



Charter Schools Accountability and Support
2012-2013

**NEW YORK FRENCH AMERICAN CHARTER SCHOOL
ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW REPORT**

2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

Part 1: School Overview & History

School Overview and History

New York French American Charter School (NYFACS) is an elementary school serving approximately 209 students¹ in grades K-4 during the 2012-13 school year. It opened in 2010-2011, and is under the terms of its first charter. The school's projected full grade span upon renewal and approval is K-5, which it's expected to reach in 2013-2014.² The school is located in private³ facilities in Manhattan within CSD 5.⁴

The table below details the school's performance on the NYC DOE Progress Report.⁵

Progress Report Grade	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Overall				C
Student Progress				F
Student Performance				C
School Environment				F
Closing the Achievement Gap				2.1

New York French American Charter School enrolls new students in grades K- 4. There were 183 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2012 lottery.⁶

The average attendance rate for the 2012-13 school year to date is 95.1%.⁷

On the 2011-12 NYC DOE School Survey, the school scored Below Average on the Safety & Respect section, Below Average on the Communication section, Below Average on the Engagement section, and Below Average on the Academic Expectations section. Fifty percent of the school's parents and 62.0% of the school's teachers responded to the survey.⁸

New York French American Charter School (which incorporates French immersion as a core element of its program) has had five school leaders in the school's three years of operation. Katrine Watkins was the school's founding principal, Marie-Jose Bernard interim principal Summer 2011 – January 2012, Vanessa Handal-Ghenania interim principal January 2012 – February 2012, Stephen Peters principal February 2012 – June 2012 and Edith Boncompain principal Summer 2012 – present. Edith Boncompain has been with the school approaching one year.

NYFACS was placed on Probation by the NYC DOE December 2011 and the probationary status was extended pursuant to N.Y. Education Law § 2855 (3). The probationary status may expire on August 31, 2013 subject to correction of the school's violations and no additional compliance issues. The school was placed on probation due to the serious violations of applicable laws and regulations: Teacher Certification and Board Governance. The school has since corrected Teacher Certification.

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

⁶ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form.

⁷ Self-reported information from school-submitted data collection form.

⁸ 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 Framework⁹.

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,

⁹http://www.qualitycharters.org/assets/files/images/stories/pdfs/publications/Performance_Framework_Fall_2012_Draft.pdf, page 38-59

- Student, staff, and Board turnover,
- Authorized enrollment numbers, and
- Annual financial audits.

A school's Governance Structure & Organizational Design and Climate & Community Engagement are rated as **Developed, Partially Developed, or Not Yet Developed**. A school's Financial Health is rated to indicate whether there are concerns about the near-term financial obligations and the financial sustainability of the school.

Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable law and regulations?

As it pertains to compliance, CSAS identifies areas of compliance and non-compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Staff Representatives

The following experts participated in the review of this school's documents as detailed above and visited the school on May 13, 2013:

- Sonia Park, DOE
- Andrea McLean, DOE
- Jean-Pierre Jacquet, DOE
- Jose Castro, DOE
- Laurie Pendleton, Consultant

Part 3: Findings

Summary of Findings

Based on CSAS review, the findings are as follows. To date, New York French American Charter School:

- has not yet demonstrated academic achievement and progress (p. 6-7),
- has a partially developed governance structure and organizational design (p. 10),
- has not yet developed a stable school culture (p 10),
- is in a weak position to meet near-term financial obligations and there are concerns about the financial sustainability of the school (p. 11),
- is compliant with some applicable laws and regulations but not others (p.12),
- has plans to reorganize the fourth floor for renovation to house two 5th Grade classes during school year 2013-2014 (p.13).

This review included a desk audit, a self-evaluation completed by the school, a visit and follow up communication via phone and email. CSAS visited the school on May 13, 2013.

Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?

To date, in its first charter term, New York French American Charter School has not yet demonstrated academic achievement and/or progress.

- The school has one year of New York State assessment data at the time of this report.
- The school received an Overall grade of C on its 2011-2012 NYC DOE Progress Report with an F in Student Progress and a C in Student Performance.
- In 2011-2012, the school earned 2.1 'Closing the Achievement Gap' points of extra credit on the NYC DOE Progress Report.
- In 2011-2012, the percentage of students in its tested grade scoring greater than a level 3 was:
 - 54.6% on the NYS ELA assessment,
 - 42.9% on the NYS Math assessment.
- The school's Overall percentile ranking was 34, higher than 4 of 38 Early Childhood schools.
- NYFACS's overall proficiency scores were below its district location, CSD 3, by 5.3 percentage points in ELA and 24.0 percentage points in Math.

Progress Toward Attainment of Academic Goals¹⁰

- NYFACS has met 2 out of 3 academic charter goals.
 - Charter goals met include:
 - Develop and administer standard aligned assessments throughout the year to gauge the progress of students and modify instructional practices based data.
 - School leadership will ensure adequacy, alignment and coherence of actions, each year the school will refine its methods in teaching English as a Second Language and FLE (Français Langue Étrangère).
 - Charter goal not met include:
 - Seventy-five percent of all 3-5th grades will perform at or above a level 3 on the NYS mathematics Examination.

Representatives of the CSAS team visited NYFACS on May 13, 2013. Based on discussion, document review, and observation the following was noted:

- CSAS representatives observed nine classrooms.
 - In most rooms, a lecture-style lesson delivery with a few examples of small group instruction and students working in pairs was observed.
 - In some classrooms observed, teacher interns were working with small groups of students who were not as fluent in French as their classmates.
 - In most classrooms observed, checks for understanding were conducted by the teacher. Teachers observed used a variety of methods to check for understanding:
 - In some classrooms teachers monitored performance-based activities and provided corrective feedback while observing student work.
 - In some classrooms, teachers used probing questions to ascertain student grasp of the content.
 - In some classrooms, students were providing feedback and support to each other during independent work time.
 - In all classrooms, very low-levels of students' off-task behavior were observed. Often effective redirection by the teacher was conducted.
 - Most students observed were on-task, engaged and transitions into new routines were efficiently executed.
 - Based on classroom observation debriefs, all classrooms and lessons observed aligned with the current model and academic goals and priorities.
- CSAS representatives conducted interviews with six teachers.

¹⁰ Goal analysis is considered a neutral point and is not used as part of the evaluation.

- All teachers interviewed reported the use of data and assessments for classroom-based planning and remediation.
 - Teachers were not able to speak to a consistent approach to the use of data across grade levels, subject areas, and the school.
 - All interviewed teachers reported being formerly evaluated; the frequency with which teachers are observed and are provided with feedback was reported to be inconsistent.
 - All teachers stated that professional development activities were generally supportive of their needs.
 - A few teachers reported the need for professional development in Special Education, socio-economic diversity and teaching in an urban setting.
 - Most teachers reported concerns with the impact a small group of vocal parents was having on the overall morale of the school.
 - Teacher interview comments did not fully align to statements made during the leadership team meeting in regards to data usage, teacher evaluations, and professional development.
- From the school's self-evaluation and the school leadership meeting, it was reported that:
 - NYFACS has created processes for identification and academic interventions for the school's high needs population.
 - Evidence of such changes through interviews and observations was not apparent.

New York French American Charter School

Percent of Students Scoring at or above Level 3 - Whole School

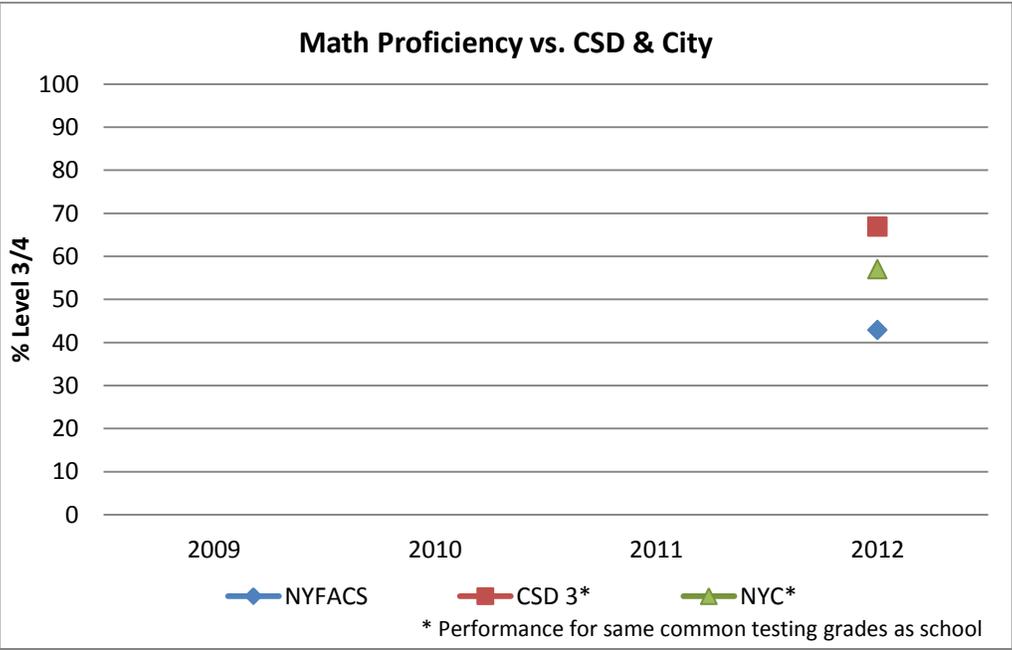
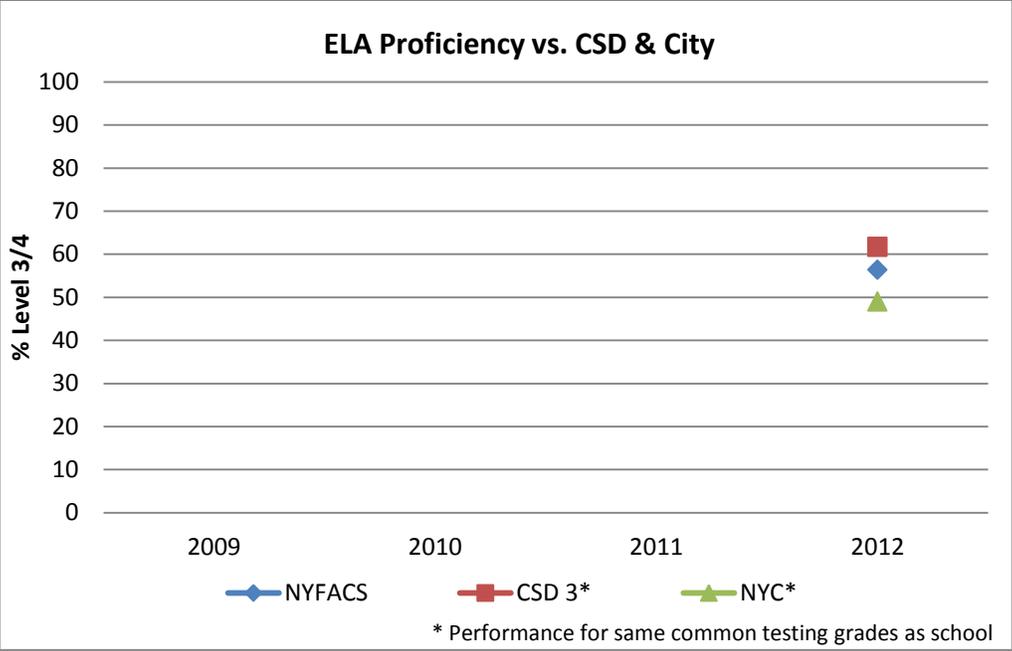
<u>ELA</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
New York French American Charter School				56.4
CSD 3*				61.7
<u>Math</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
New York French American Charter School				42.9
CSD 3*				66.9

*CSD data represents only common testing grades, for all years presented

Percent of Students Scoring at or above Level 3 - By Grade

Grade 3

<u>ELA</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
New York French American Charter School				56.4
CSD 3*				61.7
<u>Math</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
New York French American Charter School				42.9
CSD 3*				66.9



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

Governance Structure & Organizational Design

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

- The Board has seven active members, which aligns to the number of members outlined in the Board's bylaws.
- When the Board meets, it votes consistently and demonstrates quorum, as recorded in minutes.
- Officer positions outlined in the Board's bylaws are filled.
- Board has appropriate and timely access to legal counsel.
- The Board has active and functioning committees who meet and report regularly as recorded in meeting minutes.
- To date, the Board has held ten meetings during the 2012-2013 school year as outlined in the Board's bylaws and as evidenced by meeting minutes.
- The Board has experienced 44% percent turnover since the last school year.
- A new chairman was elected in June 2012 and four new members were voted in during 2013.
- The Board does not have clear and consistent lines of accountability from school leadership to the Board:
 - The Board's awareness of discrepancies in the school's financial audit was not recognized until November 2012.

School Climate & Community Engagement

NYFACS has not yet developed a stable school culture.

- The school's attendance rate is 95.1%.
- The school's student turnover is 37.4%.¹¹ To date, student enrollment is below its targeted enrollment of 250. In Spring 2013, the school's enrollment is 220.
- The school's parent survey response rate was 50%, coming in below the city average of 53%.
- The school's staff survey response rate was 62%, coming in below the city average of 82%.
- The school's administrative staff turnover was 67%, inclusive of those that left or were asked to leave, at the start of the 2012-2013 school year.¹²
- The school's instructional staff turnover was 38%, inclusive of those that left or were asked to leave, at the start of the 2012-2013 school year.¹³
- On the 2011-2012 NYC DOE School Survey, the school scored Below Average on the Safety & Respect section, Below Average on the Communication section, Below Average on the Engagement section, and Below Average on the Academic Expectations section.
- As evidenced by interviews and documentation, the school's morale is low due to a group of parents and their vocal interaction with school leadership.

Representatives of the CSAS visited the school on May 13, 2013. Based on interviews, document review, and observation we note the following:

- School leaders indicated a conscious effort to better identify students with special needs by developing a specific Response to Intervention (RTI) cycle prior to Special Education identification.
 - The school reports, in an effort to avoid over identification of students, RTI team receives professional development on the RTI model.

¹¹ ACR Data Collection Form, January 2013

¹² ACR Data Collection Form, January 2013

¹³ ACR Data Collection Form, January 2013

Financial Health

Overall, the school is in a weak position to meet near-term financial obligations and there are concerns about the financial sustainability of the school.

- NYFACS has had a positive cash flow over the past three years.
- The fiscal year 2012 audit report addresses the material and substantial violations of the school's charter. The audit report noted that NYFACS's currently on probation for not demonstrating full compliance with applicable laws and charter terms. Additionally, the audit report addresses issues with findings from the 2011 fiscal year report. In the 2011 fiscal year audit, the school was cited for the following:
 - **Attendance Records:** Based on the auditor's report, the school was not maintaining attendance records to support the start and end date of enrolled students. Based on the 2012 fiscal report, this issue has been resolved.
 - **Material Violations of Contracts:** The school was notified by the school's authorizer, the NYC Department of Education, that NYFACS had several material and substantial violations with its Charter School Agreement and School Monitoring Plan. The 2012 fiscal year audit includes the school's written response to the violations.
 - **Significant Adjustments:** Based on the auditor's report, the school did not have a person on staff with accounting experience to appropriately review the financial books, record all known adjustments and prepare financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Based on the 2012 fiscal report, this issue has been resolved. The school has contracted with Charter School Business Management (CSBM), which is providing the following support:
 - Accounting and Bookkeeping,
 - Financial Reporting and Budgeting,
 - Grant Financial Management,
 - Payroll,
 - Financial Professional Development,
 - Audit and 990 Preparations.
- The school is not maintaining its enrollment projections. At the time of the visit, the school was only within 84% of its projected enrollment. Per pupil funding is the majority of NYFACS's income.
- The school currently has outstanding debt obligations. It is in arrears to at least 5 vendors.
 - According to school leadership, the school is currently pursuing legal remedies to absolve itself of liability, reduce liability, or recover money where appropriate in these debt claims. The school leadership recognizes that this plan is difficult to predict and quantify to address current financial concerns.
- The school has a high debt to asset ratio, indicating their liabilities outweigh their assets, putting them in a risky financial position.
- The school is in a weak position to cover its long term debt.
- NYFACS is in a weak position to cover its expenses for the foreseeable future without an infusion of cash. At the time of the audit, the school was unable to cover a week of expenses without an infusion of cash.
- The school is in a weak position to meet all of its liabilities within the next 12 months.
- The school operated at a deficit in the most recent audited year.

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

The school is compliant with some applicable laws and regulations but not others.

To date, the Board of Trustees is in compliance with the below:

- Board member size falls within the range outlined in the school's charter and in the Board's bylaws.
- All Board members have submitted conflict of interest and financial disclosure forms and do not demonstrate conflicts of interest.
- Board has appropriate liability insurance for officers.
- Board has held the required number of Board meetings as per the Board's bylaws.
- Board has provided CSAS with timely submission of accountability reporting documents, including:
 - Management, Staff and Board Retention report,
 - Lottery and recruitment plan,
 - Board approved budget for upcoming year.
- As reported by the school, the Board makes board minutes and agendas available upon request to the public prior to or at Board meetings by posting them on the school's bulletin board.

To date, the school is in compliance with the below:

- NYFACS has submitted required documentation for staff-fingerprint clearance and staff members have appropriate fingerprint clearance.
- The school has submitted appropriate insurance documents.
- The school has submitted a safety plan.
- The school is in compliance with NYS Section 917 law in regards to AED/CPR certification.

To date, the school is out of compliance with the below:

- The school's immunization rate is below the 98.8% threshold established by the NYC Department of Health. The school's current immunization rate is 97.10%.

Representatives of the CSAS visited the school on May 13, 2013. Based on interviews, document review, and observation the following was noted:

- The Board has participated in a retreat to reflect and continue to develop their capacity.
- The school has hired a consultant who provides professional development for both school leaders and the Board.
- The school has added an administrative assistant to assist in maintaining reporting of student data.
- The school relies on an outside vendor, CSBM, Inc. for reconciliations and monitors reports.
- New financial controls have been established based on past improprieties.

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

As reported by the school leadership and the Board of Trustees, the following is noted:

- The school plans on reorganizing the fourth floor for renovation to house two 5th Grade classes during school year 2013-2014.

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