



Charter School Renewal Report
Charter Schools Accountability and Support
2011-2012

HARLEM CHILDREN'S ZONE PROMISE ACADEMY II CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL SITE VISIT REPORT

MAY 2012

Part 1: Executive Summary

School Overview and History:

Harlem Children's Zone (HCZ) Promise Academy II Charter School is an elementary/middle school serving approximately 550 students from kindergarten through seventh grade in the 2011-2012 school year.¹ The school is divided into two "schools," the Lower Elementary School, serving grades K-2 and the Upper Elementary/Middle School, serving grades 3-7. The principal of the Lower Elementary is Sheryl Ragland and the Upper Elementary/Middle principal is Kathleen Fernald. The school opened in 2005 with grades K-1. The school is under the terms of its second charter and is projected to expand to grades K-10 during its current term, which expires April 14, 2015. If approved for renewal, the school is projected to reach its full grade span, K-12, during the 2016-2017 school year.² The school is currently housed in a Department of Education (DOE) facility in District 5, which is co-located with the Choir Academy of Harlem.³

The school typically enrolls new students in kindergarten, but students were accepted from the waitlist in grades K, 2, and 4-8 in the 2011-12 school year. There were 167 students on the waitlist after the Spring 2011 lottery.⁴ Because of the Harlem Children's Zone unique wraparound social support system, students apply for the Kindergarten lottery when they are three, if selected for Kindergarten when they turn five, they can apply with a preference for a seat in one HCZ's pre-K programs. The student body includes 76.9% Free and Reduced Lunch students, compared to 78.4% in the district; 13.8% special education students, compared to 16.7% in the district; and 4.7% English language learners (ELL), compared to 10.9% in the district.⁵ The average attendance rate to date for the school year 2011-2012 is 94%.⁶

The school earned a 'B' on the NYC DOE Progress Report in 2010-11, a 'C' in 2009-10, and a 'B' in 2008-09.⁷ The school outperformed its Community School District in each of the last three years on the state ELA and Math exams. The school outperformed the city averages in each of the last three years on the state ELA and Math exams.⁸ The school scored Average on the Academic Expectations and Engagement and Below Average on Communication and Safety & Respect sections of the NYC DOE School Survey in 2010-2011; 67% of the school's parents responded to the survey, 71% of the school's teachers, and 82% of the school's students.⁹

Harlem Children's Zone Promise Academy II Charter School is part of the Harlem Children's Zone network, a non-profit community based organization (CBO) that is the school's charter management organization (CMO). HCZ provides a variety of services and supports to Promise II. It provides back office support, food services, fundraising, and staffing and direct financial support. Parents and students have access to the CBO's various social services and access to the HCZ facility, which shares space with HCZ Promise I Charter School. The school pays no fee to HCZ. The CBO is committed to continuing its support to the school.

Annual Review Process Overview:

The New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) Charter Schools Accountability and Support (CSAS) office conducts an annual site visit of charter schools authorized by the NYC DOE. The site visit is designed to address three primary questions: is the school an academic success; is the school a fiscally sound, viable organization; and is the school in compliance with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations? To ascertain matters of sustainability and strategic planning, we also ask about the

¹ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 4/1/2012

² NYC DOE ATS system and charter agreement

³ NYC DOE Location Code Generating System database

⁴ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 4/1/2012

⁵ NYC DOE ATS system as of 4/3/2012

⁶ Self-reported by school on Annual Site Visit Data Collection Form dated 4/1/2012

⁷ NYC DOE Progress Report – <http://schools.nyc.gov/progressreport>

⁸ NYC DOE website – <http://schools.nyc.gov/> (search: test results); District and city averages are for the grade levels corresponding to the school's testing grades in specified years

⁹ NYC DOE School Survey – <http://schools.nyc.gov/survey>

school's plans for its next charter term. The visits are conducted by representatives of the CSAS and last the duration of one school day. The annual site visit begins with a meeting with the school leadership team. Afterward, the reviewers visit classrooms and hold brief meetings with available administrators and teachers. Areas of evaluation include, but are not limited to: academic goals and mission; curriculum and instruction; school culture and learning environment; assessment utilization; parent engagement; government structures and organizational design; community support; special populations; and safety and security. The site visit is intended to provide a snapshot of the school and reflects what was observed at the time of the visit.

The following experts participated in the review of this school on May 10, 2012:

- Richard Larios, Senior Director, NYC DOE CSAS
- Debra Schwartzman, Senior Director, NYC DOE CSAS
- Scott Torres, Director of Operations, NYC DOE CSAS
- Lynnette Aqueron, Senior School Improvement Specialist, NYC DOE Division of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners

Part 2: Findings

Areas of Strength:

- The school has a strong, coherent and comprehensive instructional program.
 - On the 2011 NYS ELA and Math assessments, the school's percentage of students scoring at Level 3 or above exceeded the percentages of students in CSD 5 and across the city scoring at that level for all tested grades, 3 through 6, in both ELA and Math assessments.
 - The school has earned A's on the Student Performance section of its last three NYC DOE Progress Reports, through the 2010-11 school year.
 - The school has an effective and still developing co-teaching model, with a lead teacher and one or two teacher assistants, to support small group instruction. One or two observed classes also had a parent volunteer participating in instructional activities. A number of classes observed had additional push-in support by special education teachers or intervention teachers.
 - The core curriculum is built around Reading and Writing Workshop and Math in Focus (Singapore Math) and Holt Math but students also receive science and social studies and some specials (art, music, foreign language).
 - The school has a variety of programs and resources to support struggling students during the school day, including a Reading Recovery pilot program in Grade 1, Math Perspectives, the Boost program (for 6th and , as well as the extended day program (Bridging the Gap).
 - In addition to the in-school supports for students mentioned above the school also offers after-school tutoring and Saturday Academy programs for struggling students.

- The school uses a variety of assessments to monitor performance and inform instructional decision-making.
 - Assessments include: the Individual Reading Level Assessment (IRLA), Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), mock assessments (previous released NYS assessments for first administration; Curriculum Associates' New York Ready math and ELA assessments for second and third administration), Running Records, and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (BAS), in addition to teacher and curricular based chapter and unit assessments. Assessment data is collected on Google Docs and available for item analysis and progress tracking. (ITBS is not included in Google Docs but is web-based so accessible to teachers for review.)
 - School leaders reported that data suggests that the school's students will show growth on the 2012 NYS Assessments and reported significant progress in writing.

- The school's learning environment on the day of the visit was safe, orderly, and conducive to learning in observed classrooms and safe and orderly during observed transitions in the hallways.
 - Classrooms on the day of the visit were clean and well-resourced with curriculum resources and technology. They also evidenced a print-rich environment, particularly but not exclusively in the lower and upper elementary grades.
 - The school deploys a variety of adults to support student management; the role of grade level deans and presence of adults in hallways during transition aids orderly and efficient transitions and minimizes interruptions to instruction when a student is disruptive.
 - In many observed classrooms, visitors noted students helping one another with problem-solving, directions, and content understandings.
 - Student work was frequently displayed, sometimes with rubrics and occasionally with meaningful feedback included with the display.
 - Many classrooms' print environment included behavioral and academic resources, and teachers use a variety of routines (some linked to positive incentive system) to support behavioral expectations.

- Out of school suspensions are handled in a reciprocal arrangement with Promise II's sister school HCZ Promise I; suspended students from one school are placed in the other school for the duration of their suspension, ensuring that a temporary removal from the community does not mean removal from a school setting or meaningful learning.
- School leadership and staffers are committed to success of their students and the school, and HCZ leadership and staff provide teachers with substantial coaching and Professional Development support.
 - The school has access to a robust amount of human and educational resources to deliver on its mission and address the educational needs of its students.
 - The school added Literacy and Math coaches to both the lower elementary and upper elementary/middle schools.
 - In addition to in-house coaching and PD, teachers receive support from Teachers College, whose Reading and Writing Workshop program the school has been implementing for three years.
 - Lead and assistant teachers have a mandated common planning period. Teacher Assistants (TAs) have PD every Friday. The structured planning and a school-wide requirement that assistant teachers have instructional duties only when students are present support the implementation of the co-teaching model and aid the development of the assistant teachers.
- School has strong and supportive relationship with Harlem Children's Zone, its institutional partner/CMO.
 - HCZ provides a full "district central office" suite of back office and operational support services so that the school's principals can focus on the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms and student achievement.
 - HCZ provided Promise II with \$2.4 million in the 2011 fiscal year¹⁰. These additional funds help the school in a variety of ways with staffing and instructional resources to address needs and to provide additional supports for students and families. The funding also supports the operational needs of the school, again allowing more of the school-generated per pupil funding to be used for educational support.
 - The low instructional staff-to-student ratios help ensure that students have access to significant attention and support.
 - HCZ, through fundraising and board endowments, is in a strong financial position and has the financial well-being to continue to provide its partner schools with the financial support they have to date into the future.
- Special education program and systems are strong and in good order.
 - The special education expert on the visit team reported that the school had a good relationship with its local Committee for Special Education (CSE).
 - The school's records and case management were well maintained.
 - The school's special education team are all appropriately certified and capably supported by two coordinators, one school-based and the other working at the "district" level, across both schools, to ensure compliance support and leadership.
- The school reports strong parent involvement and support.
 - There is an active Parents as Partners Association (PAPA). The organization sponsors numerous social events (Father-Daughter Dance, Moments with Mom, Parent Appreciation Dance, etc.)
 - Parent participation on the DOE School Survey has exceeded citywide participation averages for the past three years, through the 2010-11 school year.

¹⁰ Self-reported on school's Annual Site Visit Self-Evaluation April 2012

Areas of Growth:

- The school should continue its ongoing efforts to further enhance the quality and rigor of instruction.
 - While the school's state assessment results continue to exceed district and city-wide averages, the school's overall average rate of proficiency (students scoring level 3 or above) remained essentially flat from 2010 to 2011, with the overall ELA score declining slightly from an average of 62.1% proficient to 60% proficient and its overall Math average proficient result was unchanged, 81.4% in 2010 to 81.1% in 2011.
 - Change in cohort scores (2010 3rd graders to 2011 4th graders, 2010 4th graders to 2011 5th graders, etc.) in 2011 were mixed, with one ELA cohort showing a decrease, one showing an increase, and a third maintaining its 2010 proficiency score. One Math cohort increased its score while two others' decreased.
 - However, despite the overall picture described directly above, a sufficient number of Promise II students experienced year-over-year progress to earn the school a B in Student Progress on the 2011 Progress Report (following an F on this section in 2010 and a C in 2009). The school should continue its efforts to use data, small group instruction and its various intervention strategies to target instruction to individual student needs.
 - Critical to this will be continued refinement and enhancement to the instructional model in place:
 - More consistent quality of rigor in goal-setting than was observed on the day of the visit, where quality of objectives and strength of connection between posted objectives and elements of lesson varied;
 - Greater efficiency of pacing across all classrooms and all lesson parts. On the day of the visit several observed Do Nows took much longer than planned either because of unnecessary transitions of space within a room or the absence of a timer to track duration of activities. Transitions between activities within a lesson also varied from very efficient and purposeful to inefficient and unproductive. Additionally, some teachers were very precise in their directions and preparation and also very mindful of the ratio of teacher talk time versus student talk/work time but others were much less so—for example, managing the preparation for an activity to lead into an independent practice took so long in one class that only a handful of students actually started the practice activity that was intended to be the main part of the lesson;
 - Consistent emphasis on technical and content vocabulary. While visitors observed a number of good examples of teachers reinforcing the use of specific vocabulary in directions, discussion, and checks for understanding, they also observed examples where the language was vague and the understanding less certain;
 - More sophisticated use of data and differentiation so that small group activities, independent practice, and other learning activities can be more specifically targeted to learner needs; most typically differentiation in observed classes seemed to be by level of adult support (as opposed to by content, task, timing), which is good but more options for accelerated learning;
 - The proper balance between engagement and rigor; some activities that engaged students had a low level of challenge or rigor (a project-based lesson with students applying math to a real world setting had very enthusiastic participation but math content was below grade level and expectations for audience participants were mostly to be polite listeners);
 - More consistent use of higher-level and open-ended questioning techniques to challenge student understanding and thinking.
- While financial health of the school and overall operations appear sound, school has struggled with some operational compliance matters and needs to review its processes and procedures to ensure that the routine happens routinely.

- The school's last two financial audits have been submitted extremely late, with the most recent one, due in November 2011 per New York charter law, not yet submitted at the time of the visit in May.
 - HCZ and the school's appropriate leadership/staff should take measures to ensure that the 2012 audit is delivered on time.
- The school should continue its efforts to reach compliance with the amended 2010 charter law requirements related to the enrollment and retention of at-risk student populations, specifically students with free or reduced price lunch (FRL), special education students, and English Language Learners (ELLs). The school should monitor its existing strategies and make any necessary adjustments to reach comparable averages to the district serving at-risk students.
 - HCZ Promise II serves very close to comparable percent of FRL students, with 76.9.1% of its students receiving FRL compared to 78.4% of CSD 5 students, and Special Education students, 13.8% compared to 16.7% in the district.
 - The school serves a lower percentage of ELLs than CSD 5: 6.3% compared to 10.9%.
- The school should continue its work to enhance its overall school culture to improve satisfaction results and increase engagement and ownership of learning by students.
 - While parent participation on the DOE School Survey was above average, teacher and student participation was just below average and the overall results were either average (on the Academic Expectations and Engagement sections) or below average (on the Communication and Safety & Respect sections). The overall results were down from the previous two years.
 - To increase students' engagement in the life of the school and their ownership of the school's high academic and behavioral expectations the school should continue to develop ideas mentioned in its self-evaluation, such as creating advisory and club programs as well as fully implementing student government, peer mediation, and conflict resolution initiatives, which are currently in different stages of development.
 - Some interviewed teachers said the school needs to work more with students on respect and to set and consistently enforce more meaningful consequences for misbehavior.
 - The school has added grade level deans and intends to hire a Director of Student Support Services. It should be careful to ensure that responsibility for school culture isn't delegated to these individuals but is owned by the entire school community.
 - The school is looking for a school-wide character education/social development program to implement. They have tried TRIBES but found it too elementary in approach for school-wide use.
- Two areas for improvement were identified in the school's special education program.
 - All students with IEPs who turn 12 by the end of December in a given school year are supposed to have a vocational assessment interview to determine vocational skills, interests and aptitudes. The school must begin providing these assessments to eligible students.
 - As part of the school's instructional improvement efforts, the school should work to improve the consistency of IEP implementation in general education settings, which on the day of the visit varied from observation to observation made by the special education expert on the visit team.
 - To provide better support for the school's ELL students the school should follow through on its intent to hire a certified, dedicated ESL teacher.
 - The school should use its strong support structure (weekly PD, coaches, deans) to enhance the consistency of its classroom management and behavioral and social development expectations for students. As noted in the self-evaluation and supported by leadership and teacher interviews, there are yet gaps in buy-in, execution, and understanding regarding the school's approach to management and discipline.
- As the school continues to expand to scale, HCZ and school leadership should continue to monitor its facility needs and its current plans for expansion.

- In 2012-13, the school will expand to K-8 and will remain fully located at its current site.
- In 2013-14, students in Promise II grades 7-9 will be located in HCZ's main building at 35 East 125th Street, while grade K-6 will continue to be located in their current facility, a DOE space shared with Choir Academy of Harlem and an Alternate Learning Center.

Part 3: Essential Questions and Accountability Framework

The CSO Accountability Framework

To help NYC DOE authorized charter schools better understand what we mean by success for charter schools, the NYC DOE's Charter Schools Office (CSO) has developed an Accountability Framework build around four essential questions for charter school renewal:

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

1. Is the School an Academic Success?

1a. High Academic Attainment and Improvement

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

- Meet absolute performance goals
- Meet student progress goals
- Are closing the achievement gap for at risk students, including special needs and ELL students
- Are surpassing performance of DOE identified peer-schools
- Are surpassing performance district and city proficiency or better averages
- Are meeting other rigorous academic and non-academic goals as stated in school's charter

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

- Grades 3-8 NYS ELA Results (absolute performance, individual student progress, comparative performance to similar schools, home district or city averages, progress for at-risk populations)
- Grades 3-8 NYS Math Results (absolute performance, individual student progress, comparative performance to similar schools, home district or city averages, progress for at-risk populations)
- Grades 4 and 8 NYS Science Results (absolute performance, individual student progress, comparative performance to similar schools, home district or city averages, progress for at-risk populations)
- Grades 8-12 NYS Regent Exam Results
- When applicable, NYSAA or other approved alternate assessments results
- HS 4- and 6-Year Graduation Rates (absolute and progress, overall, for at-risk student populations)
- Grades 8-12 College Readiness Credit Accumulation
- Percentage of Students Applying to and Being Admitted to College
- Percentage of Students Taking AP Courses and/or Percentage of Students Passing AP Courses
- Results on state accountability measures
- Charter School Academic and Non-Academic Goals
- NYC Progress Reports

1b. Mission and Academic Goals

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

- Have an animating mission statement that staff, students and community embrace
- Set ambitious academic and non-academic goals that entire school community knows and embraces
- Have processes for regular monitoring and reporting on progress toward school goals
- Have processes for adjusting strategies in support of goals as appropriate in response to monitoring data

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

- Mission statement, charter, external documents (parent and family handbooks, school website, etc.)
- Annual reports, school improvement plans, leadership board reports
- Board agendas and minutes
- Parent, student, and teacher satisfaction surveys
- Participation at parent-teacher conferences, school advocacy events, participation in academic goal related programs

1c. Responsive Education Program

Schools with successful education programs have many of the characteristics below:

- Are self-reflective and examine practice based on outcomes against goals
- Have well-thought out curricular programs that are aligned with NYS learning outcomes as described by state standards and the new Common Core Curriculum.
- Use instructional models and resources consistent with school mission and that are flexible in addressing the needs of all learners
- Have defined strategies that they can measure and monitor for closing the achievement gap
- Offer defined opportunities for remediation and acceleration
- Implement a coherent and effective interim assessment system (e.g., use of formative, interim, and summative assessment data) for monitoring progress, predicting performance, and adjusting instruction
- Have an effective process for supporting improved classroom instruction, including frequent observation and feedback
- Have effective strategies and quality instructional programs for addressing students with special needs and ELLs
- Use a defined process for evaluating curricular tasks, programs and resources for effectiveness and fit with school mission and goals

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

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

1d. Learning Environment

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

- Have a strong culture that connects high academic and behavioral expectations in a way that motivates students to give their best effort academically and socially
- Use a comprehensive approach to student management, including positive behavioral expectations and a clear discipline policy to build and sustain a safe, orderly, and supportive classroom environment
- Provide for safe, respectful, efficient transitions, hallways, cafeteria, yard, etc.
- Have classrooms where academic risk-taking and student participation is encouraged and supported
- Provide opportunities for students to actively engage in their own learning and in the life of the school

- Have a formal or informal character education, social development, or citizenship program that provides opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens

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

- School mission and articulated values
- Student management plan (code of conduct, school values, discipline policy, positive incentive system, etc.)
- Student attendance and retention rates
- Student discipline data
- DOE School Survey student results
- DOE School Survey parent and teacher safety and respect results
- Self-administered satisfaction survey results
- Leadership, staff, and, if appropriate, student interviews
- Classroom observations
- Scheduled student engagement opportunities (e.g., student advisory, internships, student government, student led conferences, peer tutoring, peer mediation, etc.)

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

2a. Governance Structure and Organizational Design

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

- Operate with a clearly articulated governance structure, compliant with its charter and all applicable laws and regulations
- Have a capable Board of Trustees with appropriate blend of skills and experiences to provide oversight and strategic direction to fulfill the mission and goals of its charter
- Have a Board that is fully compliant with all applicable laws and regulations, particularly but not limited to open-meeting laws and conflict of interest regulations
- Have developed a succession plan for board and school leadership, consistent with the charter and Board by-laws, to ensure continuity of direction and leadership over time and despite circumstance
- Implements a school leadership structure that is aligned with charter and that is sufficient to fulfill school's mission and achieve its accountability goals; it also has clear lines of accountability for leadership roles, accountability to Board, and, if applicable, relationship with a charter management organization
- Have timely and appropriate access to legal counsel
- Implemented a process for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's organization and leadership structure
- Have instructional leadership staffing and support structures that holds staff accountable for student learning outcomes and provide regular feedback on instruction to teachers

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

- School charter
- Board by-laws, roster, trustee resumes, meeting agenda and minutes
- Annual conflict of interest forms
- Staff roster, job descriptions, staff handbook, operations manual
- School calendar, professional development plan

2b. School Climate and Community Engagement

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

- A healthy professional school climate that is collaborative, student centered, and open to parents and community support
- An effective process for recruiting, hiring, supporting, and evaluating leadership and staff
- A flexible, data-driven approach to professional development for all staff
- An effective way of measuring and monitoring core constituency satisfaction (parent, staff, and, when age appropriate, student), including the DOE School Survey
- Effective home-school communication practices to ensure meaningful parent involvement in the learning of their children
- Strong community-based partnerships and advocacy for the school

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

- DOE School Survey satisfaction parent, teacher, and, if appropriate student results
- Student retention and wait list data
- Staff retention data
- Leadership, staff, parent, student interviews
- Student and staff attendance rates
- Parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences
- Parent association meeting calendar and minutes
- Community partnerships and sponsored programs

2c. Financial and Operational Health

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

- Consistently meet its student enrollment and retention targets
- Annual budgets that meets all short- and long-term financial responsibilities with available revenues
- School leadership and Board that oversee financial and operational responsibilities in a manner that keeps the school's mission and academic goals central to decision-making
- Boards and school leadership that maintain effective internal controls of finances to ensure integrity of financial management and a proactive approach to mitigating risk
- Consistently clean financial audits
- If applicable, strong, accountable partnerships with management organizations and other partners and significant vendors to support delivery of chartered school design and academic program
- A safe, clean and appropriately resourced educational facility with all appropriate services specified in charter and mandated by appropriate law and regulations

Evidence for a financially sound, viable organization may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School budget, P&Ls, and monthly/quarterly cash-flow reports
- Appropriate insurance documents
- Required facility documents (lease, certificate of occupancy, fire and safety inspections, etc.)
- Financial audits
- Financial leader(s) resume and accountability documents
- Operational policies and procedures
- Operational org chart
- Secure storage areas for student and staff records
- Policies/protocols for maintaining secure records
- School safety plan

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

3a. Approved Charter and Agreement

Schools in substantial compliance with their charter and agreement have:

- Implemented the key features of their charter as described in the original charter and as modified in approved revisions to their charter, including but not limited to mission, academic program, school organization, grade configuration, enrollment, goals, etc.
- Ensure that update-to-date charter is publicly available to staff, parents, and school community
- Implemented comprehensive academic, behavioral, oversight, management, and operational policies and procedures that are substantially aligned with the charter and the school's stated mission and vision

Evidence for a school's compliance with the terms of its charter and charter agreement may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Authorized charter and signed agreement
- Charter revision request approval and documentation
- School mission
- School policies and procedures
- Site visits
- Board meetings, agendas and minutes
- Leadership/board interviews

3b. Applicable Federal and State Law

Schools in substantial compliance with federal and state law have:

- Met all legal requirements for Title I and IDEA regulations and reporting
- Comparable enrollment of FRL, ELL and Special Education students to those of their district of location *or* are making documented good faith efforts to reach comparable percentages
- Implemented school policies related to student discipline and promotion and retention that are fully compliant with laws and regulations related to students with disabilities and due process regulations
- Conducted independently verified fair and open lottery and manage with integrity enrollment process and annual waiting lists
- Employed instructional staff with appropriate security clearances and certification requirements

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

- School reporting documents
- School's Annual Report
- Student recruitment plan and resources
- Student management policies and promotion and retention policies
- Student discipline records
- Lottery policy, resources, and records; enrollment procedures and records
- Staff roster, fingerprint clearance for all staff, certification status of all instructional staff

3c. Applicable Regulations

Schools in substantial compliance with applicable regulations have:

- Safe and secure facilities with no significant compliance concerns with applicable regulations
- Consistently clean annual audits, up-to-date escrow accounts, and have completed all other financial reporting as required
- Boards that meet requirements for size, meeting frequency, public notice, applicable open-meeting and conflict of interest regulations, as well as complying with NYC DOE CSO's requirements for reporting changes in board membership and securing approval for new board members.
- Informed NYCDOE CSO, and where required, received CSO approval for changes in significant partnerships, such as dropping/replacing a management organization
- Effectively engaged parent associations

Evidence for compliance with applicable regulations may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- School or building safety plan; appropriate inspection documents
- Annual audits, escrow accounts, other financial reporting documents
- Board roster, calendar, agenda and minutes, conflict of interest documents, notification of changes/approval of new member request documents
- Charter revision requests, revised or new contracts
- Parent association calendar of meetings, identified officers, parent association agenda and minutes, parent satisfaction survey results
- Interviews

4. What Are the School's Plans for its Next Charter Term?

4a. School Expansion or Model Replication

In anticipation of a new charter term schools may be considering various growth options: replication, expansion to new grades or increased enrollment or altering their model in some significant way. Successful schools generally have processes for:

- Conducting needs/opportunity assessments
- Forming Board and leadership committees or subcommittees to investigate options, develop action plans, ensure capacity and resources are aligned, etc.
- Engaging school community in articulating charter revisions (or a new charter in cases of replication) to address the proposed growth plans
- Ensuring that the final proposal is ambitious but realistic in its plans
- Creating a well-reasoned and documented prospective for the school's new charter term and, if applicable, a new charter proposal (for replication)

Evidence for likely success in planning for school growth in a new charter term may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Application Part I: Retroactive Analysis, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Application Part II: Prospective Analysis, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and Board interviews

4b. Organizational Sustainability

Successful schools consistently perform despite change. While there is no single path for ensuring sustainability, successful schools often have the following features:

- School anticipates organizational opportunities/needs and plans for resource development (human resource policies for growing your own talent, for example, or fundraising or budget management to take care of anticipated capital needs and to mitigate risks for the unexpected, or board development to bring new talent or specific needs-based expertise to the school)

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

- Board roster and resumes
- Board committees and minutes
- School organization chart
- Staff rosters
- Staff handbook
- Leadership and staff interviews
- Budget

4c. School or Model Improvements

Successful schools are thoughtful about the continued appropriateness of school design features and elements of their models. They:

- Review performance carefully and even if they don't make major changes through expansion or replication, they are careful to adjust elements to ensure continued and improved success.
- Develop plans to improve the school learning environment, including improving their facilities to expand program offerings and/or developing new partnerships to further the school's mission.

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

- Application Part I: Retroactive Analysis, including performance results and analyses of the current charter term
- Application Part II: Prospective Analysis, including mission, program description, governance, organization, budget, etc. for new term
- Leadership and board interviews
- MOUs or contracts with partners