



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

ACCOUNTABILITY HANDBOOK
for NYC DOE Chancellor-Authorized
Charter Schools

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NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships

52 Chambers Street, Room 213

New York, NY 10007

Tel: 212-374-5419

Fax: 212-374-5760

schools.nyc.gov/charters

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Introduction

The New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) via the Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) is an authorizer currently overseeing 69 Chancellor-authorized, operating charter schools in all five of New York City's boroughs. OSDCP serves as the Chancellor's designee to oversee and make determinations concerning renewal for Chancellor-authorized charter schools, holding these schools to rigorous performance standards, and providing operational support to all charter schools in NYC. The NYC DOE OSDCP's evaluative measures and tools, and its standards of excellence are transparent. This document provides an overview of the NYC DOE OSDCP accountability framework and serves as a guide for Chancellor-authorized charter schools to better understand how OSDCP holds schools accountable.

Article 56 of the New York State Education Law, or the New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998 ("the Act"), enabled the creation of independent, innovative, and autonomous charter schools. These charter schools are afforded more freedom over their educational program and operations than traditional public schools in return for a commitment to meet higher standards of accountability. As set forth in the Act [§2850(2)], the purpose of charter schools in New York is to:

- Improve student learning and achievement;
- Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at risk of academic failure;
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system; and
- Provide schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding the schools accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

The Act states that a charter may be granted for no more than a five-year period, near the end of which the school can apply to its authorizer for renewal of its charter for an additional period of up to five years. The purpose of this renewal period is to hold charter operators accountable for their individual charter goals and for making significant academic progress with their students.

The oversight and monitoring role of the NYC DOE as a chartering entity is governed by the New York State Charter Schools Act and each school's Charter Agreement. This handbook describes the framework, lens and tools through which OSDCP measures and evaluates charter school performance (academic, fiscal, and organizational) annually and upon renewal. All charter schools are also held accountable for meeting their individual charter goals. We believe that by providing clarity and detail, feedback to schools based on our evaluations, and timely notification or intervention, where appropriate, schools can chart a successful course toward renewal.

In addition to this document, schools and their governing boards should consistently closely refer to the goals and standards established in their charter, the executed contract between the board and the NYC DOE (the "charter agreement"), the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework (see page 6), and other NYSED and NYC DOE-issued memoranda including technical advisories and FAQs. If a school has been issued a Notice of Concern, Notice of Deficiency, or Notice of Probation by the NYC DOE, the school should follow the guidelines and requirements set forth in that notice in order to reach full compliance.

Given the changes to the Act, changes and newly issued relevant state and federal laws and DOE Chancellor regulations (as applicable), ongoing revisions to the standard charter agreement, and our continuing efforts to ensure rigorous accountability while respecting schools' autonomy, OSDCP's oversight

processes described in this handbook will continue to evolve.

NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

The NYC DOE OSDCP's Role in Charter School Accountability

As articulated in the New York State charter law (Education Law Article 56, Sections 2850-2857), charter schools in New York are approved for operation for limited terms, not more than five years at a time, and are charged with providing:

- Improved student achievement
- Increased learning opportunities for all students, with an emphasis on at-risk students
- Expanded choices for families
- Innovative teaching practices and educational designs
- New professional opportunities for teachers, administrators, and school staff
- Performance-based accountability

While all of the items are important, the first three are inextricably linked. Charter schools exist to provide high-quality choices to families and students, particularly at-risk students, through cultivating strong educational environments that lead to high academic achievement. Charter schools have autonomy to define what “increased learning opportunities” they are providing to their communities, subject to approval by their authorizer, whether that might be access to innovative educational models, such as a blended school model, or a STEM program targeted for specified at-risk student groups, or a rigorous college preparatory program coupled with a unique career focus. Regardless of the means, all schools must deliver significant educational benefit through improved student achievement and represent a high quality choice for the families they seek to serve. Charter schools are encouraged to set ambitious goals and to pursue them with thoughtful urgency. Consistent, substantial progress toward those goals throughout the charter term will provide evidence that a charter school is properly discharging its responsibilities under the law.

The New York City Department of Education's Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships (OSDCP) team monitors and supports the schools it authorizes via an annual accountability cycle. Chancellor-authorized schools submit an Annual Report to the State Education Department; receive a citywide School Quality Report¹, which includes results from the NYC DOE's annual School Survey and NYS assessment results; and annually submit an external audit of the school's finances.

All Chancellor-authorized charter schools will undergo an Annual Comprehensive Review (ACR) process that may involve a school visit, and all Chancellor-authorized charter schools are subject to potential pop-in visits by the NYC DOE. If a school is up for renewal it may receive a renewal visit in place of the ACR, but will be subject to the full renewal process including a visit for the school year in which the renewal is considered. For more information on the types of monitoring visits that OSDCP conducts, please see page 21.

In addition, the OSDCP team may attend regularly scheduled meetings with a school's board of trustees or request an interview with the board chair during the year.

Schools that do not meet certain performance expectations or are out of compliance with their charter agreement may receive additional monitoring and/or be required to complete and submit a Corrective Action Plan. A variety of circumstances may trigger this additional monitoring; it could be a product of one of the annual accountability cycle events/reports (concerns regarding a fiscal audit, NYS assessment

¹ Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, the NYC DOE replaced the DOE Progress Report with the DOE School Quality Report. The 2012-13 school year is the last year NYC public schools will have a Progress Report score. The Progress Report and School Quality Report contain similar indicators of performance.

results, operational issues, etc.), in response to an investigation prompted by a complaint, or academic performance concerns related to charter renewal.

The NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework

To help Chancellor-authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the OSDCP 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 and operationally sound, viable organization?
3. Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations?
4. What are the school's plans for its next charter term?

Although academic performance is primary, the NYC DOE takes into account a wide variety of factors (as indicated by the framework strands and available evidence detail) when evaluating a school. These factors include academic, fiscal, operational and environmental indicators of a charter school's performance. Additionally, some of the indicators we evaluate relate to expected performance as defined in the New York State Charter Schools Act including evidence of improved student learning and achievement, special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students who are at-risk of academic failure, use of different and innovative teaching methods, parent and student satisfaction, and enrollment and retention of special student populations. Further detail about the application of the framework to school reflection and evaluation is provided beginning on page 17.

What follows is a framework that outlines strands, indicators, and potential evidence for each of the four essential questions. The framework identifies what OSDCP looks at in determining whether a school is successful enough to earn a new charter term, with or without conditions, and the duration of the charter term recommended by NYC DOE. As schools use the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework, they should remember that charter schools exist to deliver improved student achievement for the students they serve, particularly at-risk students, so the schools are high-quality choices for families. This reminder should help a school apply this framework to its own performance analysis, underscoring the state and city's commitment to superior academic performance as the most important factor in a school's performance, while also recognizing the importance of closing the achievement gap and offering high-quality learning opportunities for all students.

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
- Meet other rigorous academic goals as stated on school charter
- Demonstrate increasing student achievement/growth
- Are closing the achievement gap for at risk students, including special needs and ELL students
- Are surpassing academic performance measures of DOE identified peer-schools
- Are surpassing academic performance measures compared with district/city proficiency averages

Evidence for success might include, but not be limited to, the following depending on school configurations:

- Grades 3-8 NYS ELA Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 3-8 NYS Math Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- Grades 4 and 8 NYS Science Results (absolute and comparative performance, individual student progress, progress for at-risk populations, etc.)
- HS 4- and 6-Year Graduation Rates
- Grades 8-12 NYS Regent Exam Results
- 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
- When applicable, NYSAA or other approved alternate assessments results
- Results on state accountability measures
- Charter School Academic Goals
- School-reported internal assessments
- NYC DOE Progress Reports or School Quality Reports²

1b. Instructionally Sound and 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 and Common Core Learning Standards
- Use instructional models and resources that are consistent with school mission and 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
- Utilizes 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 and supporting curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals

² Beginning with the 2013-14 school year, the NYC DOE replaced the DOE Progress Report with the DOE School Quality Report. The 2012-13 school year is the last year NYC public schools will have a Progress Report score. The Progress Report and School Quality Report contain similar indicators of performance.

Evidence for successful education programs, in addition to positive results, may include, but not be limited to, many of the following:

- Classroom observations
- Instructional planning documents (alignments, scope and sequences, curriculum maps, unit and lesson plans, etc.)
- Instructional leader and staff interviews
- Special Education/ELL progress monitoring documentation
- Professional development plans and resources
- Student/teacher schedules
- Student Intervention / Response to Intervention program description and resources
- Interim assessment results
- Data findings; adjusted lesson plans
- Self-assessment documentation

1c. Learning Environment

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

- Provide a safe, respectful, and stable academic environment conducive to student learning (one with efficient transitions and safe hallways, cafeteria, yard, etc.)
- Have a strong academic culture that creates high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to consistently give their best effort academically and to actively engage in their own learning and the life of the school
- 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
- Have classrooms where academic risk-taking and student participation is encouraged and supported
- Have 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:

- Classroom observations
- NYC DOE School Survey results (students, parents and teachers)
- 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 (referral, suspension, expulsion)
- Parent complaint/concern information
- Self-administered satisfaction survey results
- Interviews with school leadership, staff, and, if appropriate, students
- Scheduled student engagement opportunities (e.g., student advisory, internships, student government, student led conferences, peer tutoring, peer mediation, etc.)
- School calendar and class schedules

2. Is the School a Fiscally and Operationally Sound, Viable Organization?

2a. Mission and Goals

Schools with a successful mission and goals have many of the characteristics below:

- Have an animated mission statement and clearly articulated goals (both academic and non-academic) that staff, students and community embrace
- Demonstrate an active self-evaluation process that involves regular monitoring, an examination of practices based on outcomes against goals, and reporting on progress towards school goals
- Have processes for adjusting strategies in support of goals as appropriate in response to monitoring data

Evidence for a successful mission and goals might include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Mission Statement
- School charter and external documents (student/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
- Stakeholder interviews (board, parents, staff, students, etc.)

2b. Leadership and Governance Structure

Schools with successful leadership and governance 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 Law and conflict of interest laws, 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
- 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
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provides 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 and core operational policies
- School calendar
- Professional development plans
- Stakeholder interviews (board, school leadership and staff)

2c. 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
- Employ an effective means of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including, but not limited to, the NYC DOE School Survey
- Have effective home-school communication practices and engagement strategies to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Strong community-based partnerships that support and advocate for the school
- Engage families actively in the life of the school, including advocacy, community engagement, and feedback on school policies and initiatives
- 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
- Share instructional and operational practices with the larger NYC school community and actively seek opportunities for partnering and collaboration
- 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

Evidence for school climate and community engagement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- NYC 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
- Participation in NYC DOE initiatives and efforts to collaborate/partner with other NYC schools
- Parent and community feedback via public hearings, renewal calls to parents, etc.
- Community outreach documents (newsletters, announcements, invitations, etc.)
- 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
- Student/Family and Staff Handbooks

2d. Operational Health

Schools that are effective, sustainable organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- A safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations
- Demonstrate efficient and orderly daily operations
- Have appropriate insurance coverage and insurance and facility documents
- An effective process for recruiting, hiring, compensating, monitoring, supporting, and evaluating school leadership and staff
- A flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- Consistently meet student enrollment and retention targets as established by SED (applicable to schools renewed after 2010)
- Communications with NYC DOE are timely, comprehensive, and appropriate
- If applicable, school relationship with a charter management organization identified in charter and supported by a management agreement that spells out services, responsibilities, accountability reporting, performance expectations, and fees

Evidence of an operationally viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- Appropriate insurance documents
- Operational policies and procedures
- Operational organizational chart
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- School safety plan
- Immunization completion rate information
- Appropriate AED/CPR certifications

2e. Financial Sustainability

Schools that are responsible stewards of public funds and are effective, sustainable organizations have many of the characteristics below:

- Maintain annual budgets that meet all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- Provide rigorous oversight of financial and operational responsibilities, at 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
- Consistently clean financial audits and compliant escrow accounts
- If applicable, strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of charter school's design and academic program
- School leadership and Board maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- School leadership and Board oversee financial and operational responsibilities in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to decision-making
- Demonstrate financial planning for future school years, including per-pupil and space-related cost projections

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 audits, escrow accounts and other fiscal reporting documents
- Financial leader(s) resume and accountability documents
- Financial and operational organizational chart
- Contracts or Memos of Understanding (MOUs) for significant partnerships and vendor relationships

3. Is the School in Compliance with its Charter and All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

3a. Approved Charter and Agreement

Schools in substantial compliance with the school’s charter and charter agreement have the characteristics below:

- Implement 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
- Implement 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 Comprehensive Review reports
- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership/Board and staff interviews
- Public hearings (renewal or material revision hearings)

3b. Applicable Federal and State Law

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law have the characteristics below:

- Meet all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets for Free and Reduced Price Lunch, ELL and Special Education students to those of their community school district of location³ or are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages for enrollment and retention
- 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 enrollment process and annual waiting lists with integrity
- Employ instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and meet all certification requirements

³ School-specific targets for enrollment and retention are to come from NY State Education Department. This requirement of the New York State Charter Schools Act applies to schools renewed after 2010.

Evidence for compliance with applicable federal and state law may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School reporting documents
- School's NYSED Annual Report
- Student recruitment plan and resources
- Student management policies and promotion and retention policies
- Student/Family Handbook
- Student discipline policy and 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 the characteristics below:

- Safe and secure facilities with no significant compliance concerns
- Consistently clean annual audits, up-to-date escrow accounts, and complete 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 comply with NYC DOE OSDCP's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members
- Inform NYC DOE OSDCP, and where required, receive OSDCP 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
- Stakeholder 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, a school may consider various growth options: replication, expansion to new grades or increased enrollment, or alteration of its 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 determine community needs and to communicate regarding the school's 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 revision or merger applications
- 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 (for example, human resource policies for growing your own talent, 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)
- School develops contingency plans especially for facilities or financial scenarios

Evidence for organizational sustainability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Charter renewal application
- Board roster and resumes
- Board committees and minutes
- School organizational 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 without major changes through expansion or replication, 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:

- Renewal application narrative, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Renewal application revised charter 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

Using the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework for Charter Schools

How should schools use this framework?

The framework provides a comprehensive description of what successful charter school performance might look like. Some elements, including the most important, are school performance outcomes: NYS assessment results, graduation rates, credit accumulation, closing the achievement gap, internal assessment results, satisfaction results on DOE School Surveys, attendance rates, and the like. The framework can be used by Boards and school leaders to keep these critical outcomes clearly in focus, reflect on their own progress in pursuit of positive outcomes, and to define the interim measures that will be regularly monitored to ensure positive results for these outcomes each year.

Other elements of the framework are descriptive of best practice means to the required positive performance outcomes, including what a responsive education program looks like, a healthy and supportive learning environment and school climate, an effective governance structure and school organization, etc. These elements are more broadly defined because effective schools can approach these in a variety of ways depending on their educational and administrative philosophy, their school design and instructional model, their approach to student management, etc. Despite the designed flexibility in these areas, effective Boards and school leaders can adapt the indicator statements to their school's unique features and use the evidence for the indicators to monitor successful implementation of their school model.

Still, other elements are essentially yes/no indicators, including many of the financial indicators in Essential Question 2 and the compliance related strands and indicators in Essential Question 3. Boards and school leaders need to know these are important and ensure schools have audits completed on time and that audits are clean, for example, or that the school meets its enrollment and retention targets for FRL, Special Education, and ELL students. (On the latter example, the Board and school leaders should know the state-established targets, the school's standing relative to those targets and what efforts the school is making to meet those targets.) When an answer is "no" to any of these financial or compliance related elements, there should be observable evidence that the school is either working on a remedy or adjusting efforts to get a better result.

Finally, Essential Question 4 speaks to the importance for charter schools to not just bear in mind that they are always in the renewal process but that their long-term success depends on having a strategic vision and doing the necessary groundwork for executing that vision in a timely manner. Waiting until the renewal year to think strategically about the next term is not a recipe for success. Large initiatives require time to execute including initiatives such as moving to a private facility, growing into an existing facility, or expanding to new grade levels. The elements of Essential Question 4 are important for school leaders to bear in mind and especially for Boards to be thinking and planning about—how do we build the necessary capacity? What implications are there for the current state? What impact might the current state have on our long-term plans? The framework can be useful in prompting this kind of necessary reflection.

Because of the framework's comprehensive nature, schools can use it to prepare for any comprehensive review of the school's status and performance, whether internal or external, by re-visiting the Essential Questions, Strands, Indicators and Evidence contained in the framework. It can help schools think about where they are, how they are progressing, what might need more attention, and so on. This reflection can help with school improvement planning or preparing the school to complete its Self-Evaluation Form prior to an Annual Comprehensive Review by OSDCP staff.

Because the framework looks at school success in a structured way, school leadership or Boards can focus on a specific part of the framework for a specific purpose. For example, an education committee of the Board might review the strands of Essential Question 1 with a new committee member as part of his or her orientation to the oversight work before the committee. School leadership might do something similar with new staff or new parents to the school to ensure they understand the school's performance accountability.

Along with the school's charter, the framework can be a very useful tool to ensuring that the school community is on the same page when it comes to mission, goals, program, and accountability.

How will the OSDCP team use the framework?

The framework will provide guidance to the OSDCP team for accountability related interactions between OSDCP and the charter schools the NYC DOE authorizes. It will:

- inform our preparation for each Annual Comprehensive Review, in particular, helping us review performance and required documentation from the school to target visit discussion questions,
- help us prepare for specific interactions with charter schools (attending a Board meeting, reviewing and discussing charter revision requests, submission of required reporting documentation, etc.), and
- guide the renewal process, including our review of renewal applications, evaluation of renewal visit documentation, and preparing the Renewal Report, the last of which will include OSDCP's recommendation to the Chancellor.

The framework provides a comprehensive picture of what success looks like for each Essential Question. It is not, however, a rubric where total points are calculated and evaluated against absolute cut scores to determine which schools are renewed. Schools are too complex and circumstances too nuanced for such a strict formulaic calculation. How each question plays into a renewal decision is discussed below. The use of the different elements of the framework in renewal decisions is designed to ensure that charter schools are held accountable for performance, but that their autonomy in determining how they get their results is respected. With that in mind, strands directly related to academic performance, financial or operational health and sustainability, and compliance are more important than others, with academic performance being most important. Other strands are not unimportant; they allow for the consideration of other factors in schools being evaluated for renewal, especially in circumstances where the performance results are mixed, inconsistent or the data is not yet robust enough to be conclusive (one-three years of data).

Essential Question 1: Is the School an Academic Success?

There are three strands within this Essential Question: 1a. High Academic Attainment and Improvement, 1b. Instructionally Sound and Responsive Education Program, and 1c. Learning Environment.

1a is about student outcomes, the school's academic performance, and it is the primary strand in the framework. If the school is clearly and consistently demonstrating strong academic attainment and/or consistent and significant progress academically, then absent financial management, operational or compliance issues, the school will be renewed.

Strands 1b and 1c describe common characteristics of academically successful schools. They will help the school and OSDCP prepare for Annual Comprehensive Reviews and the renewal process. During an Annual Comprehensive Review or a renewal, the framework elements will help identify areas of strength or for growth within the feedback we provide the schools. In terms of a renewal judgment, what matters is evidence of significant educational benefit to students as measured through the academic results.

Elements of the framework beyond 1a become more important in renewal decisions when academic results are mixed or inconsistent or when academic accountability data (NYS assessment results, graduation rates, etc.) are lacking or represent only a year or two of documented results. ("Mixed" means a school meets or exceeds some academic performance measures but fails to meet others; "inconsistent" means that its academic performance fluctuates from year to year.) In those instances, the presence or absence of the conditions for success will provide additional evidence for a renewal, renewal with conditions, or non-renewal decision.

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

There are five strands within this Essential Question: 2a. Mission and Goals, 2b. Leadership and Governance Structure, 2c. School Climate and Community Engagement, 2d. Operational Health, and 2e. Financial Sustainability. If evidence is present in support of each of the strands, the school has the capacity and resources, supported by diligent oversight, to accomplish its academic goals. The framework elements here can help the school and OSDCP prepare for an Annual Comprehensive Review or renewal and, as appropriate, would contribute to the visited school's identified areas of strength or areas for growth.

If there are no or only minor concerns around these strands, a school with very strong academic indicators would be renewed. If there are one or more serious concerns, a school may be granted a short-term renewal with conditions related to the areas of concerns, or be recommended for non-renewal.

If the school's performance across the indicators for 1a-1c is mixed or inconsistent, the school's performance in strand 2 will have more impact on the renewal decision. In these instances, OSDCP looks at the examples of evidence linked to the indicators for these strands to make a judgment on the school's capacity for consistent improvement. The school might then be renewed with clear academic conditions that if not met in the early years of the next charter term could result in probation and lead to revocation if not successfully addressed. If the financial and operational review does not yield evidence of capacity necessary for consistent improvement, the school would not be renewed.

If there are financial, operational, or governance problems that violate law or jeopardize the school's continued financial existence, the school will not be renewed even if its academic results were positive.

Essential Question 3: Is the School in Compliance with its Charter and All Applicable Laws and Regulations?

There are three strands within this Essential Question: compliance with 3a. Approved Charter and Agreement, 3b. Applicable Federal and State Law, and 3c. Applicable Regulations. NYC DOE authorized charter schools should always strive to be in full compliance with their charters and all applicable laws and regulations. That said, compliance issues may occur and should be addressed directly and in good faith as they occur. During renewal, schools should reflect on their standing, address any newly discovered issues, and/or report on progress toward full compliance. Material and substantive compliance violations that go unaddressed and/or unresolved may result in non-renewal.

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

There are three strands for this Essential Question: 4a. School Expansion or Model Replication, 4b. Organizational Sustainability, and 4c. School or Model Improvements. This Essential Question concerns a school's plans for significant changes in its charter for the next charter term. These may include grade expansion or changes in enrollment, or model improvements, such as replacing a core curriculum program. The evidence is evaluated to determine whether the school has the capacity to take on these changes successfully and, even if significant model or program changes are not being proposed, does it have the capacity to sustain its performance through the next charter term. Changes in governance or school leadership would be addressed in this Essential Question. Current performance concerns would be largely addressed in the previous three Essential Questions so the evaluation of the elements related to this Essential Question would not likely impact a decision to renew or not, but would impact whether a material revision, such as a request to expand to new grades, is approved with renewal.

OSDCP reserves the right to not renew a school based on current and past performance, regardless of the school's plans for its next charter term.

NYC DOE Monitoring Visits

Rationale

The NYC DOE OSDCP team has developed a comprehensive monitoring plan for conducting ongoing oversight of schools to provide feedback on their progress toward meeting their goals and thus toward renewal. OSDCP views the purpose of monitoring visits as twofold:

1. To gather data on a school's educational environment, board capacity, leadership, and operational/financial viability to be able to make informed renewal decisions; and
2. To provide schools with formative feedback and support.

For schools that demonstrate strong student progress and achievement, smooth operations, effective leadership, highly satisfied parents, effective internal controls, and most importantly, an ability to self-reflect and constantly improve, an Annual Comprehensive Review visit may not be necessary each year. Therefore, those schools that have demonstrated continued success through strong performance results, sound operational/financial practices, and strong Board capacity may not receive a formal visit each year. Instead they may receive a shorter, more informal pop-in visit.

The chart below outlines the different types of visits that OSDCP may conduct. This section contains information on the protocols for each type of visit, the documentation required, and the potential outcomes of the visits.

Visit Type	Year of Charter	Visit Length	Additional Notes
Pop-In Visit	Any (may occur in addition to or in place of an Annual Comprehensive Visit)	1-3 hours	OSDCP reserves the right to "pop in" to any school over the course of the year for an informal visit. This includes visits to the Board of Trustees during regularly scheduled board meetings. These visits may be "social" pop-ins or "oversight" pop-ins (please see pages 22-23 for more details).
Annual Comprehensive Review Visit	Any (may occur in addition to or in place of a pop-in visit; typically does not occur during a renewal year, pending OSDCP's discretion)	½ - full day with potential for follow-up	All Chancellor-authorized schools are eligible for this visit. See pages 24-27 for more information.
Renewal Visit	Timing of visit varies depending on charter expiration date—typically occurs within 6 months of charter expiration	2-3 days	All schools that are up for renewal will receive a more thorough visit from the OSDCP team. See pages 27-34 for more information.

Pop-In Visits

Overview

The OSDCP team reserves the right to conduct multiple types of pop-in visits over the course of the school year. These may include social pop-ins (including visits to non-DOE authorized schools), oversight pop-ins (2-3 hour visits for Chancellor-authorized schools), or additional visits to follow up on parent complaints, probationary status, or other areas of concern. School leaders may or may not be informed of visit times in advance.

Social Pop-Ins

Social pop-ins are brief and informal and can occur at any time during the school year. For NYC charter schools that are not authorized by the DOE, pop-ins are opportunities for the NYC DOE to check in with school leaders regarding operational support and co-location/facility issues at the start of the school year and to learn more about the school's educational programming for NYC public school students.

For Chancellor-authorized charter schools, these visits are opportunities for school leadership to discuss with OSDCP staff the successes and challenges of opening weeks, OSDCP staff to preliminarily observe the school's educational environment and academics, and for school leadership to share with the OSDCP team the school's plans for the year. These visits are usually conducted by one to two OSDCP team members and typically last no more than two hours. The OSDCP team will not request any pre-visit documentation before social pop-ins, and generally will not follow up with any formal or informal communication.

Oversight Pop-Ins

Oversight pop-in visits can occur at any time during the school year. Cohorts may decide to conduct an oversight pop-in at a particular school rather than a formal Annual Comprehensive Review visit if the school has recently been visited for a renewal and/or if the school demonstrates continual high levels of performance. Schools will typically be informed of a targeted week for the pop-in visit, but not of the actual date. (Cohorts may request input from schools regarding "black-out dates" within the window during which the school will be unable to host a visit due to testing, field trips, or absence of school leaders.)

Oversight pop-in visits generally consist of a meeting with school leadership, short classroom observations with an instructional leader, and conclude with a brief summary conversation. Except in exceptional circumstances or when following up with a school on probation, a formal report will not be generated in response to these visits. The OSDCP team will not request any pre-visit documentation before the pop-in visit, but may ask to view documents on site. These visits are usually conducted by one to three OSDCP team members and last 2-3 hours.

Protocol for Pop-In Visits

Because oversight pop-in visits are not pre-scheduled, the meeting with school leadership may include only the school leader or some members of the school leadership team, depending on availability. Questions for the pop-in visit will be framed around the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework and may include questions about other documentation that the school has submitted to OSDCP.

School leaders should make teachers and assistants aware that their classrooms may be visited during the visit. School leaders should also make teachers aware that the visit is a check-in on the school's progress, not of the individuals or of individual teachers' practices. Reviewers will not provide feedback to teachers; reviewers may speak with students while they are observing a lesson, if appropriate, but will not interrupt

the lesson. Reviewers may ask students about what work they are completing during a group activity, about a recently completed task, or other questions relevant to the review. Reviewers will not provide instruction to students at any point.

Annual Comprehensive Review Visits

Overview

The NYC DOE OSDCP conducts an Annual Comprehensive Review each year of all NYC-authorized charter schools, some of which will receive an accompanying school visit. The purpose of the visit is to assess progress toward the school's charter goals as well as the school's performance in relationship to the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework. Unlike OSDCP's pop-in visits, the Annual Comprehensive Review visit is planned in advance and requires the school to prepare documentation and set up interviews prior to the visit.

The typical visit consists of classroom observations and interviews with school leadership, operations team members, administrators (e.g. Special Education & ELL coordinators, if requested), and teachers. OSDCP may request a separate meeting with the school's Board, but this may not take place on the day of the visit. Visits usually begin with a meeting with the leadership team during which school leadership may discuss its self-evaluation, but primarily members of the OSDCP visit team will ask questions. Visits will end with a debrief during which the OSDCP visit lead shares feedback from the visit. More information may be found in the sample schedule on page 27.

Prior to the visit, school leaders should expect to hear from a member of the OSDCP team with more details about the targeted visit date(s) for the school, a sample schedule for the visit, and a list of requested documentation. Members of your cohort team will be in touch with you throughout the weeks prior to the visit to discuss the following topics:

- 1) Confirmation of the visit date(s)
- 2) Scheduling key activities of the visit (interviews with teachers, school leaders; debrief meeting)
- 3) Any school questions regarding documentation, etc.
- 4) Directions, space accommodations and any other logistical matters

This annual review is an opportunity for OSDCP to observe the school's daily practices, implementation, processes, and routines. Documentation should be available on site, and the school should not collect documents for review from a location outside of where they are usually organized (except as outlined below). Although the team reviews various documents, the school should not prepare any *additional* binders or folders of information for the visit team, unless specifically requested.

Please note that the school should make available for the visit team a room of where the team can work and discuss observations in privacy during its visit. OSDCP requests the use of this room without disruption during the lunch period and the afternoon internal visit team debrief period (see sample schedule below).

After the Annual Comprehensive Review visit, OSDCP will issue a report containing the findings of the documentation reviewed, desk audit and school visit, if applicable. All schools will be given the opportunity to review the report for factual errors and submit requested technical corrections. Once OSDCP has incorporated the appropriate revisions, it will finalize the reports and post these to the DOE official website. These reports will be used as evidence for renewal decision-making.

Visit Team Composition

The Annual Comprehensive Review team is comprised of (in most cases) between two and four representatives of the OSDCP team, along with members of other Department of Education offices (such as the Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support) and DOE consultants, as needed. Team members focus on different areas, based on their area of expertise and knowledge base.

Protocol for Annual Comprehensive Review Visits

The leadership team meeting in the morning generally begins the visit with an opportunity for schools to answer questions from the OSDCP visit team related to the school's self-evaluation and other sources of data. Schools are allowed to define the composition of their leadership team for the purpose of the morning and afternoon debrief; however these should always include the school leader or head of school and, if the school has a formal leadership team, OSDCP prefers they all be included in the meeting if possible. However, schools sometimes choose to include additional staff, such as a director of curriculum, representative(s) from the charter management organization (CMO), if applicable, and/or consultants or coaches who have a critical support role with the school. Board members may also attend these meetings. The individuals who will be participating in the leadership team meetings should be identified during the pre-visit phone call.

Unlike in pop-in visits, we include teacher interviews on the Annual Comprehensive Review visit schedule. Members of the visit team conduct small group interviews (generally 1-2 teachers per group) of approximately 20 minutes per interview. OSDCP requests to meet with a range of teachers from different grade levels, different subject areas, and with a range of experience / years at the school. OSDCP also generally meets with the school's operations team and may request separate meetings, such as with the school's Special Education coordinator or dean of students. These details will be discussed during the pre-visit phone call with the visit lead.

The protocol for classroom observations is similar to the guidelines for pop-in observations, but these visits may be longer in duration (10-20 minutes, although this may vary depending on the specific lesson and activity that students are completing). Schools should have a member of the instructional leadership team available to accompany OSDCP team members on all classroom visits and debrief each observation afterward. The OSDCP visit lead will review expectations for these observations with the school leader prior to the visit.

School leaders should make teachers and assistants aware that their classrooms may be visited. Review team members may review student work, lesson plans, rubrics, and other documentation present in the classroom during time slated for observations. School leaders should also make teachers aware that the visit is a check-in on the school's progress, not of individuals or of individual teachers' practices. Reviewers do not provide feedback to teachers. Reviewers may speak with students while they are observing a lesson, if appropriate, but will not interrupt the lesson. Reviewers may ask students about what work they are completing during a group activity, about a recently completed task, or other questions relevant to the review. Students' anonymity will be preserved and no student observations will be identified by name either in the Annual Comprehensive Report or during debrief meetings with the leadership team.

At the end of the day, the OSDCP visit team will reconvene with school leadership for a debrief meeting in which OSDCP will share preliminary findings regarding the school's performance as related to the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework and the four essential questions. These are the "headlines" of the Annual Comprehensive Review report, but may vary in number or wording in the final report. In addition, OSDCP may include additional evidence from documentation or observations in the final report.

Documentation for Annual Site Visits

The following documents should be emailed to OSDCP (charteroversight@schools.nyc.gov) prior to the visit. This list may be subject to change; you should expect to hear from one of your cohort members in advance of the visit to discuss required documentation.

- **School Self-Evaluation Form** (use template)
- **School Data collection Form** (use template)

- **Roster of all Instructional Staff, Non-Instructional Staff, and Board Members** (use template)
- **School Organizational Chart** including job titles, staff names, and lines of reporting
- **Schedule of School Fire and Bus Drill Dates for 2014-15SY** (schools in non-DOE operated facilities only)
- **School Safety Plan** (schools in non-DOE operated facilities only)
- **Special Education Compliance Form** (use template)
- **Board minutes** for all meetings held to date of submission during the 2014-15 school year
- **Mid-Year Fiscal Check-In** for Year-to Date Period Ending 12/31/14
 - Profit and Loss statement for the YTD period ending 12/31/14 (must indicate Board Approved Budget vs. YTD performance and Revised Budget)
 - Statement of Cash Flows YTD period ending 12/31/14
 - Balance Sheet (balances on 12/31/14)
 - Statement of Functional Expenses for YTD period ending 12/31/14

NOTE ► All documents are required each year for the Annual Comprehensive Review, regardless of whether or not a school will receive a related visit.

Other Visit Documentation

The following is a list of possible documentation to be reviewed or discussed during the visit. The team reviews curricular and other documents where they are typically located, as they are normally arranged, stored or organized (except as outlined above). Again, this list is subject to change and the review team may request to see additional documentation not included in the list below.

- Admissions and Attendance Policies
- Disciplinary Policy
- Curricular maps/pacing guides – explanation of academic program
- Lesson plans
- Professional development plans
- Program information for special needs and ELL students
- Explanation of internal assessment program and any relevant samples
- Student Performance Data
- Internal satisfaction surveys
- Current building safety documents
- Staff evaluation tools and documents
- Operational systems and policies
- Attendance, attrition, and waitlist data
- Any other relevant documentation, as requested

Annual Comprehensive Review Visit Sample Schedule

The visit schedule for any given school is dependent on their individual school schedules, the availability of staff to speak with visit team members, and other school-specific variables. OSDCP reserves the right to change or modify this schedule at any point prior to or during the day of the visit.

Sample Schedule*

Time	Activity
8:00 – 8:15	Arrival
8:15-9:30	Meeting and Interview with School Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and Visit Purpose (OSDCP)—5 minutes • Q & A—70 minutes
9:30-12:00	Classroom Visits and Interviews with Teachers and Administrators (i.e. Special Ed./ELL Coordinators, Director of Operations, Data Manager)
12:00-1:00	Team Lunch Meeting (Schools should NOT order/buy lunch)
1:00-2:00	Flexible Time (Additional data gathering, additional meetings, and/or additional classroom visits as necessary)
2:00-2:45	Internal Debrief (DOE Staff)
2:45-3:30	Meeting and Debrief with School Leadership

*This schedule is subject to change and is meant to provide an outline of the activities to be conducted. The details of the visit at any particular school will be determined in collaboration with the Principal/School Leader during the pre-visit phone call.

**Additionally, some schools, depending on size or circumstance, may require a longer (up to 2 days) visit.

Renewal Process

Overview

The NYC DOE does not automatically grant charter renewal, and no charter operator is entitled to renewal. Rather, a school must prove that it has earned renewal and is worthy of continuing the privilege of educating New York City public school students. To make such determinations, the OSDCP renewal team analyzes the school's renewal application, which is built around the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework and includes a retrospective analysis of the school's prior track record as well as a prospective plan for the school. In reviewing this information, a school must be able to demonstrate that it can satisfy the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school a fiscally and operationally sound, viable organization?
3. Is the school compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations?
4. What are the school's plans for its next charter term?

While the academic performance of students is the foremost determining factor of a school's success, a school's ability to demonstrate an effective educational program, a financially and operationally viable organization, and a strong learning community with support from stakeholders are important factors that inform a renewal decision. For more information on how OSDCP makes renewal recommendations to the Chancellor, please see the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework overview on page 6.

Statutory Basis for Renewal

The New York State Charter Schools Act ("the Act") states the following regarding the renewal of a school's charter:

§2851.4: Charters may be renewed, upon application, for a term of up to five years in accordance with the provisions of this article for the issuance of such charters pursuant to section twenty-eight hundred fifty-two of this article; provided, however, that a renewal application shall [also] include:

- (a) A report of the progress of the charter school in achieving the educational objectives set forth in the charter.
- (b) A detailed financial statement that discloses the cost of administration, instruction and other spending categories for the charter school that will allow a comparison of such costs to other schools, both public and private. Such statement shall be in a form prescribed by the board of regents.
- (c) Copies of each of the annual reports of the charter school required by subdivision two of section twenty-eight hundred fifty-seven of this article, including the charter school report cards and the certified financial statements.
- (d) Indications of parent and student satisfaction.
- (e) The means by which the charter school will meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets as prescribed by the board of regents or the board of trustees of the state university of New York, as applicable, of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program which shall be considered by the charter entity prior to approving such charter school's application for renewal. When developing such targets, the board of regents and the board of trustees of the state university of New York shall ensure (1) that such enrollment targets are comparable to the enrollment figures of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school

district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the charter school is located; and (2) that such retention targets are comparable to the rate of retention of such categories of students attending the public schools within the school district, or in a city school district in a city having a population of one million or more inhabitants, the community school district, in which the proposed charter school would be located.

Such renewal application shall be submitted to the charter entity no later than six months prior to the expiration of the charter; provided, however, that the charter entity may waive such deadline for good cause shown.

The determination of whether to approve a renewal application rests in the sole discretion of a charter school’s authorizer.

Renewal Process Overview

This section outlines the basic sequence of events for a renewal. It is intended only to show the general structure of the renewal process. A specific timeline will be discussed during the renewal process with each individual school.

Timeline	Renewal Component	Component Description
	Renewal Kickoff Phone Call	A member of OSDCP will discuss the process and specific timeline for the renewal process.
<i>Typically no later than 6 months before charter expiration date, due prior to renewal site visit</i>	Renewal Application Due	The school submits the Renewal Application to OSDCP.
<i>Between submission of renewal application and typically up to 2 weeks prior to school renewal visit</i>	OSDCP Review and Clarification	NYC DOE renewal team members review the Renewal Application and, if necessary, request clarifying information from the school.
<i>Two weeks before renewal visit</i>	Pre-Visit Documentation Submission Due	The school submits documentation that will help the NYC DOE renewal team prepare for the site visit.
<i>TBD with each school (expect at least 3 months prior to charter expiration date)</i>	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.
<i>TBD with each school (may be scheduled to coincide with the renewal visit or after the visit is completed)</i>	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.
<i>Following the site visit</i>	Chancellor’s Decision/Report of Findings	Based on a recommendation from OSDCP, 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 not subject to further review

Timeline	Renewal Component	Component Description
Prior to charter expiration date	Submission to the New York State Education Department (NYSED)	If the Chancellor recommends renewal, OSDCP will submit a 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 can approve and issue the charter as proposed by the charter entity, return the proposed charter to the charter entity for reconsideration or may fail to act on the proposed charter within 90 days of its submission.⁴ If the charter is approved or if the Board of Regents fails to act, the Board of Regents will issue a charter for the term specified.⁵</p>

Renewal Site Visit Overview

OSDCP schedules and conducts a comprehensive 2- or 3-day visit after receiving the school’s Renewal Application. The purpose of the visit is to assess the quality and performance of the school in relationship to the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework. Additionally, the visit is meant to supplement and verify the information presented in the school’s renewal application. The renewal visit should be viewed as one of the components leading to a renewal determination.

The main focus of the renewal visit is Essential Question 1: “Is the School an Academic Success?” Strands included under academic success address the following areas: High Academic Attainment and Improvement; Instructionally Sound and Responsive Education Program; and Learning Environment. For more information on the evidence that OSDCP looks at in making renewal determinations, please see the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework on page 6.

While the visit focuses on Essential Question 1, there is also an on-site review of elements related to Essential Questions 2 and 3, including school governance, financial practices, stakeholder satisfaction, and compliance. Most reviews in these areas are completed through a thorough examination of submitted and historical documentation. These important aspects of the school provide further evidence around the goals that were set in the charter.

⁴ Per New York State Education Law 2852(5-a) and (5-b), if the Board of Regents fails to act on a proposed charter within 90 days of submission by the charter entity, the proposed charter shall be deemed to have been approved and issued by the Board of Regents at the expiration of such period.

⁵ In order to align charter expirations to the academic year, going forward, charter expiration dates will be June 30 of a given school year. Your cohort Senior Director will discuss this as part of the renewal process.

The renewal visit consists of 2-3 days of classroom observations, interviews with school staff, teachers and students, as well as extensive document review. The renewal visit may be conducted over consecutive days or split between two or more site visits to the school, possibly even across more than one school year depending on the date of charter expiration.

The renewal team may also request interviews with Board members or attend scheduled Board meetings. Within a month before the full OSDCP renewal team convenes at the school, the visit lead conducts a phone conference with the school leader to review the proposed visit schedule and talk through required documentation. School leaders review the proposed visit schedule, make any necessary changes, and ask any remaining questions about the visit.

The renewal visit is an opportunity for the OSDCP visit team to observe the school's daily practices, implementation, processes, and routines. Similar to the protocols for Annual Comprehensive Review visits, while documentation should be available on site, the school should not collect documents for review in a location outside of where documents are usually organized or prepare any additional binders of information specifically for the visit team. Also, similar to the protocols for Annual Comprehensive Review visits, OSDCP requests that the school make a meeting room available for the OSDCP renewal team to eat lunch and debrief without disruption.

OSDCP recommends that all school staff and parents be made aware of the renewal process and of the importance of this milestone in the life of a charter school. The NYC DOE will send letters to families explaining the renewal process and inviting them to submit feedback on the proposed renewal of the school. OSDCP staff may also call a random selection of parents in order to gauge parents' perspectives on the school.

Visit Team Composition

The renewal visit team is comprised of (in most cases) between four and six representatives of the OSDCP team, along with members of other Department of Education offices (such as the Division of Specialized Instruction and Student Support) and DOE consultants, as needed. Team members focus on different areas, based on their area of expertise and knowledge base. Additionally, district superintendents and NYC DOE senior leadership may be invited to join the renewal review process if available.

Protocol for Renewal Visits

Renewal visits begin with a leadership team meeting in the morning during which OSDCP asks the leadership team questions based on its renewal application and other supporting documentation. As in Annual Comprehensive Review visits, schools are allowed to define the composition of their leadership team for the purpose of the morning and afternoon debrief; however these should always include the school leader or head of school and, if the school has a formal leadership team, OSDCP prefers they all be included in the meeting if possible. However, schools sometimes choose to include additional staff, such as a director of curriculum, representative(s) from the charter management organization (CMO), if applicable, and/or consultants or coaches who have a critical support role with the school. Board members may also attend these meetings; however, bear in mind that the renewal process does include an independently scheduled board (or Board chair) interview. The leadership meeting is usually longer on Day 1 but OSDCP may request an additional morning meeting with the leadership team on Day 2 depending on the progress of the Day 1 visit.

Similar to Annual Comprehensive Review visits, teachers should be made available to meet with the renewal visit team during individual or small group interviews (not more than 3 teachers per group). OSDCP requests to meet with a range of teachers from different grade levels, different subject areas, and with a range of experience / years at the school. OSDCP will also meet with the school's operations team

and may request separate meetings, such as with the school's SPED coordinator or dean of students. These details will be discussed during the pre-visit phone call with the visit lead.

In addition to teacher interviews, OSDCP also asks to schedule time for student interviews during the renewal visits. These can occur during students' lunch/recess periods or at any other time of the day that is least disruptive for students. OSDCP requests to meet with a range of students from different grade levels and who have spent different amounts of time at the school. Students' anonymity will be preserved and no student observations will be identified by name either in the renewal report or during debrief meetings with the leadership team.

The protocol for classroom observations is similar to the guidelines for Annual Comprehensive Review visit observations, but these visits are generally longer in duration (15-20 minutes, although this may vary depending on the specific lesson and activity that students are completing). Schools should have a member of the instructional leadership team available to accompany OSDCP team members on all classroom visits and debrief each observation afterward. The OSDCP visit lead will review expectations for these observations with the school leader prior to the visit.

School leaders should make teachers and assistants aware that their classrooms may be visited for longer periods of time than on previous visits. Review team members may review student work, lesson plans, rubrics, and other documentation present in the classroom during time slated for observations. Teachers do not need to be available to speak with the visit team during classroom observations.

School leaders should also make teachers aware that the renewal visit is an evaluation of the school, not of individuals, and not of individual teachers' practices. Reviewers do not provide feedback to teachers. Renewal visit team members may speak with students while they are observing a lesson. Teachers should make students aware of this possibility. The renewal report will not include names, and will make a concerted effort to protect the anonymity of all teachers and students observed.

At the end of each day, the OSDCP visit team will reconvene with school leadership for a debrief meeting. On Day 1, this debrief meeting is generally short and consists of a summary of what was observed and any additional requests for Day 2 (e.g. documentation to review, particular subjects or grade levels in which OSDCP would like to do additional observations, elements of the schedule that need to be adjusted). On Day 2, the visit team will provide a debrief that includes a discussion of next steps.

Documentation for Renewal Visit

Schools are not required to submit any additional documentation for the renewal visit beyond that which is required for the renewal application. OSDCP reserves the right to request specific updated or additional documentation as necessary.

Other Renewal Documentation

The following is a list of possible documentation to be reviewed during the renewal visit. While the team will be looking at various documents, the school should not prepare any additional binders of information specifically for the visit. If the team reviews documents other than those listed, they will do so where the documents reside within the school site.

- Curricular maps/pacing guides – explanation of academic program
- Lesson plans
- Professional development plans and schedules
- Program information for special needs students
- ELL program information
- Admission and Attendance policies

- Discipline policy
- Faculty meeting minutes
- Staff and/or Student/Family Handbooks
- Recent parent newsletters
- Explanation of internal assessment program and any relevant samples
- Student performance data
- Board minutes
- Audited financial statements
- Current building safety documents
- Staff evaluation tools and documents
- Attendance, attrition, and waitlist data

Visit Schedule

The visit schedule for any given school is dependent on their individual school schedules, the availability of staff to speak with renewal visit team members, and other school-specific variables. In general, schools should expect to build in time for the following:

- Meeting with school leadership team at the beginning of the visit
- Extensive classroom observations, accompanied by member of instructional leadership team
- Individual or small group teacher interviews in small groups of 2-3 teachers (mixed subjects / years of experience)
- Student interviews (mixed grades)
- Interviews with members of school administration (e.g. operations team, SPED/ELL coordinator, deans of school culture)
- Debrief meetings at the end of each visit day

Again, the OSDCP visit lead will reach out to the school to confirm details of the visit and build a schedule for each day.

The renewal visit team will meet at the end of each day to discuss preliminary findings and prepare for the following day, and will then debrief with the school leadership team. As discussed above, the debrief on Day 2 will be longer and will provide an opportunity for the review team to discuss the school's performance across the four essential questions of the NYC DOE OSDCP Accountability Framework.

Renewal Hearing

The renewal hearing is another important part of the renewal process. OSDCP staff will contact the school to schedule a public hearing at the school. Public notice should be distributed at least two weeks before the hearing is conducted. The school is responsible for:

- confirming the hearing date, time, and location (if not at the school) with OSDCP,
- securing an extended use permit and translation services (if needed),
- translating the notice and providing minimally the Spanish translation to OSDCP,
- backpacking the hearing notice,
- informing staff of the hearing,
- posting hearing notice in the school and on the school website, and
- providing a school representative for the hearing.

OSDCP will create the hearing notice; distribute the public hearing notice to DOE Communications, Office of Public Affairs, Division of Family and Community Engagement, and Community Education Councils;

facilitate the hearing, including materials; and post the hearing notice on the DOE website. OSDCP will consider community feedback from the renewal hearing as one piece of evidence in making the renewal recommendation.

Renewal Outcomes

After the OSDCP renewal site visit, the OSDCP team will release a draft report of their findings from the visit. These reports may include evidence from classroom observations, leadership interviews, assessment results, School Survey results, public hearings and other community feedback, as well as a variety of other data. Schools will be given the opportunity to correct factual errors in the report. If the OSDCP renewal team determines that renewal is not warranted, the school will be informed in writing of the reasons for the non-renewal. If OSDCP approves the renewal application and the Chancellor recommends renewal for the school, prior to the school's charter expiration date, OSDCP will send their renewal report and recommendation along with the school's renewal application and other supporting evidence to the Board of Regents for its approval.

The OSDCP team may recommend three potential outcomes for charter schools applying for renewal: full-term renewal (with or without conditions), short-term renewal with conditions, or non-renewal. More information on each type of renewal is below.

Full-Term Renewal, With or Without Conditions

In cases where a school has demonstrated exceptional results with its students, a five-year renewal will be granted. A school must show that its program has clearly and consistently demonstrated high academic attainment and/or consistent and significant student academic progress, has met the majority of its charter goals, has demonstrated financial stability, has demonstrated operational viability, has attained sufficient board capacity, and has an educationally sound learning environment in order to gain this type of renewal.

Short Term Renewal with Conditions

In cases where a school is up for renewal of its initial charter and has two years or fewer of state-assessment results, or where any school has demonstrated mixed academic results or has uncertain organizational or financial viability, a short-term renewal with conditions may be considered.

Non-Renewal

Renewal is not automatic. Schools that have not demonstrated significant progress or high levels of student achievement and/or are in violation of their charter will not be renewed.

Grade Expansions or Enrollment Changes

A school should seek material charter revisions as part of the renewal process. In the case of a grade expansion or change in authorized enrollment, these material charter revisions are considered separately from the charter renewal. Charter renewal, with or without conditions, is not a guarantee of approval for a proposed material charter revision.

Required Public Postings

Section 104 of the Open Meetings Law requires public bodies to give notice of all public meetings: to news media, by conspicuously posting in one or more designated public locations and by posting on the school's website when the school has the ability to do so. Additionally, Section 103 of the Open meetings Law requires that all documents subject to FOIL, as per Article 6 of the Public Officers law, to be discussed during a board meeting, or any other public meeting, be **made available upon request prior to or at the meeting**. This means that many documents that could be discussed in a board meeting including, but not limited to, agendas, meeting minutes, financial statements, school policies, etc. **must be made available**. Please note that the opinion of the Committee on Open Government is that "Optimally, the record will be made available online; if that cannot be done, the record can be made available in paper form in response to a request." This law not only applies to board meetings, but any public meeting that the school holds. For more information, please visit <http://www.dos.ny.gov/coog/RecordsDiscussedatMeetings.html>.

§104 Open Meetings Law

1. Public notice of the time and place of a meeting scheduled at least one week prior thereto shall be given to the news media and shall be conspicuously posted in one or more designated public locations at least seventy-two hours before such meeting.
2. Public notice of the time and place of every other meeting shall be given, to the extent practicable, to the news media and shall be conspicuously posted in one or more designated public locations at a reasonable time prior thereto.
3. The public notice provided for by this section shall not be construed to require publication as a legal notice.
4. If videoconferencing is used to conduct a meeting, the public notice for the meeting shall inform the public that videoconferencing will be used, identify the locations for the meeting, and state that the public has the right to attend the meeting at any of the locations.
5. When a public body has the ability to do so, notice of the time and place of a meeting given in accordance with subdivision one or two of this section, shall also be conspicuously posted on the public body's internet website.

In addition, New York State statute requires that the following documents be posted and regularly updated as applicable on school's websites:

- **2013-14 NYSED Annual report** (with Board member personal contact information redacted)⁶
- **Audited financial statements**⁷

⁶ NYS Charter School Law

⁷ NYS Charter School Law

Notices of Concern, Deficiency, and Oversight Status

Based on the outcomes of routine oversight activities including school visits, documentation collected, or other data points (e.g. audits, complaints, investigations), schools may be placed on notice to indicate an official concern about a school’s performance or operations. Reasons may be related to the school’s academic performance, fiscal/operational viability, and/or compliance with its charter and applicable laws. The status of oversight may be posted publicly and the associated notices may also be made publicly available.

The chart below outlines the different types of notices that OSDCP may issue to schools based on the severity of the offense, and the possible outcomes/consequences of each type of notice.

* Please note that the statuses outlined in the table below are not in any order of progression. OSDCP reserves the right to place schools at any status level at any time. For example, a Notice of Concern may be elevated to a Notice of Probation or a school may receive a Notice of Probation without receiving earlier notices, based on the severity of the offense. OSDCP also reserves the right to determine what steps schools need to take in order to resolve the identified issue.

The New York State Charter Schools Act (“the Act”) states the following regarding the revocation of a school’s charter:

§ 2855. Causes for revocation or termination

1. The charter entity, or the board of regents, may terminate a charter upon any of the following grounds:
 - (a) When a charter school’s outcome on student assessment measures adopted by the board of regents falls below the level that would allow the commissioner to revoke the registration of another public school, and student achievement on such measures has not shown improvement over the preceding three school years;
 - (b) Serious violations of law;
 - (c) Material and substantial violation of the charter, including fiscal mismanagement;
 - (d) When the public employment relations board makes a determination that the charter school demonstrates a practice and pattern of egregious and intentional violations of subdivision one of section two hundred nine-a of the civil service law involving interference with or discrimination against employee rights under article fourteen of the civil service law; or
 - (e) Repeated failure to comply with the requirement to meet or exceed enrollment and retention targets of students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch program pursuant to targets established by the board of regents or the board of trustees of the state university of New York, as applicable.

Provided, however, if no grounds for terminating a charter are established pursuant to this section other than pursuant to this paragraph, and the charter school demonstrates that it has made extensive efforts to recruit and retain such students, including outreach to parents and families in the surrounding communities, widely publicizing the lottery for such school, and efforts to academically support such students in such charter school, then the charter entity or board of regents may retain such charter.

Status*	Possible Triggers	Possible Outcomes / Consequences
Notice of Concern	Evidence of weak performance or lack of appropriate fiscal/operational oversight	Letter to the Board Chair and School Leader detailing areas of concern and expected action(s)

Status*	Possible Triggers	Possible Outcomes / Consequences
Notice of Deficiency	<p>Failure to meet performance targets</p> <p>Failure to meet enrollment and retention targets</p> <p>Failure to comply with applicable laws</p> <p>Failure to comply with conditions of the charter</p>	<p>Letter to the Board and School Leader detailing areas of deficiency</p> <p>Depending on the situation, OSDCP may require a response letter from the Board and School Leader, outlining steps and timeline for correcting the identified deficiency(ies)</p>
Notice of Probation	<p>Serious violation of the law</p> <p>Material and substantial violation of the charter, including fiscal mismanagement</p> <p>Academic performance has violated or risks violating the standards set forth in section 2855(1) of the Charter Law</p>	<p>Letter to the Board and School Leader to serve as notification of probationary status and terms of probation</p> <p>Creation of a Remedial Action Plan (RAP), as per Article 56 (with specific improvement objectives and timelines)</p> <p>Board and School Leader to monitor and report on progress against RAP objectives</p>
Notice of Extended Probation	<p>Failure to fully meet the terms outlined in the primary probation notice and/or Remedial Action Plan, despite meaningful and timely progress</p> <p>Extra time frame needed to evaluate the effect of changes made</p>	<p>Letter to the Board and School Leader to serve as notification of extended probationary status and terms of extended probation</p> <p>OSDCP to review and modify RAP, when necessary</p>
Notice of Intent to Revoke	<p>Serious violation of the law</p> <p>Material and substantial violation of the charter, including fiscal mismanagement</p> <p>Academic performance has violated or risks violating the standards set forth in section 2855(1) of the Charter Law</p> <p>Finding by OSDCP that probationary status would not be the appropriate intervention for the school or Violation of the terms and conditions of probation or Remedial Action Plan</p>	<p>Notice stating reasons for proposed revocation to Board and School Leader at least 30 days prior to the effective date of the proposed revocation.</p> <p>Opportunity for the school to be heard in response to the notice and at least 30 days to correct the problems associated with the proposed revocation</p> <p>Recommendation to Chancellor to revoke/not revoke</p>
Notice of Revocation	<p>OSDCP office reviews results in recommendation to revoke</p>	<p>OSDCP recommendation to the Chancellor to revoke/not revoke based on information in Notice of Intent to Revoke, any response from the charter school, and information regarding school's action plan to correct</p> <p>Chancellor's decision to revoke charter</p> <p>Letter stating reasons for revocation to Board and School Leader</p>

Charter Revisions

Charter schools seeking to make changes to the programs, policies, and procedures outlined in their charters are required to request a charter revision from their authorizer and to receive approval before those changes may be implemented at the school. These revisions may be material or non-material in nature. Please see below guidance for more information on differentiating between a material and non-material change, and on the proper process for submitting each type of revision request.

Material vs. Non-material Revisions

Some changes to a charter are considered material in nature; these changes require initial approval from the NYC DOE OSDCP, as well as subsequent approval from the Board of Regents through a vote at one of its monthly meetings. The schedule of Board of Regents meetings can be found at:

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/dates.html> .

Additionally, material charter revisions must be put before the school's community through a public hearing to collect comments regarding the proposed change(s).

Material changes include, but are not limited to:

- Revisions which fundamentally alter a school's mission, vision or educational philosophy
- Significant changes in the organizational or leadership structure of the school
- Changes in the school design and/or educational program that are inconsistent with those in approved charter
- Relocation of the school to a different school district (in NYC this is a change in CSD)
- Contracting with or discontinuing a contract with a management company
- Changing the name of the school
- Increases or decreases in the maximum approved enrollment (enrollment is capped at the maximum or total projected enrollment as in the renewal application)
- Grade configuration or grades served (adding or removing grades)

Non-material changes and revisions that do not fundamentally alter the school's mission, organizational structure, or educational program must still be submitted to, and be approved by, the NYC DOE OSDCP, and then submitted to the Commissioner of Education for consideration and final approval. Non-material changes do not necessitate a public hearing to solicit comment from the school community.

Non-material changes include, but are not limited to:

- Corrections or clarifications involving the school's mission or vision statement or other sections of the charter that do not fundamentally alter a school's mission, vision or educational philosophy and are consistent with the approved charter
- Minor corrections/clarifications to the school's organizational structure or charter
- Changes in the school's bylaws, code of conduct, discipline policy, personnel policy, complaint policy, student/family handbook, or teacher/staff handbook
- Changes in the school's admissions policy or enrollment process
- Changes in the school's schedule (length of school year, school week, or school day)

Revision Request Timeline Constraints

Non-material charter revision requests can be made on a rolling basis; however, stand-alone material charter revisions must be submitted by the NYC DOE OSDCP to the NY Board of Regents (via NYSED) by **December 15 of the academic year prior to when the proposed change will be implemented.** In order

to allow for timely submission to the Board of Regents, review of the revision request and scheduling and conducting the public hearing, **schools must submit material charter revisions to the NYC DOE no later than November 1 for implementation in the next school year.**

Revision Request Process

Despite the parameters outlined above, in practice many charter revision requests straddle the line between material and non-material. Because of this, schools that are considering making a material or non-material revision to their charter should begin by contacting their cohort's Director of Evaluation and Policy to confirm which category the revision falls under.

Once that determination is made, charter revisions follow a clear process:

1. The proposed charter revision is put to a vote during a public Board of Trustees meeting of the charter school. The school's Board votes to approve or deny the proposed revision and records this in its minutes.
2. The school's Board submits the Board-approved charter revision request to the NYC DOE OSDCP with the following components:
 - a. A **cover letter** that includes the following additional information:
 - i. the school name and address;
 - ii. the contact person's name, position, telephone number, and email;
 - iii. if different, the name and position of the person submitting the revision;
 - iv. the date/year the school's charter was initially issued;
 - v. the date(s)/year(s) of school's renewal(s); and
 - vi. the description of the change(s) being requested (how it differs from the current charter) and rationale for the change.
 - b. **Written acknowledgement** (if the submitter is not the Board Chair), a statement signed by the Board Chairperson indicating that the Board of Trustees has authorized the individual to submit the proposed revision on behalf of the Board.
 - c. The **Board minutes** that record the approval of the resolution for the revision.
 - d. **Revised pages of the current charter**, which show how all affected sections of the current charter will change. Use ~~strike-throughs~~ for deleted text. Use **bold** or *italics* for added text. Submit actual revised pages, not a summation of revised text.
3. **Material Revisions Only:** The school conducts a public hearing in collaboration with the NYC DOE OSDCP. The hearing must be held in the CSD where the school is located, and public notice should be distributed at least two weeks before the hearing is conducted.
 - a. The school is responsible for:
 - i. confirming the hearing date, time, and location (if not at the school) with OSDCP,
 - ii. securing an extended use permit and translation services (if needed),
 - iii. translating the notice and providing minimally the Spanish translation to OSDCP,
 - iv. backpacking the hearing notice,
 - v. informing staff of the hearing,
 - vi. posting hearing notice in the school and on the school website, and
 - vii. providing a school representative for the hearing.
 - b. OSDCP will create the hearing notice; distribute the public hearing notice to DOE Communications, Office of Public Affairs, Division of Family and Community Engagement, and Community Education Councils; facilitate the hearing, including materials; and post the hearing notice on the DOE website.
4. The NYC DOE OSDCP approves or denies the revision request. Notification is sent to the head of the school's Board and the school's leader.
5. If the request is approved, the NYC DOE OSDCP sends its approval to the Commissioner of Education and/or the Board of Regents via the State Education Department for consideration and

final approval. The State Education Department will notify the NYC DOE about approval of material charter revision requests.

6. Acknowledgement of the revision is signed by both the school and the NYC DOE and kept on file.

Other Change Notifications

Note that there are several changes to instructional approach, governance policies, leadership/Board composition, and fiscal status, which require charter schools to make notification to their charter authorizer, even if these do not constitute charter revisions, within a strict timeline:

60 days prior to occurrence:

- Change of facility

30 days prior to occurrence:

- Significant change in the Charter School's curriculum or instructional approach
- Change in the Charter School's by-laws
- Change in the Charter School's code of ethics
- Change in management agreement

Within 5 business days of occurrence:

- Addition to or removal of members of the board of trustees
- Hiring or dismissal of the director/principal of the Charter School
- Execution of contracts or incurring of debt in excess of \$50,000
- Receipt of a summons and/or complaint in which either the Charter School or any member of the board of trustees (acting in his or her capacity as a member of the board of trustees) is named a party to the action or matter

Conclusion

The New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998 granted charter schools more autonomy than traditional public schools over their instructional and operational programs in exchange for increased accountability. The NYC DOE OSDCP team is dedicated to meeting this challenge by respecting charters' autonomy while simultaneously holding Chancellor-authorized schools to meet the high standards expected by charter law and outlined in school charters.

Charter schools commit to meeting the purposes of the Charter Schools Act: improving student learning and achievement, increasing learning opportunities for all students (and especially those students at risk of academic failure), encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods, creating new professional opportunities, providing parents and students with expanded choice, and developing a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding themselves accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results. The OSDCP team takes these responsibilities seriously. OSDCP believes that the renewal process officially begins as soon as a school is granted its charter: schools should always be working to build a strong track record of success and striving to reflect and improve on past successes and failures. Through a comprehensive monitoring system that includes regular visits and documentation review, OSDCP can provide schools with frequent, consistent feedback on the road toward renewal.

If you have questions about any of the information in this document, please contact the Senior Director or Director of Evaluation and Policy for your cohort. We look forward to working with you to increase high-quality school options for students and families in New York City.