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Chancellor

CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION

Part 1 (Retrospective Analysis)

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NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Overview

In the final year of its charter, a Chancellor-authorized charter school seeking renewal must demonstrate its success during the initial charter term and establish goals and objectives for the next charter term. The renewal process offers an opportunity for the school to reflect on its experiences during its first term; to make a compelling, evidence-based case that it deserves an additional charter term; and, if renewed, to build an ambitious plan for the future.

The application for renewal consists of two parts: Part 1, the “Retrospective Analysis,” completed in the fall of the final year of a school’s charter, and Part 2, the “Prospective Plan,” submitted in the spring.

While submitting the retrospective analysis, a school must present a compelling, evidence-based case that it has been successful during its initial charter term. The Charter School Office (CSO) will review the application and the Chancellor will make a preliminary decision on whether the school’s charter should be renewed, the length of the new term and any other conditions for renewal.

After the Chancellor’s decision, the school will submit Part 2 of the renewal application, in which the school presents a plan for the term of its next charter, including ambitious, measurable, and attainable goals as well as any conditions set for the school by the Chancellor. This bifurcated application structure is intended to clearly distinguish between a school’s report on its past performance (Retrospective Analysis) and its future plans (Prospective Plan). In order to ease the renewal planning process, the applications are designed to be completed over the course of several months.

Renewal Application Timeline & Process

Timeline		Renewal Component	Explanation
Fast-Track	Standard		
<u>DUE:</u> May 3, 2010	<u>DUE:</u> July 5, 2010	Part I of Renewal Application (Retrospective)	The applicant school submits the Retrospective Renewal Application to the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE) Charter School Office (CSO)
<u>DUE:</u> May 3, 2010	<u>DUE:</u> Sep. 13, 2010	Submit documentation for Renewal Visit	This documentation will help the Renewal Inspection Team prepare for the visit in a meaningful way.
Between May 18 – June 18, 2010	Between Sept. 20 – Dec. 15, 2010	Renewal Visit	A NYCDOE Team will visit the school for 2 days to verify and augment the information presented by the school in its written application.
July 16, 2010	Dec. 22, 2010	Recommendation to Chancellor & Renewal Report	Based on the application, on-site visits, previous oversight findings, and other information, CSO prepares a draft report of its findings and shares it with the school. CSO may also request additional information from the school. The school has the opportunity to review the draft report for factual errors and provide comment within one week of its receipt of CSO draft report. CSO reviews comments and prepares a Renewal Recommendation Report to submit to the Chancellor.
<u>DUE:</u> July 16, 2010	<u>DUE:</u> Dec. 15, 2010	Part II of Renewal Application (Prospective)	The school submits the Prospective application, incorporating conditions for renewal.
July 30, 2010	Dec. 10, 2010	Chancellor’s Decision Part I	The Chancellor makes a preliminary decision as to whether the charter is renewed, the term of the new charter, and any renewal conditions.
Aug. – Sept.	Dec. – Jan.	Public Hearing	Per the NY Charter Schools Act, a public hearing must be held to solicit comment on the possibility of the charter renewal.
July – Aug.	Dec. – Jan.	Clarifications	NYCDOE & NYSED will request clarifications regarding the Prospective Application.
Aug. 15, 2010	Jan. 30, 2011	Chancellor’s Decision on Part II	If the Chancellor approves Part II (Prospective), he will formally approve the complete application and request that the school send the proposed renewal charter agreement to the New York State Education Department (“NYSED”).
Aug. 15, 2010	Jan. 30, 2011	Forward to SED	Once the school has incorporated clarifications into its renewal charter, it will be asked to forward several hard copies of the document, along with a new charter agreement and a letter from the Chancellor, to the NYSED for review.
October / November 2010	April 2011	Decision by New York State Education Department	NYSED will consider the Chancellor’s recommendation for the proposed renewal charter and decide to reject or to recommend the proposed charter to the New York State Board of Regents. Once a proposed renewal charter agreement is forwarded to the Board of Regents, the Board of Regents shall have sixty days in which to act to approve the proposed charter renewal agreement, and thereafter to issue a charter for the term specified.

Retrospective Analysis (Part 1) Basic Requirements

Consistent with the requirements of Section 2851.4 of the New York State Charter Schools Act, a school applying for renewal of its charter must use data and other credible evidence to prove its success, a case that can be segmented into three questions:

1. Has your school been an academic success?
2. Has your school been a viable organization?
3. Has your school complied with applicable laws and regulations?

A school will answer these overarching questions by demonstrating that its students have made significant academic progress and that the school has met the goals and objectives pledged in its initial charter. In addition, the school will describe challenges it has faced during its charter term, the strategies that were used to address those challenges and the lessons learned. Part 1 is entirely retrospective; in this phase, a school may not include any plans to be implemented after the application has been submitted or in the next term of its charter. It is recommended that a school dialogue with CSO throughout its preparation in order to prepare a robust and convincing Part 1 application.

1. Has your school been an academic success?

The academic success of students is the clearest indicator of a school's efficacy. The Charter Schools Act requires that a school applying for renewal must report academic success based on achievement of the educational goals established in the charter [Ed.L. §2851(4)(a)]. However, CSO recognizes that a school deserves the opportunity to present additional types of evidence beyond those established in the charter to demonstrate the academic success of its students. CSO therefore requires that schools complete and, if desired, supplement the data templates that will be forwarded to all schools to present a more nuanced and complete picture of student progress (Section II.C). Schools may also present their evidence of academic success in additional ways that capture other school assessments.

The school will also reflect on its first term and describe practices that have yielded successful student outcomes, and will identify challenges it has faced related to academic progress. In these cases, the school must describe those challenges, how the school has addressed them during its initial charter and prior to its submission of the renewal application, and evidence that those efforts have been successful. In this section, the school may not introduce what it will do during the next term of its charter; its not-yet-implemented plans can only be described in Part 2 of the application.

2. Has your school been a viable organization?

Charter schools, apart from being accountable for the educational achievement of their students, are also expected to be effective organizations. Evidence of a well-functioning school includes its students' achievements on non-academic indicators as well as effective board governance and organizational practices, and sound financial policies.

In addition, the Charter Schools Act mandates that a school provide evidence of student and parent satisfaction to indicate the school's educational and administrative effectiveness [Ed.L. §2851(4)(d)]. To satisfy this requirement and to enable the NYCDOE to provide summative and comparative data on parent satisfaction in Chancellor-

authorized charter schools, CSO recommends that schools measure the satisfaction of their students' parents with, at a minimum, the NYCDOE Learning Environment Survey.

Finally, the school will identify challenges it has faced related to organizational viability based on its experiences, the school's annual reports, and oversight findings by CSO or the NYSED. In these cases, the school must describe those challenges, how the school has addressed them during its initial charter and prior to its submission of the renewal application, and evidence that those efforts have been successful. As with all sections of Part 1 of the renewal application, the school may not respond to the targeted areas of concern by describing what it will do during the next term of its charter; this it may only do in Part 2.

3. Has your school complied with applicable laws and regulations?

Although charter schools are exempt from many regulations that apply to other public schools, they are expected to adhere to applicable state and federal laws. As in the previous two sections, the school will identify challenges it has faced, how those targeted areas have been addressed during its initial charter, and evidence that those efforts have been successful.

Next Steps

After a charter school has submitted its Retrospective Analysis, CSO will review the application, and if the application is complete, will conduct a site visit to verify and supplement the information in the application. If the school's application is incomplete, it may be returned to the school. Based on the school's application, the renewal site visit, and previous oversight reports, CSO will prepare a draft of its findings to share with the school for comment, and will ultimately submit a renewal recommendation to the Chancellor—whether the school should receive a renewal charter, and if so, under what conditions and for what term length up to five years.

Supporting Documents and Evidence

While there is no limit on the number or size of additional attachments, it is common sense that there is little if any correlation between the volume of information a school provides and the persuasiveness of its case. We therefore urge applicants to be judicious in their choices and selections. We also urge applicants to provide information as an additional attachment only if that information is referenced specifically in the responses. Finally, note that some materials may be better brought to the attention of CSO during its renewal visit rather than included in the application. For example, if you are discussing the strength of your portfolio system in response to Section II.C (Demonstration of Other Meaningful, Measurable, and Reliable Student Academic Accomplishments), it may be more efficient to simply note that writing samples from classes are available at the school rather than trying to attach volumes of such student work to the application itself.

Assistance from the Charter School Office

Schools are encouraged to contact CSO with any questions about accessing or organizing DOE data, and to ensure that the presentation of any internal data is sufficiently clear, reliable, and valid.

Application Instructions for Part 1

- You are responsible for completing and submitting Part 1 of the Renewal Application by email and in 2 CD copies to the NYCDOE Charter School Office by 5:00pm on July 5, 2010. You must also submit your application, including exhibits, electronically in Microsoft Word. If the Application is incomplete or insufficient, it may be returned, thereby prolonging the renewal process.
- Your application, not including Exhibits, should be between 20 and 30 pages.
- Each copy of your application should have a Table of Contents and tabs for each section, including exhibits.
- Each copy must contain all sections of the application. All pages must be single spaced, using at least 11 size fonts.
- Respond to each request for information according to its associated roman numeral, lettering, and numbering. [For example, your answer to Part 1, Section III, *Is Your School a Viable Organization*, B. Indications of Parent and Student Satisfaction, should be labeled “1.III.B.”].
- You may use data provided to you by CSO, NYCDOE, or SED, either directly or via the organizations’ websites, and all sources should be cited. Any data generated by your school should include citations of the sources of that data.

This application is available on-line at <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>.

Completed Applications Must Be Submitted To:

New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE)
Charter School Office
Attention: Charter School Renewal Application
52 Chambers Street, Room 413
New York, New York 10007

Electronic copies should be submitted to:
CharterSchools@schools.nyc.gov

**SECTION I:
Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary should provide a concise and concrete overview of Part 1 of the application for renewal. While the thrust of the Executive Summary should reflect the emphasis of the application itself (i.e., the school's record of improving student achievement), you should summarize your school's progress in each of the categories outlined in the Table of Contents.

This section can be no more than two (2) pages in length.

SECTION II:
Has Your School Been an Academic Success?

A. Demonstration of Achievement of Charter Academic Goals and Objectives

Please describe your school's achievement of each of the academic goals and objectives stated in your school's charter. For each goal:

1. Restate the goal as it is written in your charter.
2. Indicate whether the goal has been met (yes/no).
3. Provide specific, reliable, and valid evidence of your school's attainment of the goal (if it has been met) or progress toward the goal (if it has not been met). Please present evidence in succinct language and clear formats with explanation when appropriate.
4. If the goal has not been met, explain what action the school took to address this goal, the school's understanding of why the goal was not met, and what the school has learned about how to best reach the goal. This description of action taken by the school must be limited to the term of the initial charter preceding submission of the renewal application and may not include action the school plans to implement after the date of submission, or if the charter were renewed.

B. Additional Analyses of Student Achievement

The renewal of your school's charter will be based largely on whether your school has met the goals and objectives stated in your charter (Section I). These goals may address the longitudinal (value-added) achievement of student cohorts, promotion, transfer, and dropout rates, and may include comparisons to the achievement of students enrolled in similar New York City schools (as determined by Progress Report peer groups), Community School Districts, or citywide. If your goals in Section I did not sufficiently capture your school's student achievement in these important ways, the purpose of this section is for you to present such analyses. Providing this additional data on your school's progress enables the school community to have a clear internal understanding of its own progress and equips the NYCDOE to make a renewal decision based on a complete understanding of your school.

Regardless of whether you performed such analyses in Section I, you are required to complete the data charts provided in Attachment 1 and those sent to each school electronically, include them in your exhibits, and summarize the results in this section. These analyses capture the following indicators of successful schools:

Grades K-8

- Attendance rate
- Grade promotion rate
- Attrition rate
- Value-Added growth on standardized tests

Grades 9-12

- Attendance rate
- Course promotion rate
- Transfer, dropout, and graduation rates
- Regents passing rates
- Credit accumulation rates

If you did not do so as part of Section I, you are encouraged to present your school's student achievement using analyses comparing your achievement to the following groups:

- Similar Schools (Progress Report Peer Groups)
- Community School District in which charter school is located
- City

Finally, you may wish to present supplemental charts in order to present results of additional types of student assessments used at your school. You are strongly advised to discuss the presentation of this data, along with that of any additional assessments, with CSO before submission.

C. Demonstration of Other Meaningful, Measurable, and Reliable Student Accomplishments

The renewal of your school's charter will be based largely on whether your school has met the goals and objectives stated in your charter (Section I). Nonetheless, you may wish to include other notable accomplishments to demonstrate its success. In this section of the application, you are encouraged to present additional evidence of student accomplishments that indicate your school's achievements. Please present evidence in succinct language and clear formats with explanations when appropriate.

Please be selective when presenting evidence of student achievement outside the goals established in your school's charter. Include only those accomplishments that would impact the renewal decision: the evidence you present should be meaningful, validly measurable, reliable, and a clear indicator of student achievement.

D. Summary of Best Practices

An important part of the Chancellor’s Children First Initiative is the opportunity for other schools to learn from the successful practices that charter schools have the opportunity to explore and develop. In *no more than two pages*, identify what you believe are your school’s best practices and clearly describe how these practices have led to successful student outcomes.

E. First Term Challenges (Academic)

Your school's renewal application will be evaluated, in part, on the discussion of the challenges your school experienced during the initial charter term. Please select from the list below no more than three characteristics related to an effective school's educational program that your school has struggled with during its initial term. For each, please describe:

- Specific nature of the challenge your school experienced
- Strategies your school used to address the challenge
- Results of those strategies (using reliable evidence in succinct language and clear formats with explanations when appropriate)
- What your school has learned about how to address this challenge effectively

Remember that you may only describe actions taken by the school preceding the date of submission of this application, not your school's future plans to remedy the challenges.

Characteristics of Effective Schools: Academics

In addition to outstanding student performance outcomes, a school that is an academic success has the following characteristics:

A Rigorous Instructional Program that includes:

- Clearly-defined essential knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn, and that are aligned with state standards
- Curriculum that is organized coherently across subjects and grades, and reflects the school's mission and goals
- Academic expectations that adults in the school clearly and consistently communicate to students
- Classroom lessons with clear goals aligned with the curriculum
- Classroom practices that reflect competent instructional strategies
- Assessments and data that the school systematically generates and uses to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning, and that has led to increased student performance
- Formal and successful strategies to identify and meet the needs of students at-risk of academic failure, students not making acceptable progress towards achieving school goals, students who are ELL, and special education students

A School Environment that Promotes Successful Teaching and Learning that includes:

- An environment where students and staff feel safe and secure
- Behavioral and cultural expectations that adults in the school clearly and consistently communicate to students
- Clear policies and strategies to address student behaviors to promote learning—those behaviors that are both appropriate and inappropriate
- Documented discipline policies and procedures for general and special education students that the school enforces fairly and consistently with appropriate due process
- A professional culture focused on teaching and learning, with a qualified and competent teaching staff

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- Professional development activities at or sponsored by the school that are aligned with the mission and goals of the school, support the instructional program, meet student needs, and result in increased student achievement
- A system for ongoing teacher evaluation and improvement that builds the school's capacity to reach its academic goals, with effective strategies to assist inexperienced or struggling teachers

SECTION III:
Has Your School Been a Viable Organization?

A. Demonstration of Achievement of Charter Non-Academic Goals and Objectives

Please describe your school's achievement of each of the non-academic goals and objectives stated in your school's charter. For each goal:

1. Indicate whether the goal has been met (yes/no).
2. Provide specific, reliable, and valid evidence of your school's attainment of the goal (if it has been met) or progress toward the goal (if it has not been met). Please present evidence in succinct language and clear formats with explanations when appropriate.
3. If the goal has not been met, explain what actions the school took to address this goal, the school's understanding of why the goal was not met, and what the school has learned about how to best reach the goal. This description of actions taken by the school must be limited to the term of the initial charter preceding submission of the renewal application and may not include actions the school plans to implement after the date of submission, or if the charter were renewed.

B. Indications of Student and Parent Satisfaction

Please present reliable evidence of student and parent satisfaction in succinct language and clear formats with explanations when appropriate. To indicate student satisfaction, many schools provide student attrition and retention rates. To demonstrate parent satisfaction, please use the results from your school-administered survey and the Learning Environment Survey, to which your school may add other questions to enhance your evidence or for internal use. Recognize that surveys are only reliable inasmuch as they have high response rates.

You may also include additional indicators of student and parent satisfaction. When doing so, please use succinct language and clear formats with explanations when appropriate.

C. Audited Financial Statements

Attach a copy of the school's most recent (2008) audited financial statement. This financial statement must be consistent with the State Education Department's guidelines on independent audits of Charter Schools. [Ed. Law §2851(4)(b)] Schools are encouraged to add additional categories or comments if it will enhance the reader's understanding of the statement. Likewise, classifications not used or not material to the school's presentation may be eliminated. If not otherwise presented, schools employing management companies should provide a breakdown of contracted service fees in a similar format.

The audited statement may be included as an attachment or exhibit, although in the body of the application you should include a brief narrative that places the information in context and describes what the school has learned about the management of financial resources (e.g., board decisions, reorganization of priorities, evolving focus of the school program, shifting sources or expenditures of revenue, large or ongoing deficits or surpluses).

D. First Term Challenges (Organizational)

Your school's renewal application will be evaluated, in part, on the discussion of the challenges your school experienced during the initial charter term. Please select from the list below no more than three characteristics related to an effective school's organization that your school has struggled with during its initial term. For each, please describe:

- Specific nature of the challenge your school experienced
- Strategies your school used to address the challenge
- Results of those strategies (using reliable evidence in succinct language and clear formats with explanations when appropriate)
- What your school has learned about how to address this challenge effectively

Remember that you may describe the actions taken by the school preceding the date of submission of this application, not your school's future plans to remedy the challenges.

Characteristics of Effective Schools: Organizational

In addition to outstanding non-academic performance outcomes, a school that is a viable organization has the following characteristics:

Effective School Governance that includes:

- A clear and common understanding of the school's mission, priorities, and challenges among all members of the board of trustees and school leadership, as evidenced by the strategies and resources used to further the academic and organizational success of the school
- An evidenced commitment to serving a student population that reflects the full range of students throughout the city.
- Policies, systems, and processes that facilitate effective governance of the school and that are followed consistently
- Communication between the school leadership and school staff that facilitates coordinated actions and effective management
- Annual evaluations of the school leadership, based on clearly-defined goals and measurements
- A board of trustees with a diversity of experiences and knowledge that promotes a healthy and vigorous dialogue of ideas
- A process for board development to build its capacity to oversee the school's operations and to ensure the school's continued progress
- A conflict of interest policy and code of ethics that are followed consistently
- Activities that are in substantial compliance with the Open Meetings Law and Public Officers Law
- An active and ongoing relationship with independent legal counsel that reviews relevant documents, policies, and incidents, and makes recommendations as needed

Healthy and Sound Financial Practices that include:

- A long range financial plan that guides school operations
- Realistic budgets that are monitored and adjusted when appropriate
- Effective oversight and financial decisions that further and reflect the school's mission, program, and goals
- Internal controls and procedures that are followed consistently and that result in prudent resource management

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- Capacity to correct any deficiencies or audit findings
- Financial records that are kept according to GAAP
- Adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations
- Processes that maintain and successfully manage the school's cash flow
- Non-variable income streams that support critical financial needs

Parent and Student Satisfaction, demonstrated by survey results as well as other valid and reliable measures

Sufficient Facilities and Physical Conditions conducive to the school implementing its program and meeting its goals.

SECTION IV:
**Has Your School Been in Compliance with All Applicable
Laws and Regulations?**

A. First Term Challenges (Compliance)

Your school's renewal application will be evaluated, in part, on the discussion of the challenges your school experienced during the initial charter term. Please select from the list below no more than three characteristics related to an effective school's compliance that your school has struggled with during its initial term. For each, please describe:

- Specific nature of the challenge your school experienced
- Strategies your school used to address the challenge
- Results of those strategies (using reliable evidence in succinct language and clear formats with explanations when appropriate)
- What your school has learned about how to address this challenge effectively

Remember that you may only describe the school's actions up until the date of submission of this application.

Characteristics of Effective Schools: Compliance

A school that is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations has the following characteristics:

Sufficient Reporting that includes:

- Annual reports and financial reports submitted completely and by deadline
- Responses to DOE's or SED's requests for information or for changes to school operations (in accordance with legal requirements) in a timely manner

An Appropriate Admissions Policy that includes:

- Opportunities for all interested parents to submit a complete application for enrollment
- A random selection process that is conducted fairly, and when a wait list is generated, it is used appropriately to ensure a fair admissions process

A Record of Substantial Compliance with:

- Applicable health laws and regulations
- Title I regulations

IDEA regulations to meet the needs of special education students

**ATTACHMENT 1:
Data Templates**

Enrollment as articulated in the school's charter

Grade	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-2011
K					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
Total					

Actual Enrollment

Grade	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-2011
K					
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
Total					

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Ethnicity

Race/ ethnicity	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	# of students	% of enrollment						
American Indian, Alaskan, Asian, or Pacific Islander								
Black (Not Hispanic)								
Hispanic								
White (Not Hispanic)								

Demographics

	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	# of students	% of enrollment						
Limited English Proficient								
Free Lunch Eligible								
Special Education								

Example Charter School - Academic Goals						
	Goals	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year	Fifth Year
Absolute		Result	Result	Result	Result	Result
		Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?
Absolute		Result	Result	Result	Result	Result
		Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?
Absolute		Result	Result	Result	Result	Result
		Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?
Value-Added		Result	Result	Result	Result	Result
		Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?
Comparative		Result	Result	Result	Result	Result
		Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?
Absolute		Result	Result	Result	Result	Result
		Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?	Met: Y/N?