniture, computers, Promethean boards. The school also purchased a generator as preparation for any future emergencies.
 - The school received \$30K insurance money to replace damaged items, which not counting the cost of the generator was less than half of the incurred damage, and has applied for a FEMA public assistance grant to cover the shortfall.
 - The school is working with the Small Business Administration to do mitigation on the building to prevent damage from future natural disasters such as installing water proof doors, raising the boiler and establishing a high stand for the generator.
 - The school will be implementing budget cuts in order to balance the budget.
- The school has a \$50K line of credit to cover payroll in the event of financial shortfall.
- While the financial analysis above is based on the school's pre- Super Storm Sandy 2012-13 Audited Financial Statements, indicating a near term financial risk, it is important to note that when the storm hit the Rockaways the school successfully managed the near term financial consequences of the storm.

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

To date, the school is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

- 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.
 - The Board has held the number of board meetings outlined in its charter.
 - The Board and school have provided timely submissions of accountability reporting documents to the CSAS team.
 - All Board members have submitted conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms and do not demonstrate conflicts of interest.

- The school is in compliance with:
 - The school has submitted required documentation for staff-fingerprint clearance and all staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.
 - The school has submitted required documentation for teacher certification and is compliant with state requirements for teacher certification.
 - The school has the required number of staff with AED-CPR certification.
 - The school has submitted appropriate insurance documentation.
 - The school submitted its required immunization documentation and is in compliance with Department of Health standards of 98.8% for immunization.

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

As reported by the school leadership and the school's Board, the following was noted:

- The school plans to expand to middle school and is working in conjunction with the DOE to develop a facility.

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