



City of
Indianapolis
Greg Ballard, Mayor

**CHARTER SCHOOL
ACCOUNTABILITY HANDBOOK**
for Mayor-sponsored charter schools

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Charter School Accountability Handbook

City of Indianapolis, Office of the Mayor

I. PURPOSE

The Mayor's Office of Indianapolis has developed a comprehensive system for overseeing the accountability of the schools it has authorized. This accountability system builds on the goals and contractual obligations described in each founding group's charter agreement, setting the expectations against which each school's performance will be measured over the seven-year charter term.

Indiana's charter school law and the state's accountability policies provide the broad context within which the Mayor's Office has developed its accountability system for charter schools. The aim is not just to create a system that meets the letter of the law and regulations, but to create an approach to accountability that provides practical benefits to charter schools, families, and the public. The Mayor's Office envisions a fundamentally new kind of relationship among public schools, the agencies that oversee them, families and the wider public.

To achieve this goal, the Mayor's accountability system for charter schools is designed to support the following basic principles:

- *Autonomy* — enabling schools to implement their own unique approaches to quality public education;
- *Value* — providing schools with tools and information that help them improve performance;
- *Low burden* — minimizing the amount of time, effort, and expense needed to comply with requirements;
- *Transparency* — providing maximum information to schools and the public about school performance and the accountability process; and
- *Responsibility* — ensuring that the Mayor has sufficient information to carry out his responsibilities for overseeing charter schools that are of the highest quality and accessible to all.

This handbook provides detailed information on the accountability system established by the Mayor's Office. Central to the accountability system is the **Performance Framework**, which defines the core areas for which schools are accountable. This framework will measure school performance by indicators common for all schools chartered by the Mayor's Office, including broad areas such as **educational performance, organizational and management performance, operations and accessibility, and conditions for success**. Section II of this handbook provides a thorough description of the Performance Framework and the **common indicators of performance** that apply to all Mayor-sponsored charter schools.

In addition to the measures common for all Mayor-sponsored schools, the Performance Framework also leaves a placeholder for measuring the attainment of educational and organizational goals unique to each school. The Mayor's Office expects charter school accountability to be based not just on state and national accountability measures and those established by the authorizer, but also on unique goals developed by each school that are tied to its mission. These unique goals will help to **define, amplify and gauge fulfillment of each charter school's mission** to parents, students, teachers, the Mayor's Office, and the general public. These goals and their accompanying measures will distinguish each charter school and help to determine its effectiveness. Section IV of this handbook provides particular guidance for Mayor-sponsored schools on this key element of the accountability system: the development of **school-specific indicators of performance**.

Together, the common school indicators and the school-specific indicators will make up each school's **accountability plan**. The accountability plan, once finalized, will become an amendment to the Charter Agreement (Attachment C) and thus represents a contractual obligation with the Mayor's Office.

II. THE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

At the center of the Mayor's Office's accountability system is the Performance Framework. Under this framework, a school's success will be measured by its performance relative to four questions:

Key Guiding Questions

- *Is the educational program a success?*
- *Is the organization effective and well-run?*
- *Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?*
- *Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?*

While all four areas are important, the first three will form the basis of the Mayor's ultimate renewal decisions. The fourth question will serve to provide a rich picture of the school for parents and the public, give valuable feedback to the school about how it is working, and provide the Mayor's Office early on with important feedback about any shortcomings at the schools that must be addressed.

When measuring a given school's performance, the school leadership and the Mayor's Office will examine several sub-questions in relation to each of the four core questions:

Is the educational program a success?

- 1.1. Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?
- 1.2. Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis?
- 1.3. Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?
- 1.4. Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?

2. Is the organization effective and well-run?

- 2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health?
- 2.2. Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?
- 2.3. Is the school's board active and competent in its oversight?
- 2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?
- 2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?
- 2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?

- 3. Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?**
 - 3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational structure and governance obligations?
 - 3.2. Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning?
 - 3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?
 - 3.4. Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?
 - 3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to with limited English proficiency?

- 4. Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?**
 - 4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?
 - 4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?
 - 4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?
 - 4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?
 - 4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?
 - 4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?
 - 4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?
 - 4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?

Under the Performance Framework, a school's success will be measured by its performance relative to *common indicators* of performance established by the Mayor's Office for all schools it charters and *school-specific indicators* developed by each school that reflect its mission and unique goals. Each school's accountability plan is, therefore, based on both common and school-specific indicators.

Common Indicators of Performance

Though each charter school will develop its own indicators of performance, all schools' success will also be measured by a set of *common* indicators. These common indicators, many of them required by Indiana state law, will ensure that the public and the Mayor's Office have some level of common information about all schools chartered by the Mayor. Refer to Appendix 1 for a detailed description of the common indicators, standards of performance, the sources of data that will be used to measure schools' success on these indicators, and the rating system.

Of particular note, each school must conduct standardized tests of reading and mathematics for students annually. To meet state requirements, schools are required to administer ISTEP+ every fall to students in grades 3-10 (as these tests become

available in all grades). The Mayor’s Office has an additional requirement that students be tested annually in the fall and spring in order to collect comparable, longitudinal data to measure student growth over the course of the school year. This consistent year-to-year testing will allow the Mayor’s Office to assess the “value-added” by each school – the degree to which the school contributes to the learning of its students. This kind of analysis will in turn prove critical in the Mayor’s Office’s assessment of school progress.

School-Specific Indicators of Performance

Since each school is unique, it has school-specific goals that are not reflected in the common indicators. The Performance Framework provided above recognizes this fact by including indicators 1.4 and 2.6 as placeholders for school-specific indicators. In addition, indicator 2.2 is “common” in the sense that it applies to all schools, but the specific expected levels of attendance and retention of students will vary by school. Each school will negotiate a set of such indicators with the Mayor’s Office over the course of the first year or two of operation. Section IV of this handbook describes the process for developing the school-specific indicators and Appendix 2 provides templates schools must complete and submit to the Mayor’s Office detailing their goals and measures.

III. GETTING STARTED: DEVELOPING THE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN AND COLLECTING EARLY DATA

The accountability plan is meant to be a living tool that informs the ongoing development of the school – essentially a **blueprint for performance**. This plan will be used to guide site visits, the school self-evaluation in the **third year** of operation, the mid-charter review in the **fourth year** of operation, and charter renewal decision-making. Schools should *not* view the accountability plan as just another document to be completed, filed, and never used. With this in mind, schools should consider accountability planning an opportunity to build a useful *process* as well as a tool.

It will likely take schools over the first year of operation to develop a final accountability plan that includes both the common and school-specific indicators of performance and valid, reliable methods of assessing progress toward those goals (as described in Section IV). That said, there are many pieces of the accountability plan that schools must put in place as early as the summer before their first year of operation, as shown in the timeline below.

Collecting Baseline Data

It is vital that, to the extent possible, schools gather baseline data in the fall of the first year of operation on all school-specific indicators that they have already identified and on common indicators as necessary. Refer to the timeline below for additional information on collecting baseline data for common indicators of performance. The Mayor’s Office expects schools to collect baseline data on common and school-specific indicators as early as possible upon first opening, and to work on refining school-specific goals and measures throughout their first year of operation.

It may not be feasible in all instances for schools to have baseline data immediately after opening. For example, suppose one school-specific aim is to improve students’ knowledge of Indianapolis history. In the fall of its first year, the school may not yet have identified or developed an assessment of such knowledge. In such cases, the school’s accountability plan should specify when baseline data will be collected.

For many indicators, schools will be able to gather baseline data early in their first year. For example, if one school goal is to have 75% of parents volunteering 20 hours or more per year at school, the school can begin tracking that information immediately.

Timeline for Developing the Accountability Plan

By early fall of their second year, schools will be expected to submit draft goals and measures to the Mayor’s Office for incorporation in their accountability plans, including performance targets for the third and sixth years of their charter term.

On the following page is a timeline outlining major accountability planning activities – establishing or refining performance goals and measures, and collecting baseline and progress data – over the first two years of charter school operation. The Mayor’s Office will set and notify schools of specific deadlines each year. (A timeline for accountability-related activities over the full seven-year charter term is found in Section V.)

Accountability Planning and Data Collection Timeline (Years 1 and 2)

YEAR 1	Put the Pieces in Place – Gather Baseline Data
Summer Pre-Opening	Schools clarify the process by which they will gather baseline data on all performance indicators (including those school-specific indicators that are known) and submit this plan to the Mayor’s Office.
Fall	<p>Schools gather baseline data on each indicator, if possible. At a minimum, baseline data should be collected for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-ISTEP+ standardized testing (i.e., required annual fall and spring testing for value-added analysis) • Student level identifiers for tracking student performance. This identifier should be the Student Test Number assigned to each student as required by the Indiana Department of Education. Demographic information should be attached to the student identifier so that student data can be disaggregated at a minimum by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ economically disadvantaged students; ○ students with disabilities; ○ students with limited English proficiency; ○ major racial and ethnic groups; and ○ gender.
Winter	Schools submit baseline data to the Mayor’s Office.
Ongoing	<p>Throughout the first year of operation, each school works with the Mayor’s Office to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refine any school-specific indicators of success included in its charter application, developing clear goals and measures for each. • Identify and develop additional school-specific goals and measures of success.
Summer (by June 1)	Schools submit data showing progress to date on all performance indicators in their accountability plans at that time.
YEAR 2	Submit and Finalize School-Specific Goals and Measures
Early Fall	<p>Schools gather baseline data for any new school-specific goals for which they lack baseline data.</p> <p>Schools submit draft school-specific goals and measures to the Mayor’s Office for review, including performance targets for their third and sixth years.</p>
Late Fall	The Mayor’s Office provides each school with feedback on its proposed goals and measures. (A school may need to submit more than one draft before its goals, measures and performance targets are finalized for incorporation in its accountability plan.)
Winter	<p>Schools submit final school-specific goals and measures, incorporating feedback from the Mayor’s Office.</p> <p>The Mayor’s Office finalizes each school’s accountability plan (including both common and school-specific indicators), and it becomes an addendum to the school’s charter.</p>
Summer (by June 1)	Schools submit data showing progress to date on all performance indicators.

IV. DEVELOPING SCHOOL-SPECIFIC INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

Ultimately, each school's accountability plan will include both (1) the **common indicators** of performance by which all schools chartered by the Mayor's Office will be evaluated, and (2) the **unique indicators** of performance developed by each school to gauge and demonstrate fulfillment of its mission more fully. This section provides detailed guidance for charter schools in creating the latter: **school-specific indicators of performance**.

Format for Developing and Submitting School-Specific Performance Indicators

The Mayor's Office has created a template that schools should use to submit their school-specific indicators of performance. The template is also designed to be a useful tool to help schools *develop* these indicators. Appendix 2 contains a summary sheet for recording all school-specific goals and assessments, instructions for completing the template for each goal, a copy of the template itself, and an example of a completed template for a single performance indicator. The template contains, but is not limited to, the following elements:

1. Mission Statement

A school's mission statement should serve as the compass for the school. It should be a brief (one or two sentences), jargon-free statement of the school's purpose and broad aims. This statement should be measurable, memorable, and meaningful.

Most Mayor-sponsored charter schools should be able to use their existing mission statement (as established in the charter school application, Attachment B of the Charter Agreement) to guide the development of their accountability plan. If you believe your school needs to refine its mission statement to make it more meaningful or practical as the starting point of your accountability plan, contact the Mayor's Office to discuss the changes you wish to make. (Appendix 3 provides some resources that can help in crafting or refining a mission statement.)

2. Goals

To set performance goals, schools will find it helpful to engage in *backward mapping* – asking themselves what they would like to have achieved seven years hence. What would the school like a newspaper article or concerned parent to say about the school at that time? The school should then translate these broad hopes into specific goals under the following categories of the Performance Framework: **Educational Success** (1.4) and **Organizational and Management Performance** (2.6).

In general, a school may propose any set of indicators that it believes reflects its unique mission. The Mayor's Office does not require that any particular areas of performance be addressed in school-specific indicators or any particular number of

indicators. However, *all* schools must propose goals related to **student attendance and retention** (in addition to enrollment goals, which are already stated in each school’s charter). These are part of a “common indicator” (Framework Indicator 2.2), but the Mayor’s Office recognizes that what constitutes success on these indicators may vary from school to school and so allows schools to propose their own targets for attendance and retention.

For each goal, schools will develop specific indicators, assessment tools, baseline data, targets for performance, and strategies for attaining them. Schools should **use the templates in Appendix 2 for submitting proposed goals and related information** to the Mayor’s Office in electronic format. Additional guidance for developing goals and school-specific indicators is provided below.

Developing Sound Performance Goals and Measures¹

The Mayor’s Office asks each charter school organizer, during the application process, to define both **educational** and **organizational and management** goals for its proposed school. This important exercise helps organizers begin to reflect on how they will measure success.

However, to be meaningful and realistic, each school must reexamine and refine its goals and measures after enrolling students and gathering baseline achievement data early in their first year of operation. In addition to educational goals, the Mayor’s Office expects each school to develop a few **organizational and management** goals reflective of its mission.

This section of the Accountability Handbook is designed to offer focused guidance in developing sound goals and measures – both educational and organizational – for inclusion in each school’s accountability plan. These goals and measures should be carefully selected to be most useful to the charter school, the Mayor’s Office, and other stakeholders in the school’s success.

The Performance Framework for the Mayor’s Office’s accountability system requires each school to develop school-specific goals and measures for:

- 1) **Educational Performance** – addressing aspects of student learning that demonstrate the school’s mission; and
- 2) **Organizational and Management Performance** – addressing matters such as finances, facilities and other operational management; leadership,

¹ Many of the concepts, definitions and principles in these pages are adapted from the following sources: *Measuring Up: How Chicago’s Charter Schools Make Their Missions Count*, by Margaret Lin (Leadership for Quality Education, 2000); *Guidelines for Writing Charter School Accountability Plans, 2001-2002* (Charter Schools Institute, State University of New York), http://www.newyorkcharters.org/charterny/act_guide.html; and “Some Expectations Regarding the Contents of Charter School Accountability Plans,” District of Columbia Public Charter School Board.

governance and personnel; attendance and retention rates; strength of community; parent satisfaction and market demand.

While it is important that charter schools have enough goals to measure progress relating to their mission, too many goals can become difficult to manage and measure. In addition, not all goals that your school may develop for internal guidance and strategic planning are necessary for external accountability purposes. Thus, for incorporation in each school's accountability plan, the Mayor's Office recommends developing no more than ten to twelve total unique educational and organizational/management goals, with the majority focusing on educational performance. A much smaller number of goals would also be acceptable. Each school, however, should use its own discretion to determine a suitable number of goals based on its individual situation.

Note: The following guidance focuses particularly on developing strong *educational* goals and measures for your accountability plan. This task demands particular attention because educational performance indicators are often more challenging to state in objective, externally meaningful terms than are measures that focus on organizational and management performance. However, the principles for developing both educational and organizational goals and measures are very similar. Thus, to the extent applicable, you should follow the guidance in these pages for developing your organizational and management goals and measures as well.

General Criteria for Educational and Organizational Goals

Goals should be SMART:

- **Specific** (and, for educational goals, tied to learning **Standards**). A well-defined goal must be specific, clearly and concisely stated, and easily understood. Educational goals should be tied to learning standards that specify **what students should know and be able to do**, for each subject or content area and for each grade, age, or other grouping level. Equally important, educational goals should be developed with solid knowledge of students' **baseline achievement levels**.
- **Measurable**. A goal should be tied to measurable results to be achieved. Measurement is then simply an assessment of success or failure in achieving the goal.
- **Ambitious and Attainable**. A goal should be challenging yet attainable and realistic. Educational goals should be based on a well-informed assessment of your school's capacities and your students' baseline achievement levels.
- **Reflective of Your Mission**. A goal should be a natural outgrowth of your school mission, reflecting the school's values and aspirations.
- **Time-Specific with Target Date**. A well-conceived goal should specify a time frame or target date for achievement. The Mayor's Office expects its charter

schools to specify **long-term performance targets** for each school's **third** and **sixth** years of operation.

Definitions of Key Terms in Goal-Setting²

****Remember:** *while these definitions pertain specifically to educational goals, they are also applicable to organizational and management goals.*

To develop adequate learning goals and measures, schools should begin with a clear understanding of a few essential terms:

Goal: A clear, measurable statement of what the school will accomplish with its students after a certain length of time attending the school.

Standard: A clear, measurable statement of what students will be expected to know (a *content* standard) or be able to do (a *performance* or *skill* standard) at a given point in their development, usually each year and at graduation. Allows monitoring of progress toward an ultimate *goal*.

(Standards are usually defined grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject, and are thus more specific than – but necessary to support – overarching school goals.)

Benchmark: A clear, measurable statement of what the school will accomplish with its students at a given point in the school's development, usually each year or at more frequent intervals. Allows monitoring of progress toward an ultimate *goal*.

Assessment (*sometimes also "measure"*): A method, tool or system to evaluate and demonstrate student progress toward – or mastery of – a particular learning standard or goal.
(Examples: A standardized test, or a portfolio-judging system)

Measure: An application of an assessment that defines progress toward or attainment of a goal and indicates the level of performance that will constitute success.

(Example: "Students at the Successful Charter School will improve their performance on the reading portion of the NWEA by at least 3% per year, on average.")

Assessments – and by extension, measures – should be **valid, reliable**, and demonstrate **scoring consistency**:

- **Valid:** Assesses the skill or knowledge it is intended to assess.
- **Reliable:** Provides consistent results when taken repeatedly by the student at a given point in his/her development, as well as by other students at the same point in development.
- **Scoring Consistency:** Produces consistent scores, ratings, results or responses when a particular assessment tool, scoring guide or rubric is used by different evaluators to assess the same student performance or work sample. (Often called *interrater reliability*)

² Some of these terms may be defined or used differently elsewhere in the education community. This page is meant to provide a consistent set of working definitions for schools to use in developing accountability plans with the Mayor's Office.

Essential Principles for Developing Sound Educational Goals and Measures

- Your mandate as the operator of a charter school is not just to teach well but also to **demonstrate objectively** – in ways that are **clear, understandable** and **credible** to a variety of external audiences – that you are doing so. Thus, you must measure and report educational progress precisely and extensively.
- Distinguish between **goals** and **measures**. Goals are the starting point, but require valid, reliable ways to measure and demonstrate that you have achieved them.
- Make sure that your goals are **clear, specific** and **measurable**. They should also be **challenging** yet **achievable**.
- Your measures for attainment of those goals should describe **how you will assess progress**, and **how much progress will constitute success**.
- Educational goals must be connected to a well-defined set of learning standards for both **content** (what students should know) and **performance** (what students should be able to do). Such standards should exist for **every subject or content area** and **each grade, age or other grouping level** in the school. Focus on **outcomes** and **evidence of learning**, not inputs. For example, participation rates or the number of hours spent on an activity are *not* sufficient measures of success. Participation and investment of time are necessary first steps, but they are inputs, not **demonstrable** measures of learning and accomplishment.
- In developing goals for your accountability plan, focus on **what's most important**. No more than eight to ten clear, well-chosen and carefully measured educational goals should allow you to provide a convincing story of your progress and achievements – and will be more effective than listing a score of vague, trivial, redundant or hard-to-measure indicators.
- The measures you develop to assess achievement of each goal, if not based on standardized assessments, should be demonstrably **valid** and **reliable**. (The “Framework for Creating Unique Learning Measures” provided later in this section will provide some help in developing validity and reliability in assessments.)

A Note on Defining Standards: *Milestones on the Path to Broader School Goals*

Educational goals must be tied to clear content and performance standards specifying what you expect your students to know and be able to do in order to graduate or be promoted to the next level. These standards need only to be referenced in your accountability plan, but they form the foundation of your school's education program. As such, selecting and developing grade-by-grade, subject-by-subject standards is an essential component of accountability planning that goes hand-in-hand with broader goal-setting and answers the following question: *do our standards embody the expectations necessary to achieve our mission and reach our goals?*

Continued...

Of course, many of your school standards will be Indiana state standards. However, most schools have important aims beyond the state requirements, and developing these supplemental standards is a technically challenging task. It usually consists of several steps, including:

1. Articulating desired characteristics of “educated” students at a general level – or setting your school’s overarching goals;
2. Breaking these general qualities and goals into more concrete graduation or exit standards; and
3. Benchmarking these exit standards down into specific and measurable grade-age-level content and performance standards.³

Practical Steps for Developing Sound Educational Goals and Measures

- **Define a set of goals** that describe what success will look like at your school. These goals should be carefully selected to reflect the **breadth and depth of your mission**.

Defining Goals: Some Helpful Guiding Questions

Ask the following critical questions when defining your school’s goals:

- *How will you know if your school is succeeding (or not)?*
- *What will be important characteristics of “educated students” at your school?*
- *What will students learn, know, understand and be able to do after a certain period of time, before promotion to the next grade level, or before graduation from our school?*
- *What should your graduates permanently possess as a result of their time in your school?*

- Outline your goals in **precise, declarative sentences**. Example: “All students at the Excelencia Charter School will be proficient readers and writers of Spanish within four years of enrolling.”
- Identify at least **one and possibly multiple measures** to assess and demonstrate progress toward each goal. These measures must indicate both (1) the **level of performance** you will expect your school or students to achieve, and (2) **how much progress will indicate success**. (It is not sufficient to say you’ll administer a certain type of assessment; you must explain how you expect your students to perform on it to demonstrate progress and success.)
- You may develop different types of measures to assess (1) absolute achievement; (2) student growth or gains; or (3) achievement compared to other schools. (The box below, entitled “Example: Multiple Measures Applied to a

³Adapted from *Accountability for Student Performance: An Annotated Resource Guide for Shaping an Accountability Plan for Your Charter School* (Charter Friends National Network, 2nd ed., 2001), p. 5, <http://www.charterfriends.org/accountability.doc>.

Single Goal,” provides an example of different ways to measure achievement of the same goal.)

- For every goal, choose means of assessment that make **non-attainment** of the goal as **objectively apparent** as success. That is, the assessment(s) should tell you (and external audiences) immediately whether you have achieved a particular goal or not. For example, if one goal of your school is to develop your students into skilled readers, it would not be persuasive to rely on a survey of parents’ opinions of their children’s reading skills to show that your students did indeed become skilled readers. You would need to select some type of **externally credible assessment** to measure and demonstrate students’ reading proficiency.
- Make sure that your measures of student learning are based on knowledge of your students’ **baseline achievement levels**. Without such knowledge, your measures will not be meaningful or realistic.
- Set **long-term goals** as well as **intermediate (typically annual) benchmarks** to assess progress. Administer assessments corresponding to this timeline to provide longitudinal data over the term of the charter. (The Mayor’s Office does not require annual benchmarks to be reported in schools’ external accountability plans, but schools should nevertheless set them to guide internal accountability planning, and must provide annual longitudinal data showing progress toward each long-term goal to the Mayor’s Office.)
- To have time to counter learning deficits that students may have upon entering your school, you may consider setting certain goals for students who have been enrolled in your school for a **certain period of time**, such as “students who have been in the school for at least three years.”
- For every measure you develop, ask yourself, “*Will this measure be readily understandable and **credible** to someone who doesn’t spend a day or a week in our school getting to know us?*” Remember, your school will be judged by the media, community leaders and the public at large, in addition to your authorizer and parents. For measures not based on standardized tests, establishing external credibility typically requires demonstrating **validity** and **reliability**. (The “Framework for Creating Unique Learning Measures” at the end of this section offers an overview of one way for schools to do this.) Credibility – through valid and reliable measures – should be an aim for all goals you develop. Be sure to establish this.
- Understand **what data** you will need to gather to support each measure. Remember, *if you have no data, you have no case* proving your school’s achievements. Likewise, if you have insufficient data, you have an insufficient case.

Selecting Assessments: Some Helpful Guiding Questions

Ask the following critical questions when selecting or developing assessments:

- *How will we ensure and demonstrate that we meet or exceed these expectations? How will we measure and report – clearly and concisely – whether our students are reaching each learning standard?*
- *What are all the characteristics of a student performance or sample of work that meet a particular standard? Exceed the standard? Approach the standard? Do not meet the standard?*
- *Does this assessment enable all students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understandings relevant to the given standard?*
- *Is the assessment **valid** – does it measure the skills or knowledge we intend it to measure?*
- *Is the assessment **reliable** – does it provide consistent results when taken repeatedly by the same student at a given point in his/her development? Does it provide consistent results when taken by other students at the same point in development?*
- *Is there a clearly written scoring tool or rubric that is consistent with the purpose of the assessment?*
- *Do our assessment tools, scoring guides, or rubrics pass the test of **interrater reliability, or scoring consistency and accuracy**? That is, do different assessors or evaluators use them in the same way, resulting in consistent responses when scoring the same student performance or work sample?*

Tip: Schools can achieve interrater reliability by undertaking an audit-like process to pilot and refine assessment tools – for example, double- or triple-scoring every fifth sample of student work, comparing the scoring responses given by the different evaluators, and revising or clarifying the scoring tool as needed to eliminate inconsistent ratings. (See the examples in the box above.)
- *Are our assessment tools or scoring guides user-friendly? Are the instructions and procedural explanations for teachers or other assessors clear?*
- *Is the assessment feasible to administer?*

There is no single best way to measure achievement of a particular goal. As charter schools, you are free to choose measures that you prefer, provided that they are also meaningful and persuasive to external audiences.

Double-Checking the Quality and Integrity of Learning Measures: Some Helpful Guiding Questions

Ask the following critical questions when selecting or developing assessments:

- *Are our assessments aligned with our standards and curriculum?*
- *Are the standards and curriculum aligned?*
- *Are the knowledge and skills we test important to teach and test?*
- *Does our school adequately teach the knowledge and skills being tested?*
- *Do our assessments accurately measure attainment of the standards?*
- *Do our standards and assessments show both breadth and depth?*
- *Do our standards and assessments demand that students demonstrate more than simple recall?*
- *Do our standards and assessments represent a worthwhile educational experience?*
- *Are the standards and assessments free of gender, cultural and other biases?*

The following example shows how three different measures might be applied to a single learning goal. (These goals could be developed by one school or by three different schools that have the same goal.) Note that each measure describes **how progress will be assessed and how much progress will constitute success**. The third measure allows the school to assess skills beyond those measured on standardized tests, and would thus require some demonstration of validity and reliability or be used in addition to externally validated assessments.⁴

Example: Multiple Measures Applied to a Single Goal

Goal: “All students at the Successful Charter School will become proficient readers of English within three years of enrolling at our school.”

Possible Measures:

- “Students at the Successful Charter School will improve their performance on the reading portion of the NWEA by at least 5% per year, on average.”
(Measuring growth – Note: The proposed rate of improvement must be sufficient, based on information collected through baseline data, to meet the ultimate target goal in the specified time frame)
- “Students at the Successful Charter School will perform at a level higher than their peers in the Successful School District on the English & Language Arts portion of Required State Examination in all grades, as demonstrated by a greater percentage of students passing and by a higher overall average student score.”
(Assessing comparative performance)
- “All students at the Successful Charter School will read aloud and discuss an essay of literary significance before a panel of teachers and outside experts at the end of their 8th- and 10th-grade years, achieving a “Proficient” or higher rating from the panel for each of the following skills: elocution, comprehension and analysis.”
(Performance-based assessment)

“From Qualitative to Quantitative”: A Framework for Creating Unique Learning Measures⁵

Below is a six-step framework for designing **valid, reliable** measures of learning in areas not typically assessed by standardized tests. Schools may use this framework to create their own externally credible measures in similarly difficult-to-measure areas. If this approach does not meet your school’s needs, you should propose an alternative approach to the Mayor’s Office.

⁴ Adapted from *Guidelines for Writing Charter School Accountability Plans, 2001-2002* (Charter Schools Institute, State University of New York), p. 4, http://www.newyorkcharters.org/charterny/act_guide.html.

⁵ From *Measuring Up: How Chicago’s Charter Schools Make Their Missions Count*, by Margaret Lin (Leadership for Quality Education, 2000), pp. 32-33.

Six-Step Framework for Creating Unique Learning Measures

1. Define Clear Standards
<p>Define: What are our ultimate goals for our students and graduates? What do we expect them to know and be able to do before promotion to the next grade level or graduation?</p> <p>Have the standards externally reviewed by experts and community members (e.g., standards and subject-area experts, curriculum specialists, university professors, other educators, school district administrators, school governing board members, parents).</p>
2. Design Assessments Aligned with Those Standards
<p>Define: How can students demonstrate they have reached our standards?</p>
3. Develop Scoring Tools or Rubrics
<ol style="list-style-type: none">For every assessment designed to measure attainment of a particular standard, first define: What are the essential features of a student performance or sample of work that <i>meets</i> the standard? That <i>exceeds</i> the standard? That <i>does not meet</i> the standard? That <i>approaches</i> the standard?Create a scoring tool or guide that rates student performance or work by applying these criteria.Assign performance levels to express students' overall attainment or non-attainment of the standard (for example: Exceeds standard; Meets standard; Approaching standard; Does not meet standard).Train teachers and other assessors to use the scoring guides or rubrics consistently.
4. Test the Reliability of Assessments
<p>Pilot assessments and scoring tools repeatedly to ensure scoring consistency and accuracy across different evaluators and assessment occasions. Try an audit-like process in piloting and refining an assessment – for example, double- or triple-score every fifth sample of student work, compare scoring responses, and revise or clarify the scoring tool as needed to eliminate inconsistent ratings. Use exemplars – samples of student work that should be scored at varying levels – to help achieve consistent interpretation and usage of scoring guides.</p>
5. Translate Student Scores into Aggregate Measures
<p>After ensuring the validity and reliability of an assessment, translate student scores on the assessment into aggregate measures: What percent of all students met, exceeded, approached, or did not meet the standard?</p>
6. Communicate Results
<p>Communicate student progress toward the standards by reporting individual and aggregate growth, using students' beginning or baseline performance as the point of comparison. Communicate school results through multiple avenues, such as community meetings and annual or more frequent reports for parents, the public, and the media.</p>

Examples of Measures Created through This Framework

Examples of goals and assessment processes developed by charter schools in Chicago, IL following this framework include:

Narrative Writing: Writing Appraisal System

North Kenwood-Oakland Charter School (NKO)

Performance Goal:

“80% of our students will demonstrate mastery in narrative writing by meeting or exceeding the minimum grade-level standard score for work assessed according to the seven-category Writing Appraisal System.”

Establishing Reliability in Assessment:

North Kenwood-Oakland, an elementary charter school in Chicago, has created a unique system to assess its students’ writing skills. The assessment team that developed NKO’s Writing Appraisal System was composed of writing assessment specialists, NKO faculty, and Literacy Coordinators (teachers) from eight other public schools in Chicago in the Center for School Improvement’s (CSI, affiliated with the University of Chicago) network. Together, this team examined accountability protocols developed earlier by CSI as well as from across the country, paying particular attention to urban school district and charter school writing assessment materials.

Drawing upon these models, the assessment team created scoring guides to gauge student progress toward NKO Charter School’s Unique Writing Standards as well as state and district standards. The team then repeatedly scored samples of student writing collected from the eight schools in CSI’s network, compared their scores to find variances, and revised the rubrics as needed to eliminate significant discrepancies. To build consistent understanding and usage of the rubrics, the team used **exemplars** – samples of student work illustrating distinct levels of achievement that should be scored accordingly. They repeated this exercise several times throughout the Project year until they had confidence in the reliability of the assessment instruments.

Oral Expression

North Lawndale College Preparatory Charter High School (NLCP)

Performance Goal:

“Within two years, 75% of our students will master speaking effectively in a variety of academic and professional settings.”

Establishing Reliability in Assessment:

North Lawndale College Prep, a charter high school in Chicago, has established both internal and external consistency and reliability in tools to assess its students’ skills in Oral Expression. First, in training faculty and student judges in the use of the rubric, the school uses videotaped Oral Presentations by students from other schools. Teams of assessors of three people each (two faculty members and one student) watch a taped presentation, score it and then compare and discuss individual scoring. They repeat this with two additional taped presentations.

Continued...

Having each Oral Presentation assessed by three people provides an ongoing check on consistency, reliability and fairness. Significant scoring variances within any three-member scoring team are discussed and resolved by the team. If necessary, the scoring team can request assistance from one of the two English faculty members to resolve a scoring difference.

The school also uses a team of external expert assessors to evaluate randomly selected, taped Oral Presentations. This team consists largely of speech and communications faculty of local colleges and universities and possibly the Speaking, Arguing and Writing Program at Mt. Holyoke College. Scores produced by the external assessors are compared with those of NLCP's internal team, and scoring variances are resolved by refining or clarifying the assessment tool.

Developing Organizational and Management Performance Goals and Measures

In addition to goals and measures for student learning, your accountability plan will require a few goals and measures pertaining to **Organizational and Management Performance**. Many of the general principles and steps outlined above are useful to follow in developing these indicators, though the framing question to guide this task is:

In addition to educational measures, what evidence will show that your school is an effective, well-run institution?

This will be your opportunity to demonstrate success in areas of organizational and operational performance such as (but not limited to):

- Financial management and performance;
- Strength and stability of leadership, governance and personnel;
- Facilities and other operational management;
- Enrollment, attendance and retention;
- Staffing and professional development;
- Parent and community involvement; and
- Parent and student satisfaction.

Note: All Mayor-sponsored charter schools are **required** to articulate goals and measures, accompanied by third- and sixth-year targets, for **student enrollment, attendance and retention**. (Enrollment goals are already included in each school's charter, but the Mayor's Office asks that each school re-incorporate those goals in their accountability plan for clarity.) Beyond the requirement for enrollment, attendance and retention, you may develop any other organizational goals with accompanying measures that are meaningful for your school mission.

For most schools, developing three to four school-specific goals for organizational performance should be sufficient. Keep in mind that organizational and operational performance is already extensively addressed by the **common indicators** of the Performance Framework. The Mayor’s Office recommends that schools first review the types of organizational performance addressed by the Framework’s common indicators, and then develop unique organizational goals only for matters *not* already addressed that are important for your school. The box below offers examples of organizational goals and possible related measures.

Examples of Organizational and Management Performance Goals and Measures

Goal: “Teachers and staff will be highly qualified, demonstrate high expectations for all students, and have a positive attitude toward the school and their colleagues.”

Measures: *“90% or more of the teaching staff will have at least a bachelor’s degree in the subject they teach and at least two years of teaching experience. The teacher retention rate will be at least 90% each year, not including departures for health or family reasons. All teachers will consistently earn satisfactory ratings on regular classroom observations by the Principal and Academic Director. The school will earn satisfactory ratings from at least 90% of the faculty on a survey administered each semester to assess professional satisfaction. At least 90% of parents responding to an annual survey will indicate satisfaction with teachers at our school.”*

Goal: “Families will see themselves as partners in their children’s education and will be active in the life of the school.”

Measures: *“At least 80% of parents will participate in report card pick-up days and quarterly parent-teacher conferences, as recorded on sign-in sheets. At least 80% of parents will regularly attend student exhibitions, performances, academic fairs and other showcase events, as recorded on sign-in sheets. At least 20% of parents will volunteer at least 15 hours per year for the school, and at least 50% of parents will volunteer at least 10 hours per year.”*

V. THE ACCOUNTABILITY TIMELINE OVER THE CHARTER TERM

The Mayor’s Office will conduct oversight throughout the term of the charter to corroborate information submitted by the school and to gain a rich understanding of the school’s operations and performance. The data obtained through these processes will inform the Mayor’s ultimate decision about whether to renew the school’s charter.

A basic timeline for accountability plan development, implementation and oversight follows, showing general timeframes to help schools in planning. The Mayor’s Office will notify schools of specific dates and deadlines each year.

The timeline below does *not* include reporting requirements or the Mayor’s Office’s ongoing monitoring of schools’ finances and governance — it focuses instead on indicator development, assessments, and performance monitoring. In addition, this timeline assumes that school performance is sufficiently high to avoid “corrective action” under federal law, state law, or Mayor’s Office policy. Schools with more significant performance or compliance concerns may face additional monitoring, oversight requirements, or charter revocation.

Timeline for Accountability Plan Development, Implementation & Oversight

YEAR 1	
Summer Pre-Opening	School finalizes initial common and school-specific performance indicators and assessments and makes plans for baseline data gathering. A representative from the Mayor’s Office visits each school to ensure the school is ready for operation.
Fall	School collects baseline data on all initial performance indicators. External team visits school to assess implementation of basic systems and processes, and provides feedback to school.
Winter	School submits baseline data on all initial performance indicators to the Mayor’s Office.
Spring	School continues gathering data on all initial performance indicators. External team visits school to assess implementation of systems and processes, and provides feedback to school. External organization surveys staff and parents at school.
Summer (by June 1)	School submits data reporting annual progress on all initial performance indicators to the Mayor’s Office.
YEAR 2	
Ongoing	School continues gathering data on all performance indicators. External team may visit school to monitor performance and provide feedback.
Fall	School submits draft school-specific indicators. Mayor’s Office provides feedback on indicators.
Winter	Mayor’s Office and schools finalize school-specific indicators.
Spring	External organization surveys staff and parents at school.
Summer (by June 1)	School submits data reporting annual progress on all performance indicators to the Mayor’s Office.

YEAR 3	
Ongoing	School continues gathering data on all performance indicators. External team may visit school to monitor performance and provide feedback.
Spring	School conducts self-evaluation of performance. External organization surveys staff and parents at school.
Summer (by June 1)	School submits data reporting annual progress on all performance indicators to the Mayor's Office.
YEAR 4	
Ongoing	School continues gathering data on all performance indicators.
Fall or Spring	External team visits school for several days to corroborate third-year self-evaluation and provide additional information and detailed report to Mayor's Office. Mayor's Office provides feedback to school on issues that may affect the renewal of the school's charter. External organization surveys staff and parents at school.
Summer (by June 1)	School submits data reporting annual progress on all performance indicators to the Mayor's Office.
(to be scheduled)	School leadership meets with Mayor's Office to discuss an action plan for addressing areas needing improvement identified in the previous academic year's site visit report. If necessary, school completes a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Mayor's Office regarding this action plan.
YEAR 5	
Ongoing	School continues gathering data on all performance indicators. School addresses areas needing improvement identified by third-year self-evaluation and fourth-year external report. External team may visit school to monitor performance and provide feedback.
Spring	External organization surveys staff and parents at school.
Summer (by June 1)	School submits data reporting annual progress on all performance indicators to the Mayor's Office.
YEAR 6	
Ongoing	School continues gathering data on all performance indicators. School continues addressing areas needing improvement identified by third-year self-evaluation and fourth-year external report, if not yet resolved. External team may visit school to monitor performance and provide feedback.
Spring	External organization surveys staff and parents at school.
Summer (by June 1)	School submits data reporting annual progress on all performance indicators to the Mayor's Office.
(by Aug. 1)	School submits <i>charter renewal application</i> by August 1 st . The renewal application will be an in-depth analysis of the school's performance over the previous six years.
YEAR 7	
Ongoing	School continues gathering data on all performance indicators. School continues addressing areas needing improvement identified by third-year self-evaluation and fourth-year external report, if not yet resolved. External team may visit school to monitor performance and provide feedback.

Winter	Mayor's Office makes decision about renewal of school's charter.
Spring	External organization surveys staff and parents at school.
Summer	School submits data reporting annual progress on all performance indicators to the Mayor's Office.

VI. APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Performance Framework Assessment Rubrics

Appendix 2. Accountability Plan Summary Sheet for School-Specific Goals and Assessments, Template Instructions & Templates

Appendix 3. Resources

APPENDIX 1: PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK ASSESSMENT RUBRICS

The Mayor's Office has developed an assessment system that will be used at mid-term and toward the end of a charter's term to determine the extent to which the school is meeting expectations under the first three questions of the Performance Framework. For each sub-question, the assessment system uses a four-level scale:

- Exceeds standard
- Meets standard
- Approaching standard
- Does not meet standard

The Mayor's Office also will assess each school overall on the first three broad evaluation questions.

Note: In the case of question 3 of the Performance Framework, which addresses legal and charter compliance, there is no rating for "exceeds standard." "Meets standard" is the highest possible rating for that question.

The draft assessment rubrics on the following pages define these performance levels for each of the sub-questions. These rubrics are subject to revision by the Mayor's Office from time to time.

SECTION 1: Is the educational program a success?

1.1 Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress (AYP), as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?	
Does not meet standard	School has met AYP in less than half of student subgroups for the last two consecutive years.
Approaching standard	School has met AYP in more than half of student subgroups for one of the last two years.
Meets standard	School has met AYP across all student subgroups for the last two years.
Exceeds standard	School has exceeded the AYP target in all student subgroups in at least one of the last two years.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

The Indiana Department of Education determines a school's AYP and designation status annually.

1.2 Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time, as measured using value-added analysis?	
Does not meet standard	Value-added analysis indicates that less than 50% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Approaching standard	Value-added analysis indicates that 50%-74% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Meets standard	Value-added analysis indicates that more than 75%-89% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Exceeds standard	Value-added analysis indicates that at least 90% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Schools must administer a nationally normed standardized test that is approved for use by the Mayor’s Office in at least reading and mathematics to students in grades 2 – 11 in both the fall and the spring. The results of these assessments are examined using “value-added” analysis techniques to determine the amount of student learning attributable to the school’s efforts. The terms “expected gains” and “minimal,” “inadequate,” “adequate,” and “exemplary” will be defined as the Mayor’s Office finalizes its techniques for value-added analysis.

1.3 Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?	
Does not meet standard	School's overall performance in terms of proficiency and/or growth is generally lower than that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend in each of the last three years.
Approaching standard	School's overall performance in terms of both proficiency and/or growth is generally lower than that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend in two of the last three years.
Meets standard	School's overall performance in terms of both proficiency and/or growth is generally as good as that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend.
Exceeds standard	School's performance consistently outpaces that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

ISTEP+ data provided by the Indiana Department of Education and/or corporations from which a charter school draws enrollment. The Mayor's Office will select schools and/or corporations for comparison. In doing so, it will seek to create a comparison group that is as representative as possible of the schools to which the charter school's students would have been assigned to attend. Its ability to achieve this aim will depend upon the availability of data on which schools would have been the assigned schools of charter school students.

1.4. Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals? (Optional)

A given school may have several school-specific educational goals in its accountability plan (i.e., 1.4 through 1.X as needed).

In relation to each, please indicate one of the following:

Does not meet standard	School has clearly not met its school-specific educational goal.
Approaching standard	School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific educational goal.
Meets standard	School has clearly met its school-specific educational goal.
Exceeds standard	School has clearly exceeded its school-specific educational goal.

Rating

Comments

Sources of Evidence:

The evidence will vary depending on the goals of the school. For each school-specific goal, the school will be required to specify the measure to be used to evaluate the school’s attainment of the goal. Each measure must be approved by the Mayor’s Office as valid (actually measuring the desired result) and reliable (producing consistent results across multiple administrations or graders). The onus will be on each school to develop these measures and to collect and report the data necessary to evaluate success.

SECTION 2: Is the organization effective and well-run?

2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents concerns in <u>three or more</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one or two</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement.
Meets standard	The school presents significant concerns in no more than <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement. In addition, if the school presents significant concerns in one area, it has a credible plan for addressing the concern that has been approved by the Mayor’s Office.
Exceeds standard	The school demonstrates satisfactory performance in all of the areas listed in previous levels.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

- a) Results of Indiana State Board of Accounts audit of school finances.
- b) Results of external audit of school finances commissioned by school in accordance with Charter Agreement with the Mayor.
- c) Results of external audit of school finances commissioned by school in accordance with Charter Agreement with the Mayor.
- d) External review of projections submitted by school at the time of this rating.
- e) Mayor’s Office records of timeliness of report submission.

2.2. Are the school’s student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?	
<i>Over the last three years...</i>	
Does not meet standard	The school’s actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>10% or more</u> . Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school’s agreed-upon target rates.
Approaching standard	The school’s actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>1-9%</u> . Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school’s agreed-upon target rates.
Meets standard	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates are generally at or above the school’s agreed-upon target rates.
Exceeds standard	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates consistently exceed the school’s agreed-upon target rates.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Where possible, these data will be obtained from the Indiana Department of Education’s official counts. In other cases, schools will report data according to a form prescribed by the Mayor’s Office.

Notes:

- “Retention rate” refers to the percentage of eligible students who return to the school from one year to the next.
- Each school will negotiate its own target student attendance and retention rates with the Mayor’s Office to reflect the fact that different schools’ target populations may have different needs. For example, it would not make sense for a school for students in the juvenile justice system to have the same target retention rate as that of a school serving a more conventional population.

2.3. Is the school’s board active and competent in its oversight?	
Does not meet standard	The school appears to lack clear, consistent, and competent stewardship. The board lacks the number of members specified in the by-laws; it is not well-balanced in member expertise; there has been consistently high turnover on the board unrelated to the term limits stipulated in the board’s by-laws; roles and responsibilities of the board are not clear; it often fails to achieve a quorum.
Approaching standard	Board membership is not complete; there has been some unanticipated turnover on the board unrelated to the term limits stipulated in the board’s by-laws; it is reasonably well-balanced in member expertise; roles and responsibilities on the board are reasonably clear; it is difficult to get a quorum; board subcommittees are somewhat active; the board is developing its ability to provide clear, consistent, and competent stewardship.
Meets standard	The board’s membership collectively contributes a broad skill set and fair representation of the community; board members are knowledgeable about the school; roles and responsibilities of the board are clearly delineated; board meetings reflect thoughtful discussion and progress in the consideration of issues; overall, the board provides consistent and competent stewardship of the school.
Exceeds standard	The board meets the standard for this sub-question AND: displays exceptional expertise and stewardship, as evidenced by significant board actions to enhance the school over time.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Expert site visit reports; Mayor’s Office compliance and governance reviews. These standards and sources of evidence are more fully specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, available at <http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Schools/Operating/governance.htm>.

2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?

Over the past two years of surveys, on average:

Does not meet standard	Less than 70% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
Approaching standard	More than 70% but less than 80% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
Meets standard	More than 80% but less than 90% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
Exceeds standard	At least 90% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.

Rating

Comments

Sources of Evidence:

Parent surveys.

2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) the leadership has insufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) turnover in leadership has been high and/or damaging to the school; c) roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the board are generally unclear; d) the school's leadership does not appear to actively engage in a process of continuous improvement; it has made few mid-course corrections in response to problems.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) the leadership has insufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) turnover in leadership has been high and/or damaging to the school; c) roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the board are generally unclear; d) the school's leadership does not appear to actively engage in a process of continuous improvement; it has made few mid-course corrections in response to problems.
Meets standard	The school's leadership a) has sufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) has been sufficiently stable over time; c) has clearly defined roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the board; d) actively engages in a process of continuous improvement which has led to some mid-course corrections.
Exceeds standard	The leadership displays exceptional academic and business expertise. Leadership turnover has been manageable and appropriate. Roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the board are clear. The leadership has established exemplary processes to engage in continuous improvement which have led to significant enhancements to the school over time.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Expert site visit reports; parent and staff surveys.

2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals? (Optional)

A given school may have several school-specific organizational goals in its accountability plan (i.e, 2.6 through 2.X as needed). In relation to each, please indicate one of the following:

Does not meet standard	School has clearly not met its school-specific organizational goal.
Approaching standard	School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific organizational goal.
Meets standard	School has clearly met its school-specific organizational goal.
Exceeds standard	School has clearly exceeded its school-specific organizational goal.

Rating

Comments

Sources of Evidence:

The evidence will vary depending on the goals of the school. For each school-specific goal, the school will be required to specify the measure to be used to evaluate the school’s attainment of the goal. Each measure must be approved by the Mayor’s Office as valid (actually measuring the desired result) and reliable (producing consistent results across multiple administrations or graders). The onus will be on each school to develop these measures and to collect and report the data necessary to evaluate success.

SECTION 3: Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?

3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational and governance obligations?	
Does not meet standard	School presents significant concerns in two or more of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) maintenance of adequate “compliance and governance binder” containing all required documents; b) completion of criminal background checks on all board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with open meetings obligations; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes.
Approaching standard	School presents significant concerns in one of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) maintenance of adequate “compliance and governance binder” containing all required documents; b) completion of criminal background checks on all board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with open meetings obligations; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes
Meets standard	School has substantially completed all of its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, including: a) maintenance of adequate “compliance and governance binder” containing all required documents; b) completion of criminal background checks on all board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with open meetings obligations; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes. Any concerns are minor and the school presents a credible plan to address them.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Mayor’s Office compliance and governance reviews. These standards and sources of evidence are more fully specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook, available at <http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Schools/Operating/governance.htm>.

3.2. Is the school’s physical plant safe and conducive to learning?	
Does not meet standard	The facility requires <u>much</u> improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. Significant health and safety code requirements have not been met AND/OR the school <u>lacks</u> many conditions such as the following: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; adequate maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students.
Approaching standard	Significant health and safety code requirements are being met, but the facility needs <u>some</u> improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. It <u>partially</u> – but not fully – provides conditions such as the following: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; good maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students.
Meets standard	Significant health and safety code requirements are being met AND the facility generally provides a safe environment that is conducive to learning, based on conditions such as: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; good maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

School’s documentation of health and safety code compliance; expert site visit reports; staff and parent surveys.

3.3 Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?	
Does not meet standard	The school’s enrollment process does not comply with applicable law AND/OR the school exhibits one or both of the following deficiencies a) a substantial number of documented parent complaints suggest that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; b) the school has not engaged in outreach to students throughout the community.
Approaching standard	The school’s enrollment process complies with applicable law but exhibits one or both the following deficiencies: a) a substantial number of documented parent complaints suggest that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; b) the school has not engaged in outreach to students throughout the community.
Meets standard	The school’s enrollment process complies with applicable law; there are minimal documented parent complaints suggesting that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; AND the school has engaged in outreach to students throughout the community.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

School’s documented enrollment policy; marketing materials; Mayor’s Office records of parent complaints; Mayor’s Office compliance and governance reviews.

3.4 Is the school properly maintaining special education files for its special needs students?	
Does not meet standard	The school is <u>not</u> fulfilling its legal obligations regarding proper maintenance of special-needs students' files, and requires substantial improvement in order to achieve compliance such as the following: individualized education plans are up-to-date, student evaluations or re-evaluations have occurred within the appropriate timeframe, files contain the relevant required information, such as, file log sheet, parent consent form, documentation of case conference notification to parents and other conference participants and signatures of attendees at case conferences. A school does not meet the standard if any individual education plans have not been updated within the appropriate timeframe.
Approaching standard	The school is <u>not yet completely</u> fulfilling all of its legal obligations proper maintenance of special-needs students' files, and requires <i>some</i> (but not considerable) improvement to fully achieve conditions such as the following: individualized education plans are up-to-date, student evaluations or re-evaluations have occurred within the appropriate timeframe, files contain the relevant required information, such as, file log sheet, parent consent form, documentation of case conference notification to parents and other conference participants and signatures of attendees at case conferences.
Meets standard	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding special-needs students, as indicated by conditions such as the following: individualized education plans are up-to-date, student evaluations or re-evaluations have occurred within the appropriate timeframe, files contain the relevant required information, such as, file log sheet, parent consent form, documentation of case conference notification to parents and other conference participants and signatures of attendees at case conferences.
Rating Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Expert site visit teams' reviews of special education compliance; expert site visit reports.

3.5 Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related To access and services to English as a Second Language (ESL) students?	
Does not meet standard	The school is <u>not</u> fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires substantial improvement in order to achieve conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Approaching standard	The school is <u>not yet completely</u> fulfilling all of its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires <i>some</i> (but not considerable) improvement to fully achieve conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Meets standard	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, as indicated by conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Indiana Department of Education reviews of ESL compliance; expert site visit reports.

SECTION 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Meets standard	The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

School and state documents; classroom observations; school-wide interviews.

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

classroom observations; student work samples.

4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the school’s academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the school’s academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Meets standard	The school: a) has challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) has high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) has sufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) presents opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) meets or exceeds Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Faculty, administrator, parent and student interviews; school documents.

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

School documents; lesson plans; assessment information; classroom observations; school-wide interviews.

4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) hiring processes are organized and used to support the success of new staff members; b) the school deploys sufficient number of faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) is related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD opportunities are determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Faculty and administrator interviews; school documents.

4.6. Is the school’s mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>both</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school’s mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school’s mission.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school’s mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school’s mission.
Meets standard	The school: a) has a mission that is shared by all stakeholders; b) has stakeholders possessing widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school’s mission.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Faculty, administrator, parent and student interviews; school documents.

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Faculty, administrator and student interviews; classroom observations.

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Meets standard	The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents).
Rating	
Comments	

Sources of Evidence:

Parent and student interviews; school documents.

APPENDIX 2: INSTRUCTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL-SPECIFIC GOALS

This appendix provides a **summary cover sheet** and a **general template** that each charter school must use to submit its school-specific goals to the Mayor's Office. Schools should use the template to explain each of their school-specific **educational** and **organizational** goals, with the exception of goals relating to student enrollment, attendance and retention.

This appendix contains, in the following order:

1. The **summary cover sheet**, which schools should use to summarize their school-specific goals and assessments and submit as a cover page for the more detailed goals information submitted on the template;
2. **Instructions** for completing the **general template** for school-specific goals;
3. The **general template**;
4. A **sample submission** from a hypothetical charter school showing how the general template might be completed for one goal.

For more information and assistance developing these goals, see the Accountability Handbook available at:

<http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Schools/Operating/accountability/handbook.htm>.

INSTRUCTIONS

General Template for School-Specific Goals

- Submit each goal – and the requested information pertaining to that goal – on a separate template page (or pages). Reproduce the template page as needed for the number of goals that you wish to submit.
- Indicate the name of your school at the top of each page.
- Indicate your school’s mission statement in the designated space.
- Indicate the required information in the designated spaces in the template. You may expand the template to additional pages if needed to accommodate information pertaining to a particular goal.

Below are specific instructions for each designated space in the template:

1. **Mission Statement**: In this space, provide a brief (1-2 sentences), jargon-free statement of the school’s purpose and broad aims. This statement should be measurable, memorable, and meaningful.
2. **Performance Goal**: In this space, articulate the school-specific goal in a precise, declarative statement.
3. **Performance Indicators**: In this space, concisely explain how you will know when the goal has been achieved.
4. **Assessment Tools & Measures**: In this space, state the tool(s) you will use to evaluate achievement of, or progress toward, that goal (e.g., a school-selected assessment, a parent survey, etc.).
5. **Attachments** (if applicable): In this space, note any attachments that you have included to illustrate the performance goal and assessments. In the case of school-developed assessments, attachments might include an actual test that your school has developed for a particular purpose, and/or a scoring tool and instructions for evaluators. Provide the attachment(s) immediately following the completed template page(s) for that performance goal. If you are still developing a particular assessment or evaluation tool, note this along with the date when it will be ready for submission, and submit it to the Mayor’s Office once it is developed.
6. **Rationale for Goal and Measures**: In this space, briefly explain (in about 2-3 sentences) why you have chosen to include that particular goal and its accompanying measures in your accountability plan. The rationale should articulate (a) why the goal is important to your school mission, and (b) why the assessments you have chosen are appropriate, useful tools for measuring performance toward that goal.
7. **Assessment Reliability and Scoring Consistency**: In this space, explain how you will demonstrate both the reliability and scoring consistency of any non-standardized assessment

developed or administered by your school, if applicable. (For suggestions and guidance in establishing reliability and scoring consistency for school-developed measures, see the “**Six Step Framework for Creating Unique Learning Measures**” and “**Examples of Measures Created through This Framework**” in the *Accountability Handbook*, available at <http://www.indygov.org/eGov/Mayor/Education/Charter/Schools/Operating/accountabilityhandbook.htm>. If you will not need to establish reliability and scoring consistency because you have chosen a standardized assessment, simply note “N/A” in this space.

8. **Baseline Data:** In this space, state your school’s baseline student achievement levels (such as incoming student test scores) pertaining to the particular goal, if known. If you have not yet gathered the needed data, explain when you will have the data and how you plan to collect it.

9. **3rd- and 6th-Year Targets:** In these spaces, describe your performance targets for the stated goal for the third and sixth years of your charter. Specify the levels of performance that you will deem to have earned each rating, as set forth in the scale below. The performance level you set for “Meets standard” should establish your performance target for your third and sixth years. The levels of performance you establish for this scale will be the ones that the Mayor’s Office will apply in evaluating school progress on these goals in the 3rd and 6th year of the school’s charter.

Does not meet standard	School has clearly not met its school-specific goal.
Approaching standard	School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific goal.
Meets standard	School has clearly met its school-specific goal.
Exceeds standard	School has clearly exceeded its school-specific goal.

GENERAL TEMPLATE FOR SCHOOL-SPECIFIC GOAL

School-Specific Goal for _____ (school name)

Mission Statement	<i>The mission of our charter school is to...</i> (Brief, jargon-free statement of the school's purpose and broad aims)
Performance Goal	<i>What will our school accomplish?</i> (Precise, declarative statement tied to a specified timeframe or length of attendance)
Performance Indicators	How will we know that we have achieved this goal?
Assessment Tools and Measures	<i>How will we measure achievement of this goal, using mandated assessments and/or school-specific assessments (such as portfolios, juried performances)?</i>
Attachments	<i>Attachments to illustrate the performance goal and assessments.</i> (Note and attach relevant school-developed assessments and/or assessment tools. If a school-developed assessment or tool is still under development, note this here along with the date when it will be ready for submission, and submit it to the Mayor's Office once it is developed.)
Rationale for Goal and Measures	<i>Why is this goal important to our mission, and why is our chosen method of assessment appropriate and useful for measuring performance toward this goal?</i> (2-3 sentences)
Assessment Reliability and Scoring Consistency	<i>How will we demonstrate both the <u>reliability</u> and <u>scoring consistency</u> of the assessment(s) we plan to use, if non-standardized?</i>
Baseline Data	What is our beginning data point?
3rd-Year Target*	<p><i>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our third year?</i> (Set your expectation for "Meets standard" at a level that you would consider on target for your third year.)</p> <p><i>Does not meet standard:</i></p> <p><i>Approaching standard:</i></p>

	<p><i>Meets standard</i></p> <p><i>Exceeds standard</i></p>
6th-Year Target*	<p><i>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our sixth year? (Set your expectation for “Meets standard” at a level that you would consider on target for your third year.)</i></p> <p><i>Does not meet standard:</i></p> <p><i>Approaching standard:</i></p> <p><i>Meets standard</i></p> <p><i>Exceeds standard</i></p>

* Following is the scale that the Mayor’s Office will apply in evaluating a school’s attainment of (or progress toward) a particular goal. Schools should apply the same scale in describing their 3rd- and 6th-year targets, while defining the specific performance levels that would earn each rating.

Does not meet standard	School has clearly not met its school-specific goal.
Approaching standard	School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific goal.
Meets standard	School has clearly met its school-specific goal.
Exceeds standard	School has clearly exceeded its school-specific goal.

- SAMPLE COMPLETED TEMPLATE PAGE FOLLOWS -

SAMPLE SCHOOL–SPECIFIC GOAL SUBMISSION
School-Specific Goal for the New Academy Charter School

Mission Statement	The mission of our charter school is to cultivate in youth of the Riverside and Brickyards neighborhoods a deep appreciation and understanding of mathematics and science, and to develop in them the academic and social skills and character qualities essential to be active community members, responsible citizens and successful individuals.
Performance Goal	<i>What will our school accomplish? (Precise, declarative statement tied to a specified timeframe or length of attendance)</i> Graduating students will have a plan for their future and the confidence, skills and preparation to pursue it.
Performance Indicators	<i>How will we know that we have achieved this goal?</i> Students will demonstrate that they have thought about their interests and aptitudes, have researched necessary steps to achieve their goals, and have outlined a realistic path for taking those steps.
Assessment Tools and Measures	How will we measure achievement of this goal, using mandated assessments and/or school-specific assessments (such as portfolios, juried performances)? Beginning in the 8 th grade, students will develop a career plan that is revised annually. The career plan will be evaluated for soundness by the school counselor and each student’s teacher-advisor, using a tool that we have developed for this purpose.
Attachments	<i>Attachments to illustrate the performance goal and assessments. (Note and attach relevant school-developed assessments and/or assessment tools. If a school-developed assessment or tool is still under development, note this here along with the date when it will be ready for submission, and submit it to the Mayor’s Office once it is developed.)</i> Our school-developed tool for evaluating student career plans is attached. [Example response only – no tool is attached to this sample.]
Rationale for Goal and Measures	Why is this goal important to our mission, and why is our chosen method of assessment appropriate and useful for measuring performance toward this goal? (2-3 sentences) Developing in students the self-knowledge and skills to plan realistically for their futures is essential to our mission. We are committed to preparing our students to succeed beyond our doors. Individual student career plans, thoughtfully revised each year with faculty counseling, will teach students to engage in self-reflection and research that will equip them to follow a plan throughout their lives – adjusting as necessary, but continuously focused on meaningful and realistic goals.
Assessment Reliability and Scoring Consistency	<i>How will we demonstrate both the <u>reliability</u> and <u>scoring consistency</u> of the assessment(s) we plan to use, if non-standardized?</i> The school counselor and all teachers (who also serve as advisors to assigned groups of students) will be trained to use the tool that we have developed for evaluating student career plans. From the first set of career plans developed in 2004-2005, we will identify exemplars representing distinct levels of achievement (Excellent, Good, Fair, Needs Improvement) that should be rated accordingly, and will use these to help guide and build consistency in evaluation. Guided by the exemplars, the counselor and teachers will repeatedly evaluate a sample set of actual career plans developed in 2004-2005 (including written comments and oral feedback as well as a numeric score for each plan), comparing their scores and comments to identify variances, and revising the evaluation tool as needed to eliminate significant discrepancies. We will repeat these “practice evaluations” as

	needed until we are confident in the reliability and consistent usage of the evaluation tool.
Baseline Data	<p><i>What is our beginning data point?</i></p> <p><i>Career plans from the 2004-2005 school year, which will be finalized in May 2005.</i></p>
3rd-Year Target	<p><i>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our third year?</i> (Set your expectation for “Meets standard” at a level that you would consider on target for your third year.)</p> <p><i>Does not meet standard:</i> Fewer than 70% of students in the 8th grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><i>Approaching standard:</i> 70% to 84% of students in the 8th grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><i>Meets standard:</i> 85% of students in the 8th grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><i>Exceeds standard:</i> 86% or more students in the 8th grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p>
6th-Year Target	<p><i>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our sixth year?</i> (Set your expectation for “Meets standard” at a level that you would consider on target for your sixth year.)</p> <p><i>Does not meet standard:</i> Fewer than 80% of students in the 8th grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><i>Approaching standard:</i> 80% to 94% of students in the 8th grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><i>Meets standard:</i> 95% of students in the 8th grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><i>Exceeds standard:</i> 96% or more students in the 8th grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p>

INSTRUCTIONS
Student Enrollment, Attendance and Retention Template

- In the designated spaces, state your school’s enrollment, attendance and retention goals for the third and sixth years of your charter. Your enrollment goals should match those stated in your charter.
- “Attendance rate” is based on the Indiana Department of Education’s official count (as reported in Form DOE-AT).
- “Retention rate” is based on the Indiana Department of Education’s official count (as reported in Form DOE-PE) and refers to the percentage of eligible students who return to the school from one year to the next.
- For a full description of how the Mayor’s Office will evaluate school attainment of enrollment, attendance and retention goals, refer to question 2.2 of the Performance Framework Assessment Rubrics on p. 32.

**TEMPLATE FOR STUDENT ENROLLMENT,
ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION GOALS**

Accountability Plan for _____(school name)

Student Enrollment, Attendance and Retention Targets

3rd-Year Target*	<p><i>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our third year?</i></p> <p><u>Enrollment</u> (should match the enrollment target stated in the school's charter):</p> <p><u>Attendance:</u></p> <p><u>Retention:</u></p>
6th-Year Target*	<p><i>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our sixth year?</i></p> <p><u>Enrollment</u> (should match the enrollment target stated in the school's charter):</p> <p><u>Attendance:</u></p> <p><u>Retention:</u></p>
Strategies for Attainment	<p><i>What are our strategies for attaining this goal? (Include designation of a point person.)</i></p>

* The Mayor's Office will evaluate each school's attainment of (or progress toward) its targets by applying the following rating system:

1 = Does not meet standard	The school's actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>10% or more</u> . Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school's agreed-upon target rates.
2 = Approaching standard	The school's actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>1-9%</u> . Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school's agreed-upon target rates.
3 = Meets standard	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates are generally at or above the school's agreed-upon target rates.
4 = Exceeds standard	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates consistently exceed the school's agreed-upon target rates.

APPENDIX 3: RESOURCES FOR SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY PLANNING

Following is a list of some resources that can help in developing standards and quality measures of performance for your school. Be aware that this list is not comprehensive, but just a sampling of some of the strongest resources in this area, including numerous materials referred by other charter schools. It would be impossible to list all the resources available to help in developing standards or assessments for any subject or skill you might wish. Fortunately, the Internet provides easy access to an abundance of resources, many of which are not listed here, that are worth exploring for your specific needs. One additional collection of resources is available on the U.S. Department of Education’s charter schools website at:

<http://www.uscharterschools.org/cs/r/query/q/1573?topic=10,12,14,37,11&type=5&x-title=Accountability>.

The following list provides resources in the general areas of (1) crafting a mission statement; (2) general accountability planning; (3) selecting or developing school standards; (4) aligning curricula to standards; and (5) developing assessments. Within each section, the resources appear in no particular order.

As websites change frequently, it is possible that some of the links listed below are no longer current. If you find that a link for a resource you are looking for does not work, just enter the name of the resource into a search engine like Google.com, and you should easily find the new site.

MISSION STATEMENTS

The Internet Non-Profit Center, <http://www.nonprofits.org/npofaq/03/21.html>

The Alliance for Non-profit Management,
http://www.allianceonline.org/FAQ/strategic_planning/what_s_in_mission_statement.faq

GOALS AND GENERAL ACCOUNTABILITY PLANNING

Charter School Accountability Action Guide, by Jennifer Nahas and Roblyn Brigham, Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center, 2000.

<http://www.pioneerinstitute.org/pdf/acctguide.pdf>

Provides school developers and leaders a highly practical, six-step “recipe” to creating a school-wide academic accountability system, from creating a school culture that embraces accountability to selecting appropriate measurement tools and using data effectively. This action guide demystifies the work of infusing academic accountability throughout a school’s daily life and endeavors.

Accountability for Student Performance: An Annotated Resource Guide for Shaping an Accountability Plan for Your Charter School, Charter Friends National Network. 2nd ed., 2001.

<http://www.charterfriends.org/accountability.doc>

This handbook, drafted by several charter school resource centers, provides a six-step framework for accountability planning along with referrals to many resources to help schools implement each step. (The best of these resources appear in this Resource List in updated form.)

The Charter School Development Guide, by Eric Premack, Charter Schools Development Center.

<http://www.cacharterschools.org>

This paper discusses accountability issues relating to a charter school's operational performance in such areas as finance, legal matters, governance, staffing, and racial/ethnic balance.

Accountability and Assessment, and Governance and Management, Chapters 3-4 of the Charter Starters Workbook, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1999.

http://www.nwrel.org/charter/Workbook/cs_workbook3.pdf

http://www.nwrel.org/charter/Workbook/cs_workbook4.pdf

These chapters are part of a larger series for charter school developers. Tools, sample documents and other resources on governance and management are provided. These chapters offer information on management policies, financial data gathering and reporting, and annual reports.

Board Self-Assessment, Chapter 12 of Creating an Effective Charter School Governing Board, by Frank Martinelli

http://www.uscharterschools.org/pdf/gb/governance_summary.pdf

<http://www.uscharterschools.org/gb/ch12.doc>

This publication offers guidance to charter leaders to learn how to enhance effectiveness through continuous self-assessment.

Tracking Your School's Success: A Guide to Sensible Evaluation, by Joan Herman and Lynn Winters, 1992.

This book, sponsored by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), discusses data-gathering instruments and guidelines for sharing data with the public. Available from major booksellers.

STANDARDS

National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE and the New Standards Project)

<http://www.ncee.org>

The New Standards Project, a joint endeavor of NCEE and the University of Pittsburgh, has been a leader in the standards movement since 1991 and has developed and published a set of internationally benchmarked performance standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, and applied learning. New Standards has also pioneered performance-based assessments, developing the New Standards Reference Examinations and a portfolio system to help teachers build a standards-based curriculum. These standards and assessments can be ordered from NCEE's site.

Standards at Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory

<http://www.mcrel.org/standards/>

This site provides links to an extensive array of standards-based education documents and resources in both traditional and non-traditional curricular areas.

Content Knowledge, a Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education, by John Kendall and Thomas Marzano, 3rd ed., 2000.

<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>

This 600+ page compendium catalogs highly regarded national, state, district, and other academic standards and related benchmarks in 24 disciplines (ranging from math to language arts to "life skills"). Much of the document is available online at the above address. The full guide can be ordered for \$47.95; for more information about the complete guide, visit <http://www.mcrel.org/products/standards/contentknowledge.asp>.

Developing Educational Standards

<http://edstandards.org/Standards.html>

This website offers a wealth of state and national standards documents and resources, as well as links to other Internet sites and organizations concerned with standards and assessment. The standards and frameworks are indexed by state and subject area.

The Standards Clearinghouse by Achieve, Inc.

<http://www.achieve.org/achieve/achievestart.nsf/Search?OpenForm>

Achieve, Inc. is a nonprofit organization created by America's governors and corporate leaders to provide advice and assistance to states on education reform and school accountability. Its website offers a searchable database of state and international academic standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, organized conveniently by subject, state, grade level, topic, and keyword.

Standards and Frameworks, Eisenhower National Clearinghouse (ENC)

<http://www.enc.org/professional/standards/>

ENC provides national and state standards and frameworks documents for mathematics and science education.

National Educational Technology Standards for Students

<http://cnets.iste.org/students/>

This website, developed by the International Society for Technology in Education, provides frameworks and standards to guide the development of enriched learning environments supported by technology.

Universal Intellectual Standards

<http://www.criticalthinking.org/>

This site, provided by the Critical Thinking Consortium, offers a wealth of information to help educators implement critical thinking throughout their curriculum, including assessment resources.

National Association of Independent Schools' Accreditation Standards

<http://www.nais.org/>

Accreditation is one of the most commonly used methods of ensuring that school academics, health and safety issues and student performance measures are aligned with existing standards. This website explains the accreditation standards used to determine schools' eligibility for NAIS membership. (Note: full access to the site is limited to users with passwords.)

Character Education Quality Standards

http://www.character.org/site/c.gwKUJhNYJrF/b.993287/k.732A/Character_Education_Quality_Standards.htm

The Character Education Partnership, a nonpartisan coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to developing moral character and civic virtue in our nation's youth, outlines key components of effective character education and helps schools and districts to evaluate their efforts in relation to these criteria.

The National Writing Project

<http://www.writingproject.org/>

This project advances an extensive professional development network of teachers focused on providing exemplary instruction of writing throughout America's classrooms. Provides resources to support the development and use of strong writing standards and assessments.

Learning In Deed

<http://www.learningindeed.org/tools/>

This initiative, launched by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, provides an array of resources and links related to service learning, including ordering information for a Service-Learning and Standards Toolkit. This toolkit features numerous examples of service-learning curriculum and assessments tied to standards.

Teachmaster’s Standards Toolkit

<http://shop.ascd.org/ProductDisplay.cfm?ProductID=599272>

This product provides searchable individual state standards and benchmarks on a CD-ROM.

Explorasource

<http://www.mlc.lib.mi.us/workshop/vendor/EXPLORASOURCE.pdf>

This resource finds educational standards resources that address a specific learning need.

Scholastic, Inc.’s Content Index

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/ilp/index.asp>

This website provides standards-based resources and curricula.

“You Gotta Be the Book”: Teaching Engaged and Reflective Reading with Adolescents, by Jeffrey Wilhelm, 1996.

This book develops a theory of reading grounded in the actual experiences of students that stresses the visual dimensions of reading. Particularly helpful for educators creating literacy-related standards and assessments. Available from major booksellers.

ALIGNING CURRICULA TO STANDARDS**PBS TeacherSource**

<http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/>

This website offers over 2000 lesson plans in language arts, history, math, and social studies lessons correlated to national and state curriculum standards.

Curriculum Designer

<http://www.scantron.com/products/cd/index.asp>

Curriculum Designer is a software tool designed to quickly and efficiently aligns school curricula to state and district standards.

The New York Times Learning Network

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/archive.html>

This site contains an archive of daily lesson plans that are aligned with McREL's national content standards and benchmarks.

EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT

At Your Fingertips: Using Everyday Data to Improve Schools, by Karen Levenesque et al., MPR Associates, 1998.

<http://www.mprinc.com/pubs/summary.asp?pubID=109>

This is a practical, six-step (250-page) workbook designed to help school administrators and teachers in selecting, analyzing, using and reporting key student performance data.

A Guide to Authentic Instruction and Assessment: Vision, Standards and Scoring, by Fred Newmann et al., Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 1995.

<http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/publications/docstore/index.php>

This book provides a detailed description of standards, examples and scoring rubrics for authentic instruction and assessment used in research in social studies and mathematics in elementary, middle and high schools.

Measuring Up: How Chicago's Charter Schools Make Their Missions Count, by Margaret Lin, Leadership for Quality Education, 2001.

<http://www.lqe.org/Resources%20and%20Links/Measuring%20Up.htm>

This publication provides lessons, reflections and practical tools from four charter schools that have created valid, reliable and externally credible measures of student growth beyond standardized testing for their accountability agreements with the Chicago school board. The tools and step-by-step process frameworks included in this book should be useful to schools and authorizers striving to measure achievement in any number of areas.

Charter School Accountability Tool Kit (Edition 8), Charter Schools Development Center.

<http://www.cacharterschools.org>

This briefing paper provides an overview and process suggestions on how to assemble a student assessment system for charter school developers. While designed for California schools, it provides some lessons useful to charter operators in any state.

The Coalition of Essential Schools (CES)

<http://www.essentialschools.org>

This national network pioneered much of the work in alternative assessment. This site covers essential elements of portfolio exhibitions and how to get started with digital portfolios. Those wishing to visit schools that are currently using portfolios, exhibitions, and graduation performance assessment can call the Coalition of Essential Schools' main office at (401) 863-3384 to get the listing of their local CES office. These local CES offices can then provide lists of schools in the areas that are incorporating alternative assessments and are open to visitation.

Boston College Center for the Study of Testing, Evaluation and Educational Policy

<http://www.csteep.bc.edu/>

This research organization works with individual schools, districts, states and countries to advance educational testing practices and policies based on multiple modes of assessment. Research projects include the Consortium for Equity in Standards and Testing.

The Work Sampling System

http://www.pearsonearlylearning.com/prof_devel/prof_devel_wss.html

This is a curriculum-embedded performance assessment system developed at the University of Michigan, designed to assess and document the skills, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishments of children in preschool through fifth grade in a variety of education domains. The Work Sampling System systematizes teacher observations by guiding them with specific criteria and well-defined procedures.

Mt. Holyoke College – Speaking, Arguing and Writing Program

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/programs/wcl/saw>

The Speaking, Arguing and Writing (SAW) Program teaches Mt. Holyoke College students to speak, argue and write effectively and persuasively. The SAW Program can also serve as a resource for high schools by sharing educational materials and providing the opportunity for teachers to observe the college program in action.

International Baccalaureate Curriculum and Assessment Center

<http://www.ibo.org>

Provides an international education assessment strategy that includes a variety of methods, including conventional external examination techniques as well as internal assessment of coursework, with classroom teachers and international examiners working in partnership to evaluate student achievement.

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse

<http://www.servicelearning.org/article/view/130/1/106/>

This site provides a wealth of resources on service learning, character education, citizenship, civics, history, and environmental education, including evaluation and assessment materials.

Assessment and Accountability, Chapter Three of the Charter Starters Workbook, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1999.

http://www.nwrel.org/charter/Workbook/cs_workbook3.pdf

This chapter is part of a larger series for charter school developers. Tools, sample documents and other resources on start-up logistics, regulatory issues, assessment and accountability, governance and management, and community relations are provided. This chapter offers information on aligning standards, assessment and curriculum with school mission, assessment tools, and collecting and reporting performance data.

Assessment and Standards Development Services (ASDS)

<http://www.wested.org/asds/>

Offering online resources as well as in-depth technical assistance, ASDS works at the local, state, and national level to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate new assessment tools, methods and systems.

Making Assessment Work for Everyone: How to Build on Student Strengths, The Assessment Laboratory Network Project, Regional Education Laboratories, 2000.

<http://www.sedl.org/pubs/tl05/welcome.html>

This guide provides practical ideas, activities, and resources for selecting, adapting, and developing assessments to promote excellence in all students.

National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment, Inc. (NCIEA)

<http://www.nciea.org/>

With the goal of improving practices in educational assessment and accountability, NCIEA provides technical assistance services to state, district, and local education leaders in designing and implementing effective assessment and accountability policies and programs