



**CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**RENEWAL APPLICATION**

**2013-2014**

**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Charter Schools Accountability and Support  
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## Overview

In the final year of its charter, a Chancellor-authorized charter school seeking renewal must demonstrate its success during its most recent charter term and establish goals and objectives for its 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.

Our standard for evaluating a charter application comes from the New York Charter Schools Act [Ed.L. §§2852(2)(a)(c)]. Aligned with this, your application for a public school charter should answer the following overarching questions which together comprise the CSAS Accountability Framework<sup>1</sup>:

- 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 with all applicable laws and regulations?**
- 4. If renewed, what is the school's plan for its next charter term?**

The information you provide in this renewal application should address these questions. The NYC DOE Charter Schools Accountability and Support (CSAS) team will use your responses to evaluate the evidence provided for renewal, the quality of the plan for the next charter term, and the capacity to successfully operate and sustain a quality charter school. Teams are advised to carefully review the instructions and guidelines provided below to prepare your application for submission to CSAS, as well as the amended New York State Charter Schools Act.<sup>2</sup>

The application for renewal consists of three parts: the executive summary, the renewal application narrative, and the revised charter application. The renewal application narrative is built around the four essential questions above, and replaces the previous format in which the retrospective and prospective analyses were presented separately. Schools are asked to present a compelling, evidence-based case that they have been academically successful, fiscally sound, organizationally viable, and legally compliant through their answers to the first three questions. In the fourth question, schools are asked to detail their plans for the proposed charter term, including ambitious, measurable, and attainable goals as well as any requested revisions to the school's original charter application, and responses to any conditions set for the school in previous DOE visits.

The final part of the application asks schools to re-submit their charter application updating any changes made during the current charter term and including all proposed changes for the new term, along with a two-part chart summarizing all significant revisions within the document. One section of the chart should list all changes made to the submitted document during the current term and the second section should list the proposed changes for the new charter. More guidelines for this section may be found on pages 20-22.

The CSAS office may respond to the renewal application with clarification questions and requests for additional information prompted by the renewal application. Each school's cohort will work with the school to establish an appropriate timeframe for complying with these requests.

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<sup>1</sup> More information on the CSAS Accountability Framework may be found on pages 26-32 of the Accountability Handbook; it is also appended to this application beginning on page 25.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/article56.html>

If you have questions about the guidelines for this renewal application, please reach out to the Director of Oversight for your cohort.

### **Renewal Process Overview**

This section outlines the basic sequence of events for a renewal. It is meant only to show the general structure of the renewal process. A specific timeline will be discussed during the renewal process with each individual school and will be dependent upon the school's charter expiration date.

For more information on CSAS's protocols for renewal visits, please see pages 26-32 in the Accountability Handbook.

<b>Approximate Date</b>	<b>Renewal Component</b>	<b>Component Description</b>
Fall 2013	Renewal Kickoff Phone Call	A member of CSAS will discuss the process and specific timeline for the renewal process.
Winter 2013-14 (depends on charter expiration date)	Renewal Application Due	The school submits the Renewal Application to CSAS.
Winter 2014	CSAS Review and Clarification	CSAS members review the Renewal Application and, if necessary, request clarifying information from the school.
Two weeks before site visit	Pre-Visit Documentation Submission Due	The school submits documentation that will help the NYC DOE Renewal Inspection Team prepare for the site visit.
TBD with each school (depends on charter expiration date)	Renewal Site Visit	The NYC DOE Renewal Team will visit the school for 2 to 3 days to verify and augment the information presented by the school in its written application.
TBD with each school (depends on charter expiration date)	Public Hearing	Per the New York State Charter Schools Act, a public hearing must be held to solicit comment on the possibility of the charter renewal.
Following the site visit	Chancellor's Decision/Report of Findings	Based on a recommendation from CSAS, the Chancellor makes a decision as to whether to recommend charter renewal, the term of the new charter, and any renewal conditions. If the Chancellor decides not to renew the charter, the decision is final and no decision is made by the Board of Regents.
Prior to charter expiration date	Submission to the New York State Education Department	If the Chancellor recommends renewal, CSAS will submit a

	(NYSED)	new charter agreement and a letter from the Chancellor to NYSED for review.
Prior to charter expiration date	Renewal Decision by Board of Regents	<p>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.</p> <p>The Board of Regents will vote to approve or return the proposed charter renewal agreement for additional consideration. If approved, the Regents will issue a charter for the term specified.</p>

## **Overview of Guidelines for Renewal Application**

### **1. Executive Summary**

The executive summary should provide a concise and concrete overview of the renewal application, summarizing the school's mission, educational goals, defining characteristics, and major challenges and successes over the course of the school's charter. 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 four questions that comprise the CSAS Accountability Framework. The Executive Summary should be no more than two (2) pages in length.

### **2. Renewal Application Narrative**

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 the four questions that comprise the CSAS Accountability Framework:

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 with applicable laws and regulations?
4. If renewed, what is the school's plan for its next charter term?

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 most recent charter term. In addition, at all points appropriate in the narrative, 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. Finally, in answering question #4, the school will describe its plan for its next charter term for demonstrating success through the lens of the first three questions. The school will fully describe all changes it plans to make in its academic or operational program (including grade expansions, facility changes, or any requested revisions) in the proposed upcoming charter term, including the rationale for the proposed changes and any evidence that supports the rationale.

More specifics on the requirements for the renewal application narrative can be found on pages 9-19. The full narrative should be no more than fifty pages in length.

### **3. Revised Charter and Summary of Revisions**

As part of the renewal application, CSAS asks schools to submit a revised, updated copy of their charter, including proposed changes for the new charter term. Once any and all clarification questions are resolved and the renewal application is approved, schools will submit a final "clean" version of their new charter which will become part of the renewal package that is sent to NYSED. In addition, schools are asked to submit a two-part chart with a list summarizing changes that they have made to their charter during the course of the expiring charter term and the proposed changes for the upcoming term. The submitted chart should include page references for each change identified in the submitted chart, as well as rationale for the revision and the date when each revision was approved (or when the revision is proposed to be implemented). For more information on the requirements for the revised charter and the summary chart, please see pages 20-22.

#### **4. Required Attachments**

Please note that the following attachments are required for all schools, separate from the exhibits that are part of the charter application:

- **An updated “Progress Toward Charter Goals” table** that includes progress for each year of the school’s most recent charter period, providing 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). 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 this goal. A sample template is included on page 23 of this document.
- **Renewal Visit Data Collection Templates** (please use the Excel templates provided by NYC DOE CSAS)
- **Copies of each of the annual reports** of the charter school from the current charter term including the charter school report cards (NYC DOE Progress Reports) and certified financial statements, as mandated by charter law [Ed.L. §§2851(4)(a)(e)]. Please note that CSAS will accept links to these documents to meet this requirement if they are posted in secure locations online.
- **Indications of parent and student satisfaction**, as mandated by charter law [Ed.L. §§2851(4)(a)(e)]. Please note that CSAS will accept links to these documents (including but not limited to the NYC DOE School Survey) to meet this requirement if they are posted in secure locations online.

#### **5. Supporting Documents and Evidence**

While there is no limit on the number or size of additional attachments, we 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 CSAS during its renewal visit rather than included in the application. For example, if you are discussing the strength of your portfolio system, 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 Schools Accountability and Support Team**

Schools are encouraged to contact their cohort’s Director of Oversight 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.

#### **Technical Instructions**

You are responsible for completing and submitting the renewal application to the NYC DOE Charter Schools Accountability and Support office ([charterschools@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:charterschools@schools.nyc.gov)). The specific deadline will be determined based on the school’s charter expiration date. You must also submit your application, including exhibits, electronically in Microsoft Word or, for appropriate attachments, Microsoft Excel. If the Application is incomplete or insufficient, it may be returned, thereby prolonging the renewal process. *Please note that the CSAS inbox cannot accept emails from a non-DOE email address that are over 10 MB, so files should be condensed into a zip folder.*

- Your application, not including Exhibits, should be no longer than 50 pages in length.
- All pages must be numbered and single spaced, using at least 11 size font.
- Responses in the renewal application narrative section should be labeled according to the CSAS Accountability Framework (e.g. section 2a should address governance structure and organizational design).
- You may use data provided to you by CSAS, NYC DOE, or NYSED, 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.
- Exhibits and Attachments should be saved as separate documents from the application narrative.
- Acceptable electronic formats for the narrative, exhibits, and attachments are Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel. Please avoid PDF / Adobe Acrobat formats unless required. PDF may be used for signed letters of support and other documents where necessary.
- NOTE: For any exhibits or documents that are exactly the same as in the original charter, simply provide the original exhibit (updated to meet the current conditions).

This application is also available online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/charters>.

### **Next Steps**

After a charter school has submitted its renewal application, CSAS will review it and respond with any clarifying questions or requests for more information. If the school's application is incomplete, it may be returned to the school with feedback from CSAS. Once the school's renewal application has been submitted and reviewed, the CSAS team will conduct a site visit to the school. Based on the school's application, the renewal site visit, review of documentation submitted to the CSAS during the school's charter term, and previous oversight reports, CSAS will prepare a draft of its findings to share with the school for factual corrections, and will ultimately submit a renewal recommendation to the Chancellor — whether the school should receive a renewal charter, and if so, under what conditions.

# **Renewal Application Narrative**

## **1. Is the school 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)]. Therefore, this section should include an honest and detailed discussion of the school's progress toward meeting its charter goals. If a goal was not 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 this goal.

You may wish to include notable evidence of student achievement outside the goals established in your school's charter. You are encouraged to present additional evidence of student accomplishments, but please be selective and succinct: 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.

This section should focus on the school's past and current success, not its plans for changes going forward – this will be addressed in the response to question #4. Please note that CSAS places a high emphasis on schools' self-reflectiveness and capacity to adapt. This section should include explanation of up to three significant academic challenges that the school has faced over the term of its charter and the steps the school has taken to address these issues.

Please also be sure to include explanation of those academic characteristics which you consider "best practices" for your school and how you believe that they have led to greater student achievement.

Finally, in preparing your response to this question, please frame your narrative through the four corresponding strands included in the CSAS Accountability Framework: high academic attainment and improvement; mission and academic goals; responsive education program; and learning environment. In cases where there is overlap, you do not need to repeat information already included, but please reference the section where that information may be found. The goal is to present a more holistic, nuanced picture of the school through including information on each strand. Sample evidence for each strand may be found in the full Accountability Framework, which is included in the CSAS's Accountability Handbook but can also be found beginning on page 26 of this document.

### **1a. High Academic Attainment and Improvement**

Schools that are academic successes have many of the characteristics below:

- Meet absolute performance goals established in school charter
- Meet student progress goals established in school charter
- Are closing the achievement gap for at risk students, including special needs and English Language Learners (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

Describe the school's progress toward meeting the academic goals delineated in its charter, including evidence on the performance of specific at-risk subgroups. Please compare the school's performance to its district, city, and peer schools (as reflected in its NYC DOE 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

Please detail the school's progress toward implementing its stated mission, including evidence that suggests the school's mission is known and embraced by students and the school community. Schools should also describe how they monitor progress toward their goals and report on that progress to staff, the Board, and the surrounding community. Schools may want to reflect in this section on whether goals were adequately reflective of school's mission and were sufficiently clear, ambitious, and realistic for the most recent charter term. (Schools will have the opportunity to revise their goals and state their rationale for proposed revisions in section 3 of this application.)

## **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
- Offer defined opportunities for remediation and acceleration
- Have effective strategies and quality instructional programs for addressing students with disabilities (SWD) and ELLs
- Have defined strategies that they can measure and monitor for closing the achievement gap
- 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
- Use a defined process for evaluating curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals
- Have school calendars and day schedules that provide the time necessary to deliver on the school's mission and academic goals

Schools should describe how successful their core curriculum and instruction programs have proved to be in meeting the needs of students. Be sure to explain how the school's curriculum program is aligned with the new Common Core Standards. Schools should explain how they have met the instructional needs of at-risk learners as well as those of accelerated learners. Finally, this section should also include an explanation of how the school's interim assessment system has supported instructional decision-making at the school, class, and individual student level.

### **1d. Learning Environment**

Schools with successful learning environments have many of the characteristics below:

- Have a strong academic culture that creates high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to consistently give their best efforts
- 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 plan with formal or informal structures or programs in place that provide students opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens (for example: a character education, citizenship, or community involvement or service program)

Schools should describe how their missions have been translated into student academic and behavioral expectations and how these expectations have been communicated to students, parents, and the school community. Schools should share evidence of their successes and discuss any challenges in successfully establishing the desired learning environment and how the school responded to those challenges.

## **2. Is the school a fiscally sound, 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' and staff's performance 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 NYC DOE to provide summative and comparative data on satisfaction levels in Chancellor-authorized charter schools, the NYC DOE expects schools to monitor the satisfaction of their students, parents, and staff with, at a minimum, the NYC DOE School Survey, and to describe the results in this renewal application. If the school uses additional tools and/or surveys to track satisfaction rates, they may also be included as supplemental information. It is important to recognize that surveys are only reliable inasmuch as they have high response rates, so you should discuss participation rates along with your satisfaction results.

In constructing your response to this section, please consider each of the three corresponding strands in the CSAS Accountability Framework: governance structure and organization design; school climate and community engagement; and financial and operational health. More information on indicators for each is below.

This section should focus on the school's past and current success, not its plans for changes going forward – this will be addressed in the response to question #4. Please note that CSAS places a high emphasis on schools' self-reflectiveness and capacity to adapt. This section should include explanation of up to three significant challenges related to fiscal soundness or organizational viability that the school has faced over the term of its charter and the steps the school has taken to address these issues. Please be sure in your narrative to reference relevant data submitted in the data attachments with this application, such as survey participation and results, student, staff and board attrition data, etc.

Please also be sure to include explanation of those fiscal and operational characteristics which you consider “best practices” for your school and how you believe that they have helped you run a more fiscally sound, viable organization.

### **2a. Governance Structure and Organizational Design**

Schools with successful governance and organizational design structures have many of the characteristics below:

- Have a clearly articulated governance structure, compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations, with clear lines of accountability for the Board, school leadership and all staff
- Have a capable Board of Trustees with appropriate officers, committees, and a purposeful 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, and is fully compliant with its Board approved by-laws (number of meetings, quorum, posting of calendar, agenda and minutes)

- Have a defined process for Board reflection on effectiveness, assessing developing needs, and plan for professional growth
- 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 and, if and when necessary, makes timely adjustments to that structure with proper notice to and approval by its authorizer
- If applicable, school relationship with a charter management organization is identified in charter and supported by a management agreement that spells out services, responsibilities, accountability reporting, performance expectations, and fees
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Implements a process for recruiting, hiring, compensating, monitoring, and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's staff that is clearly defined in staff handbook
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provide regular feedback on instruction to teachers, including both formal and informal observations

Describe how the Board of Trustees has been involved in the life of the school, how the composition of the Board changed over time, and how this has impacted Board governance. Be sure to note evidence of the Board's compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Explain how the school's leadership structure has contributed to improved student achievement, and how this structure may have changed over time.

## **2b. School Climate and Community Engagement**

Schools with a sustaining school climate and engaged parent and community support have many of the characteristics below:

- Create and maintain a healthy professional school climate that is collaborative, student centered, and aligned with school mission and values
- Implement flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- Encourage professional conversations about effective performance and quality instruction among staff, through, for example, such means as regular and periodic teaming (grade level teams, data days, etc.) and peer observations
- Have systems in place to evaluate professional development effectiveness and provide ongoing support for school-wide and individual initiatives
- Employ an effective means of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including, but not limited to, the DOE School Survey
- Have effective home-school communication practices and engagement strategies to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Engage parents actively in the life of the school, including advocacy, community engagement, and feedback on school policies and initiatives
- Develop strong community-based partnerships who support and advocate for the school
- Have a clear procedure for parents and staff to express concerns to school leadership and the Board, as appropriate, including a clearly articulated escalation path to authorizer
- Have made efforts to enroll and retain Free-Reduced Lunch (FRL), ELL, and SWD students

Describe the structures in place for teacher collaboration and professional development, and how and why they may have these changed over time. Include descriptions of evidence that the school has developed a positive, professional, student-centered climate. Schools may also want to consider including examples of how they have resolved issues that have arisen to threaten school culture. Please be sure to include a description of how the school measures teacher, student, staff, and family satisfaction, what feedback the school has received from these key constituents, and how the school has reacted to this feedback. In addition, feel free to include any other evidence that documents how the school has successfully engaged parents and community members.

## **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 student enrollment and retention targets
- Maintain annual budgets that meet all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- Provide rigorous oversight of financial and operational responsibilities, as school leadership and Board levels, in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to short- and long-term decision-making
- Have clearly established policies and procedures for overall fiscal and operational health of the school (onboarding of all new staff, record-keeping, processing requests of HR services, application and enrollment calls, visitors, volunteers, etc.)
- Maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- Receive consistently clean financial audits
- If applicable, have strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of charter school design and academic program
- Ensure a safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations
- Have appropriate insurance coverage

Describe the school's financial health and operational effectiveness over the last five years. Be sure to include information on the results of audits as well as the school's actual year-end surplus (or deficit) compared to its long-term projections. If there has been significant turnover in finance/operations staff, please describe how/if this has impacted the school's development. Describe the internal controls employed by the school, and how the school has codified operational/fiscal policies and procedures to ensure smooth functioning.

### **3. Is the school in compliance with its charter and all 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. They are also expected to comply fully with the terms of their charter and any subsequently approved revisions. As in the previous two sections, the school will identify challenges it has faced, how those targeted areas have been addressed during its most recent charter period, and evidence that those efforts have been successful.

In constructing your response to this section, please consider in turn each of the three corresponding strands in the CSAS Accountability Framework: approved charter and agreement; applicable federal and state law; and applicable regulations. Please see below for guidance on each.

This section should focus on the school's past and current success, not its plans for changes going forward – this will be addressed in the response to question #4. Please note that CSAS places a high emphasis on schools' self-reflectiveness and capacity to adapt. This section should include explanation of at least two significant challenges related to compliance that the school has faced over the term of its charter and the steps the school has taken to address these issues.

Please also be sure to include explanation of compliance-related “best practices” for your school and how you believe that they have helped you run a more compliant school.

#### **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, if appropriate, 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 up-to-date charter is available on request 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

In this section, please describe how the school's academic and operational programs have aligned with those set out in its charter. Schools do not need to go into detail about planned charter revisions since this will be covered in answering question 4 but please note specific areas of charter misalignment over the most recent charter term and explain what steps were taken either to re-align with the charter or to revise the charter to reflect the school's new approach during the course of the current charter term.

#### **3b. Applicable Federal and State Law**

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law:

- Meet all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Implement 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
- Conduct an independently verified fair and open lottery and manage with integrity enrollment process and annual waiting lists
- Employ instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and certification requirements

In this section, please describe the school's record of compliance with applicable federal and state law. . In any areas where the school has not fully complied with applicable law over the course of the most recent charter, such as in having a number of uncertified teachers greater than five or 30% of the total teaching staff, please detail the discrepancy and the steps the school took to rectify the issue.

### **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 CSAS's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members.
- Informed NYC DOE CSAS, and where required, received CSAS approval for changes in significant partnerships, such as dropping/replacing a management organization
- Effectively engaged parent associations

In this section, please describe the school's record of compliance with applicable regulations, including but not limited to those regarding facilities, financial reporting, Board governance, parent associations, and charter revisions.

## **4. If renewed, what are the school's plans for its next charter term?**

Charter schools are expected to continuously self-reflect and adapt their programs based on data about what is working, while continuing to develop those practices that have proved effective for the school. In this section, each school will be asked to describe its plans for the next charter term by considering how it will continue to be academically successful, fiscally sound and organizationally viable, and in compliance with its charter and applicable law. In addition, schools will identify changes that are planned for the next charter term, including all school / model improvements as well as possible expansion or replication, regardless of whether changes are considered material or non-material.

In constructing your response to this section, please consider in turn each of the three corresponding strands in the CSAS Accountability Framework: school expansion or model replication; organizational sustainability; and school or model improvements. Please see below for guidance on each.

Unlike the previous three sections, this section should focus on the school's future plans if it is granted an additional charter term, not its performance record in the past (although data may be cited as evidence for why the school is proposing a particular revision or why the school feels it has demonstrated organizational sustainability). This section should include explanation of at least two significant challenges related to the next charter term that the school anticipates facing over the term of its charter and the steps the school expects to take to address these issues.

### **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)

In this section, please address the school's future plans for expansion or replication, if any, and describe the school's capacity and progress toward carrying out such plans. If the school does not currently have any plans to expand to new grades or replicate with an additional charter, you may write "N/A" for this section. If the school is considering replication, we do not need detailed plans about the future school, but please do submit a description of how these plans will be executed in a way that does not threaten the current school's success.

### **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)

In this section, please describe the school's capacity to remain a sustainable organization over time. If the school will be expanding to additional grade levels over the next charter term, what plans are in place for leadership development and resource management? If the school is currently operating at scale, how does the school plan to sustain and improve its performance? What evidence is there that the school has the capacity to self-reflect, adapt, and consistently improve over time?

#### **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.
- Meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets for FRL, ELL and Special Education students to those of their district of location<sup>3</sup> or are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages for enrollment and retention

In this section, please describe changes the school plans to make to its academic or operational program in the upcoming charter term. Consider any proposed changes to the school's mission, goals, education program (including plans to align with Common Core standards), learning environment, governance structure, community engagement, services for at-risk subgroups, organizational design, financial management plan, enrollment plan, and compliance efforts. Be sure to address the means by which the school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets prescribed by NYSED, as mandated by charter law [Ed.L. §§2851(4)(a)(e)], and whether the school is planning any changes in its recruitment or other policies to meet these targets. Please review the 2010 Charter Schools Act amendments to make sure that you are in full compliance with all new amendments, such as the requirement for monthly Board meetings.

Additionally, please include information on the data that the school considered in proposing these changes (academic performance, community feedback, year-end budgets, etc.) and why the school expects these changes to improve the school environment, the school's fiscal/operational status, and/or the educational experience for students and staff.

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<sup>3</sup> School-specific targets for enrollment and retention are to come from NY State Education Department

# **Revised Charter and Summary of Revisions**

## **Guidelines for Revised Charter and Summary of Revisions**

### **Overview**

CSAS requires schools to submit a revised copy of their charter reflecting the proposed changes for the next charter term. The charter application should reflect both past revisions that have been approved by CSAS as well as proposed revisions that the school is making to its instructional or operational program or its organizational structure in this application. All of these changes should be delineated in a separate chart summarizing revisions to the charter.

### **Guidelines for Updating Charter**

#### *Charter Narrative*

- Please carefully review your charter application that was submitted to the NYC DOE upon authorization. Where revisions to the charter have been previously approved, be sure that they are incorporated into the text of the charter. Where you are proposing revisions for the next charter term, be sure to incorporate them into the text of the charter as appropriate.
- The version that you submit to CSAS should be “clean”; you are not required to submit all changes in tracked changes, although we do ask you to keep a copy of all changes in tracked changes that we may request to review. You are required to note all changes, whether material or non-material, in the Summary of Revisions Chart. More guidance on this chart may be found on the next page.
- When making a revision to your charter, please be sure to update all other sections that may be affected. For example, if you are proposing a revision to your school leadership structure, be sure to revisit the sections on staffing accountability, supervision, evaluation, etc. so that they accurately reflect the proposed new leadership structure.
- Please paginate all sections of your application, including the narrative and large exhibits. You must indicate “not applicable” (N/A) with a brief explanation if specific requests are not relevant to your charter school.
- In some sections of the application, you will be asked to present relevant information as a separate exhibit. Please provide exhibits after your responses to all parts of the application and not in the narrative of your application.
- You are responsible for using original information in the application unless otherwise indicated. Any information excerpted or paraphrased from other sources that is not appropriately cited may invalidate the application.
- Content must be consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws governing New York State charter schools, including but not limited to the revised New York Charter Schools Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), and Open Meetings Law. Cite these and other applicable laws where appropriate.

*Charter Attachments*

- All attachments and exhibits should be updated as applicable. If there are documents that have not changed since the original charter and do not require any updates, please re-submit the original versions.<sup>4</sup> If the application is approved, these exhibits will be incorporated into the renewal charter.
  - All “proposed” documents, such as bylaws, codes of ethics, personnel policies, and discipline policies should be updated with the Board-approved versions.
  - All “projected” numbers such as those found in projected enrollment charts should be updated for the proposed charter term.
  - Please submit a new five-year financial plan using the [template](#) provided by NYSED<sup>5</sup>.

**Guidelines for Summary of Revisions Chart**

**Length and Content Requirements**

- ✓ Include a **separate table noting the nature of all revisions that have been made to the charter during its most recent charter term; where the revised language is located in the application; and when the revision was made and approved** by CSAS during the charter period. For example:

Revision	Section	Rationale	Date of Approval
Increase in student enrollment for each grade level served	Admissions – page 15	After three years of A’s on our Progress Report, we wanted to reach more students and were able to move into a private facility that gave us sufficient space to do so.	May 2010, approved by CSAS

- ✓ Include a **separate table noting the nature of all proposed revisions, where the revised language is located in the application, and the proposed date for the revision to be implemented** in the upcoming charter period. For example:

Revision	Section	Rationale	Proposed Date
Admissions preference policy: adding preference for ELLs	Admissions – page 16	We have had huge success with our ELL program and to date have moved 22 students out of 56 total to achieve “proficient” status on the NYSESLAT. We want to add an admissions preference for ELLs so we can continue to serve a representative sample of students from our community.	To take effect Sept 2013

<sup>4</sup> Please note that the curriculum crosswalk is not required for this process and does not need to be updated or re-submitted.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/psc/documents/Renewal5yrbudgetemplate062012.xls>

# Required Attachments

## Required Attachments

Please use the below chart to track your school’s progress toward charter goals for each year of the most recent charter. You do not need to use this exact template but all submissions should include the text of the goal, the result year-by-year, whether or not the result was met, and a thoughtful explanation of results (including steps taken to make progress toward the goal if goal was not met).

Additional data templates to be completed by schools are attached in an Excel file labeled “[].” Please reach out to the Director of Oversight for your cohort if you have any questions about how these data templates should be completed.

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

# **CSAS Accountability Framework**

## **CSAS Accountability Framework**

To help NYC DOE authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the CSAS team has developed an Accountability Framework built 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?

There is no strict, number-driven point scale for applying the framework to a school's overall performance record. Although academic performance is primary, the NYC DOE takes into account a wide variety of detail (as indicated by the framework strands and available evidence detail) when evaluating a school. Further detail about the application of the framework to school reflection and evaluation is provided in the CSAS Accountability Handbook on pages 16-18.

### **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 established in school charter
- Meet student progress goals established in school charter
- 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
- Parent association meeting agendas and minutes
- Participation at parent-teacher conferences, school advocacy events, participation in academic goal related programs
- Stakeholder (board, parents, staff, students, etc.) interviews

### **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
- Offer defined opportunities for remediation and acceleration
- Have effective strategies and quality instructional programs for addressing students with disabilities and ELLs
- Have defined strategies that they can measure and monitor for closing the achievement gap
- 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
- Use a defined process for evaluating curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals
- Have school calendars and day schedules that provide the time necessary to deliver on the school's mission and academic 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

- Special Education/ELL progress monitoring documentation
- Interim assessment results
- Student and teacher portfolios
- Data findings; adjusted lesson plans
- Self-assessment documentation
- Professional development plans and resources
- School calendar and daily schedules
- DOE School Surveys and internal school satisfaction surveys
- Instructional leader and staff interviews

### **1d. Learning Environment**

Schools with successful learning environments have many of the characteristics below:

- Have a strong academic culture that creates high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to consistently give their best efforts
- 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 plan with formal or informal structures or programs in place that provide students opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens (for example: a character education, citizenship, or community involvement or service program)

Evidence for successful learning environments may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- School mission and articulated values
- School calendar and class schedules
- Student management plan (code of conduct, school values, discipline policy, positive incentive system, etc.)
- Student attendance and retention rates
- Student discipline data (referral, suspension, expulsion)
- DOE School Survey student results
- DOE School Survey parent and teacher safety and respect results
- Parent complaint/concern information
- Internal 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:

- Have a clearly articulated governance structure, compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations, with clear lines of accountability for the Board, school leadership and all staff
- Have a capable Board of Trustees with appropriate officers, committees, and a purposeful 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, and is fully compliant with its Board approved by-laws (number of meetings, quorum, posting of calendar, agenda and minutes)
- Have a defined process for Board reflection on effectiveness, assessing developing needs, and plan for professional growth
- 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 and, if and when necessary, makes timely adjustments to that structure with proper notice to and approval by its authorizer
- If applicable, school relationship with a charter management organization is identified in charter and supported by a management agreement that spells out services, responsibilities, accountability reporting, performance expectations, and fees
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Implements a process for recruiting, hiring, compensating, monitoring, and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's staff that is clearly defined in staff handbook
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provide regular feedback on instruction to teachers, including both formal and informal observations

Evidence for school governance and organizational design may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- School charter
- Board by-laws, roster, trustee resumes, calendar of meetings, meeting agenda and minutes
- Annual conflict of interest forms
- Board resources for evaluating school leadership and staff, including rubric/performance metrics
- Board resources for self-reflection and professional growth
- Board development plan
- Board interviews
- Staff roster, job descriptions, staff handbook, operations manual
- School calendar
- Professional development plan for leadership staff
- School leadership and staff interviews

### 2b. School Climate and Community Engagement

Schools with a sustaining school climate and engaged parent and community support have many of the characteristics below:

- Create and maintain a healthy professional school climate that is collaborative, student centered, and aligned with school mission and values

- Implement flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- Encourage professional conversations about effective performance and quality instruction among staff, through, for example, such means as regular and periodic teaming (grade level teams, data days, etc.) and peer observations
- Have systems in place to evaluate professional development effectiveness and provide ongoing support for school-wide and individual initiatives
- Employ an effective means of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including, but not limited to, the DOE School Survey
- Have effective home-school communication practices and engagement strategies to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Engage parents actively in the life of the school, including advocacy, community engagement, and feedback on school policies and initiatives
- Develop strong community-based partnerships who support and advocate for the school
- Have a clear procedure for parents and staff to express concerns to school leadership and the Board, as appropriate, including a clearly articulated escalation path to authorizer
- Have made efforts to enroll and retain FRL, ELL, and SWD students

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
- Internal satisfaction surveys
- Staff handbook
- Student retention and wait list data
- Staff retention data
- School Professional Development Plan and staff feedback on professional development events
- Resources for evaluations and observations, scheduled opportunities for professional collaboration, staff feedback on professional development events
- Leadership, staff, parent, student interviews
- Student and staff attendance rates
- Parent/Student Handbook
- Parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences
- Parent association meeting calendar and minutes
- Community partnerships and sponsored programs
- Parent and community feedback via public hearings, renewal calls to parents, etc.
- Community outreach documents (applications, newsletters, announcements, invitations, etc.)
- Documents that illustrate best faith efforts to enroll and retain FRL, ELL and SWD students.

## 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 student enrollment and retention targets
- Maintain annual budgets that meet all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- Provide rigorous oversight of financial and operational responsibilities, as school leadership and Board levels, in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to short- and long-term decision-making
- Have clearly established policies and procedures for overall fiscal and operational health of the school (onboarding of all new staff, record-keeping, processing requests of HR services, application and enrollment calls, visitors, volunteers, etc.)

- Maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- Receive consistently clean financial audits
- If applicable, have strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of charter school design and academic program
- Ensure a safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations
- Have appropriate insurance coverage

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
- Financial leader(s) job description, resume and accountability documents
- Financial and operational organizational chart
- Financial audits
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) for significant partnerships and vendor relationships
- Operational policies and procedures, including training resources
- Staff turnover and retention records
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- School safety plan
- Appropriate insurance documents

### **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, if appropriate, 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 up-to-date charter is available on request 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
- Annual Site Visit reports

- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership, Board, staff and community interviews
- Public hearings (renewal or material revision hearings)

### **3b. Applicable Federal and State Law**

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law:

- Meet all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Implement 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
- Conduct an independently verified fair and open lottery and manage with integrity enrollment process and annual waiting lists
- Employ 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
- Family/Student handbook
- Student discipline records
- Parent complaint/grievance records
- Lottery policy, resources, and records; enrollment procedures and records
- Demographic data (school, district, and other as appropriate)
- 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 CSAS's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members.
- Informed NYC DOE CSAS, and where required, received CSAS 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 with Board, staff, parents, students or others, as appropriate

## 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:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter submission, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Charter (replication) Application
- 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:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter submission, including mission, program description, governance,

organization, budget, etc. for new term

- 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.
- Meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets for FRL, ELL and Students with Disabilities to those of their district of location<sup>6</sup> or are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages for enrollment and retention

Evidence for successful improvements to a school's program or model may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter submission, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and board interviews
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) with partners or important vendors

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<sup>6</sup> School-specific targets for enrollment and retention are to come from NY State Education Department