National Scan of Best Practices for Charter School Authorizer Accountability Tools

Performance Frameworks, Site Visit Protocols, & School Annual Reports

March 2020

A national scan conducted by Adam Hawf of the Grand Isle Group for the Tri-State Alliance to Improve District-Led Charter Authorizing.

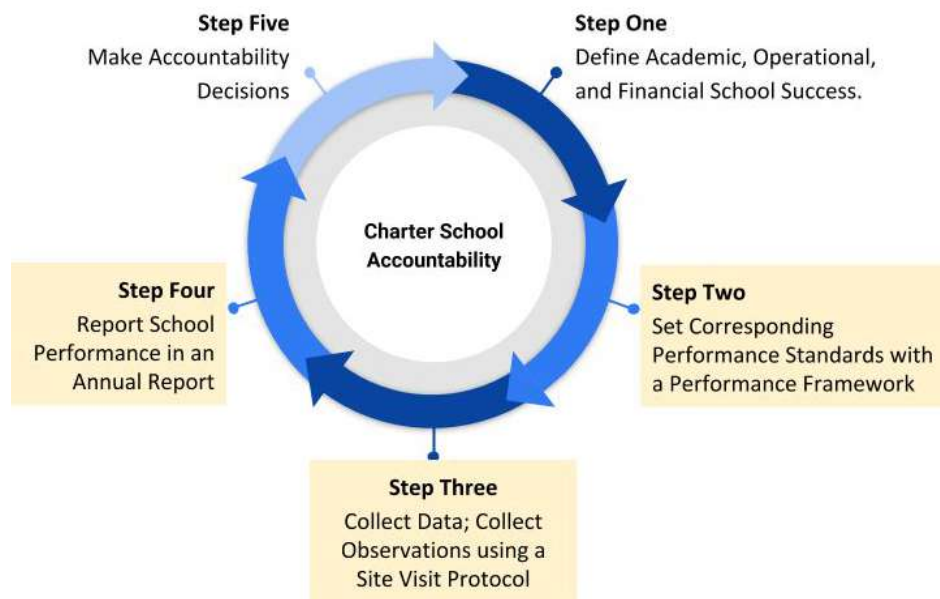## National Scan of Best Practices
20 March 2020

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Introduction

Effective charter school authorizers manage a trade-off of increased agency and autonomy with high levels of accountability for their portfolios of schools. Transparent, coherent accountability systems depend on both the capacity of authorizer staff as well as the written tools that staff use to communicate their expectations, observe and track school performance, and report school performance relative to those expectations. These tools include authorizers' annual reports, site visit protocols, and charter school performance frameworks.

This document is a resource to support charter school authorizers in developing or revising their own annual reports, site visit protocols, and performance frameworks. For each of these accountability tools, this document first summarizes relevant national best practices and subsequently reviews samples from various authorizers.

Authorizers should note that these accountability tools correspond with the second, third, and fourth steps in the accountability cycle. Authorizers cannot begin to prepare for these steps without taking the first, which is to define academic, operational, and financial success. If an authorizer does not have policy making this explicit or pre-existing indicators of success for each of these areas, it will be impossible to produce coherent authorizing tools that correspond with the second, third, and fourth steps.

Step Five
Make Accountability Decisions

Step One
Define Academic, Operational, and Financial School Success.

Charter School Accountability

Step Four
Report School Performance in an Annual Report

Step Two
Set Corresponding Performance Standards with a Performance Framework

Step Three
Collect Data; Collect Observations using a Site Visit Protocol

Overview of Document

This document includes tools from authorizers who utilize accountability tools that are distinct from one another but include viable, straightforward content reflective of best practices from which other authorizers can learn. These authorizers are located throughout the country, serve varied student

populations and have a wide range of portfolio sizes. You will find accountability tools included from the following authorizers:

Authorizer	Type of Authorizer	Description
Chicago Public Schools	LEA/local school district	CPS charter schools are held accountable by the CPS Office of Innovation and Incubation. This staff oversees 142 campuses, including traditional, charter, and contract schools, among others.
Colorado Charter School Institute	Independent charter school authorizer	CSI is the authorizer of 40 charter schools across the state of Colorado.
D.C. Public Charter School Board	LEA/local school district	PCSB is the authorizer of 123 schools that serve a total of approximately 43,000 students.
Denver Public Schools	LEA/local school district	DPS is the authorizer of 117 charter and "innovator" schools that serve approximately 43,000 students.
Los Angeles Unified School District	LEA/local school district	LAUSD is the largest school district authorizer of charter schools in the country, with approximately 250 schools serving over 130,000 students.
Louisiana Department of Education	SEA/state department of education	LDE is the authorizer of 89 schools that serve a total of 46,835 students.
SUNY Charter School Institute	Higher Education Institution	SUNY is the authorizer of 214 schools that serve a total of 104,000 students.

As authorizers review the best practices and examples from other authorizers for each accountability tool, they should consider first the following essential questions to determine how to apply these lessons in developing and/or refining their own tools:

- What am I seeking to accomplish in developing and/or implementing this tool?
- Who is my primary audience for this tool?
- What is the capacity of my organization to consistently execute this tool and/or process?

Rather than begin with a review of samples, authorizers should begin with reflection upon the needs of their schools, the context in which they are working, and the values they hold. For authorizers, accountability tools that reflect comprehensive, thorough, rigorous standards best meet their needs. For others, tools that inform the public and present simple, easy-to-understand indicators of success are the

most useful. The examples included in this document present the variety of choices that authorizers make as they develop accountability tools. Rather models which you should replicate, consider them examples of effective self reflection on the part of that particular authorizer.

Authorizing & Accountability Context: California, Colorado, and Florida

Each of these states has a unique charter school authorizing and accountability context which require consideration as their respective groups of authorizers contemplate development of accountability tools.

California	
State Authorizing Context	California leads the country in charter school enrollment, number of charter schools, and number of charter school authorizers. Correspondingly, California has a highly decentralized presence of charter school authorizers made up primarily of local school districts. The passage of AB 1505 provides greater autonomy and responsibility to local school districts as authorizers, reducing the state's ability to intervene in their accountability and authorizing decisions.[1]
State Accountability Context	The recent implementation of the California School Dashboard and the passage of AB 1505 provide statewide updates to school accountability and change how charter school authorizers are able to hold charter schools accountable. Neither, however, provide requirements or guidelines on districts' accountability frameworks or decisions, requiring that districts create their own.
Implications for Authorizing Practices and Tools	While some of the large California authorizers implement authorizing best practices, most oversee a small group of schools with a limited authorizing staff, making it impractical to replicate the more complex practices of larger authorizers. With the passage of AB 1505 and the implementation of the California School Dashboard, districts now have increased access to streamlined performance data based upon which they can develop their own accountability frameworks and tools. This will minimize the data that authorizing staff must independently collect and assess while allowing authorizers to make renewal decisions based upon clear, simple, vetted information. Smaller California districts can look to Chicago Public Schools' performance framework, for example, which demonstrates exemplar use of a combination of pre-existing performance and accountability frameworks.

Colorado	
State Authorizing Context	Colorado is rare in that it has an independent, statewide charter school authorizer, the Charter School Institute (CSI), as well as local school districts that act as charter school authorizers. CSI may authorize charter schools in districts that 1) have not retained exclusive chartering authority (ECA) in their district and

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[1] A Summary of AB 1505, California Charter Schools Association

	2) in districts that retain ECA and either release the charter to apply to CSI or waive ECA.[2] Further, districts such as Denver Public Schools utilize exemplar practices and resources from which neighboring districts can learn in that they are all highly customized to the unique context of Denver. Finally, Colorado has performance requirements to which the State Board of Education (SBE) holds all authorizers and according to which the SBE can revoke a school district's authorizing authority. Taken together, these factors result in authorizing practices that are less disparate and more easily coordinated across the state.
State Accountability Context	Developed with leadership from Denver Public Schools, Colorado produces a rating in an annual School Performance Framework report[3] for every school. This report provides an in-depth look at student performance on state testing as well as both performance challenges and corresponding recommendations for improved practices. The passage of SB 204[4] empowers local school districts to experiment with alternative accountability structures (although the School Performance Framework remains in use) which are more responsive to the values of their stakeholders.
Implications for Authorizing Practices and Tools	Given the regulatory environment, Colorado is able to empower both the CSI and local school districts in implementing nuanced authorizing practices and tools that are responsive to their respective, unique needs. Colorado authorizers should look to examples from their neighboring Denver Public Schools as well as the Louisiana Department of Education, both of which implement practices and tools that are directly responsive to respond to the values and stakeholders of their respective jurisdictions.

Florida	
State Authorizing Context	With the exception of one school authorized by a Higher Education Institution, only local school districts are currently permitted to act as charter school authorizers in Florida. Charter schools make up a significant presence of the public school landscape in Florida. About 10% of public school students attend charter schools and nearly 20% of all public schools statewide are charter schools. While local school districts have a significant amount of autonomy in most charter school authorizing and oversight activities, strong accountability provisions make some statewide coordination across authorizers easier. As a state, Florida has charter contracts which all authorizers are required to use, statute requiring default school closure in the event of low-performance over multiple years, and a strong statewide renewal standard. Furthermore, a district may close a charter

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[2] https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/faq
[3] See sample here.
[4] http://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/2019a_204_signed.pdf

	school if the school fails to meet the student performance outcomes agreed upon in the charter, fails to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management, violates the law, or shows other good cause.
State Accountability Context	Florida produces a school letter grade for every school annually and charter schools are evaluated using the same metrics as their district peers. In Florida, the floor for school accountability is high. For example, schools named "persistently low-performing school" are those that have earned grades lower than a 'C' in at least three of the previous 5 years and have not earned a grade of "B" or higher in the most recent two school years. This plays out in the charter school sector, as well: charter schools are required to close if they have received an "F" for two consecutive school years.
Implications for Authorizing Practices and Tools	Given the rigor of the statewide academic accountability system and statutory accountability provisions for charter schools, Florida authorizers have an opportunity to develop their own, high quality performance frameworks and accountability tools that build upon these regulations and requirements. Depending on the capacity of the staff and the interests of an authorizer's stakeholders, authorizers can look to accountability tools as simple as, for example, the Chicago Public Schools financial and operational framework site visit protocol or as extensive as the Louisiana Department of Education's.

Methodology for Selection of Artifacts

Knowing that California, Colorado, and Florida authorizers will all have unique needs based upon the characteristics of their own jurisdiction as well as the regulatory and political backdrops of their respective states, this national scan seeks to include artifacts that best represent implementation of some best practices, knowing authorizers must make trade-offs based upon their unique needs in designing these tools.

Each artifact represents best practices in light of the trade-offs that the authorizer has made. For example, one authorizer may utilize accountability tools that are highly accessible to the public, achieving not only transparency but an understanding among key stakeholders such as parents. By avoiding complex (and, therefore, potentially confusing) systems, such tools may not have the depth or nuance that another accountability tool may have. Similarly, another authorizer may utilize accountability tools that are highly efficient, enabling the accountability staff to make informed, clear-headed accountability decisions with limited time or capacity. Such a tool may be harder for the public to understand, however.

The highest quality accountability tools are those most customized to the unique needs of the authorizer. This scan correspondingly includes artifacts that mirror an authorizer's awareness of their own unique circumstances, needs, and limitations.
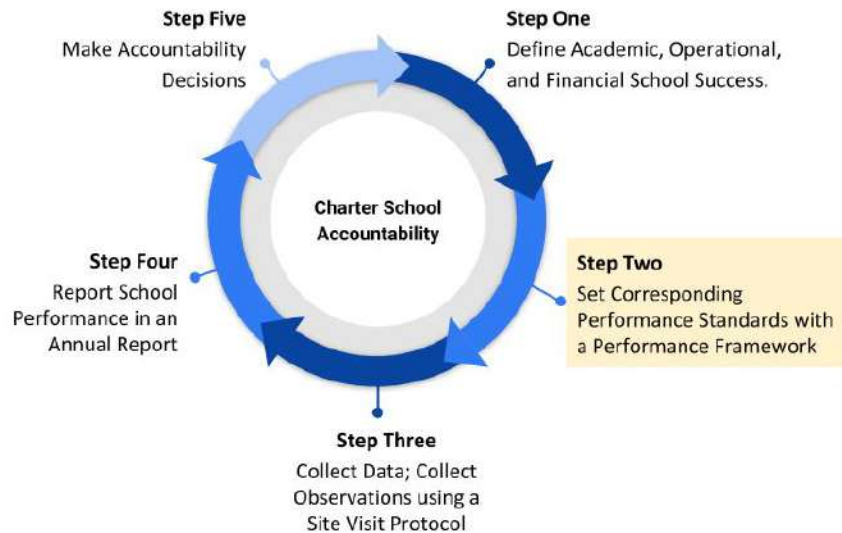
Performance Framework

What purpose do performance frameworks serve?

High-quality performance frameworks enable authorizers to establish transparent standards for academic, organizational, and financial performance without impeding school's autonomy. By communicating clear performance standards, authorizers are able to hold schools accountable for serving the public interest without dictating the inputs for doing so. Performance frameworks are critical to striking the balance between oversight and accountability for charter school authorizers.

What do performance frameworks usually include?

Component	Description
Indicator	This explains what the authorizer will measure: student academic performance, student academic growth, financial health, governance practices, etc.
Measures	Measures explain what authorizers will use to evaluate an indicator: performance on standardized testing, financial audit, board meeting minutes, for example.
Metrics	Metrics are the yardsticks that authorizers use to evaluate measures: % students demonstrating mastery on standardized tests, audit findings, and frequency of board meetings, for example.
Performance Target	Performance targets establish a baseline expectation for performance according to each metric. For example: 90% of students are expected to demonstrate mastery, schools should have no audit findings, and boards should meet 8x per year.
Rating	Authorizers designate ratings based upon schools' performance relative to each performance targets ("approaching standard," "meets standard," "exceeds standard," for example). These ratings then establish an objective picture of whether a school is meeting its performance standards.

Charter school performance frameworks can be made up of one document or a combination of separate documents.

What must authorizers consider in developing a performance framework?
Trade-offs that authorizers should reflect upon in designing their site visit protocol:
- Is it important to you that your performance framework is simple and easy-to-understand or as thorough and comprehensive as possible?
- Who is the primary audience of this document? Stakeholders such as parents and the public, school leaders, or authorizing staff who will ultimately guide accountability decisions?
- What is your staff's capacity to collect both qualitative and quantitative data?
- Are there pre-existing frameworks/documents that your authorizing staff already has in place that you should build upon or do you want to start from the ground up in creating a customized performance framework?

National Scan of Best Practices

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Performance Framework: Learning from the Field

Overview of Authorizer: Chicago Public Schools (CPS)
[CPS performance framework linked here.](#)

Portfolio of Schools	CPS Accountability Staff
CPS charter schools are held accountable by the CPS Office of Innovation and Incubation. This staff oversees 142 campuses, including traditional, charter, and contract schools, among others.	The Office of Innovation and Incubation staff is made up of 17 members, 4 of whom are dedicated exclusively to school performance and accountability.

Purpose of the CPS Performance Framework
The CPS performance framework lists the standards by which charter schools are held accountable through the term of their agreements with the Chicago Board of Education, and the standards by which renewal and non-renewal decisions are made.

Illinois State Context

Accountability Framework	State Reporting	Alignment to Authorizing Best Practices
The state accountability framework focuses primarily on students' academic growth and performance relative to other schools.	Each school receives one of four summative ratings ('Exemplary,' 'Commendable,' 'Underperforming,' or 'Lowest Performing) in the Illinois School Report Card.	The state accountability system provides data necessary to complete the academic component of authorizer academic reporting based on best practices.

Why did we select this performance framework?

The CPS charter school performance framework is made up of a combination of policy documents and evaluation tools, and is not consolidated into a single document. This is, in part, because CPS utilizes the same academic performance evaluation tool for charter schools as it does for all traditional public schools. In this way, CPS is implementing best practices because this design trade-off results in more efficient, streamlined academic evaluation for all schools while the overall performance framework specific to charter schools is made up of separate pieces.

Under what circumstances should an authorizer adapt this accountability tool for their own use?

1. If an authorizer feels that their state's method of reporting the academic rating for schools - and the indicators that inform ratings - are sufficiently clear and thorough; AND/OR
2. If an authorizer does not have the capacity to collect academic data beyond that which the state collects and reports.

On which stakeholder group is this accountability tool focused?

The CPS charter school performance framework is simple and easy to understand for any stakeholder group. However, because it is made up of a combination of different policy documents and evaluation tools, school leaders and authorizing staff probably benefit most from the information therein.

What is in this performance framework?
(1) *Academic Performance Framework: The School Quality Rating Policy*[5]
The SQRP articulates the measures, metrics, and possible ratings for all public schools, including charter schools. For charter schools, the Charter School Quality Policy (CSQP)[6] articulates the performance targets and ratings required at the various accountability milestones.

Snapshot of the SQRP

What indicators are included in the SQRP?
Because different schools serve different populations of students, the SQRP uses different indicators for each type of school. The included indicators are as follows:

Elementary Schools	High Schools	Option Schools
• Student attainment on the NWEA MAP test • Student growth on the NWEA MAP test • Student attendance • My Voice, My School survey • Student growth on ACCESS for English Learners • Data quality	• Student attainment on the PSAT/SAT assessments • Student growth on the PSAT/SAT assessments • Student attendance • Graduation rate • Freshman on-track rate • Dropout rate • Students earning early college or career credentials • College enrollment and persistence • My Voice, My School survey • Data quality	• Student growth on the STAR test • Graduation rate • Enrollment stabilization • Student attendance • Credit attainment

(2) Operational and Financial Framework: The Financial and Compliance Scorecard[7]
This portion of the CPS performance framework establishes highly objective standards.
● Financial standards include indicators that measure the effectiveness of financial controls as well as the financial condition and budget of the school.
● For operational performance, the framework uses indicators that measure the legal compliance of school as well as how promptly and comprehensively the school satisfies reporting requirements.

Financial Controls:

Indicator	+4	+3	+2	+1
Annual Audit	Unqualified opinion, no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies	Unqualified opinion; one significant deficiency noted, but school will address within 12 months	Unqualified opinion, with two noted significant deficiencies.	Unqualified opinion, with a noted material weakness or three or more significant deficiencies; or a qualified opinion

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[5] https://cps.edu/Performance/Documents/SQRP_Overview.pdf
[6] https://policy.cps.edu/download.aspx?ID=273
[7] Financial and Compliance Scorecard

Financial Condition and Budget:

Indicator	+4	+3	+2	+1
Change in Net Assets	Increase in net assets in line with or greater than budgeted surplus	Increase in net assets less than budgeted surplus or realizing a balanced budget	Decrease in net assets in line with or less than budgeted deficit	Unbudgeted decrease in net assets or decrease in net assets greater than budgeted deficit
Liquidity/Current Ratio	Current ratio is greater than or equal to 1.3	Current ratio is less than 1.3 but greater than or equal to 1.1	Current ratio is less than 1.1 but greater than or equal to 1.0	Current ratio is less than 1.0
Net Asset Ratio	Net assets are greater than or equal to 30% of total assets	Net assets are greater than or equal to 20% of total assets but less than 30%	Net assets are greater than or equal to 10% of total assets but less than 20%	Net assets are less than 10% of total assets
Cash-on-hand Ratio	Cash/avg. monthly expenses greater or equal to 3.0	Cash/avg. monthly expenses greater or equal to 1.0 but less than 3.0	Cash/avg. monthly expenses greater or equal to 0.75 but less than 1.0	Cash/avg. monthly expenses less than .75
Loan Delinquency	No late payments in last twelve months, or no outstanding debt	One late payment in last twelve months	Two or three late payments in last twelve months	More than three late payments in last twelve months
Budget	Realistic budget with reasonable assumptions and revisions allowed through the end of October	Realistic budget with mostly reasonable assumptions and revisions allowed through the end of October	Realistic budget without assumptions and needs to be resubmitted	Unrealistic budget with unreasonable assumptions and needs to be resubmitted

Compliance:

Indicator	+4	+3	+2	+1
Legal Compliance	Auditor report on compliance reflects no findings	Auditor report on compliance reflects one finding	Auditor report on compliance reflects two findings	Auditor report on compliance reflects three or more findings; and/or audit states that corrections have not been made for prior year finding(s)

Reporting:

Indicator	+4	+3	+2	+1
Budget	Budget is submitted on a timely basis	Budget is submitted with one delay but with prior notification to and acknowledgement by I & I	Budget is submitted with significant delay or submitted late without prior notification to and acknowledgement by I & I	Budget is submitted with significant delay for second year in a row, or not submitted at all
Quarterly Statements	Quarterly statements are submitted on a timely basis	Quarterly statements are submitted late one time	Quarterly statements are submitted late two times	Quarterly statements are submitted late three or more times, or not submitted at all
Audit	Audit is submitted on a timely basis	Audit is submitted with one delay but with prior notification to and acknowledgement by I & I	Audit is submitted with significant delay or submitted late without prior notification to and acknowledgement by I & I	Audit is submitted with significant delay for second year in a row, or not submitted at all
CPS/State/Fed Compliance Document Submissions	Timely submittal of all required documents	Late submittal of up to two required documents	Late submittal of three required documents	Late submittal of more than three required documents

Performance Framework: Learning from the Field

Overview of Authorizer: Louisiana Department of Education (LDE)*
LDE Charter School Performance Compact (CSPC) linked here.

LDE Portfolio of Schools	LDE Accountability Staff
LDE is the authorizer of 89 schools that serve a total of 46,835 students.	The LDE staff that oversees and holds charter schools accountable is made up of 10-15 people.

The objective of the CSPC is to provide charter school operators and boards with clear expectations, fact-based oversight, and timely feedback while ensuring charter autonomy. In addition to achieving this objective, the Performance Compact should deliver important secondary benefits, including objective information for students and families who want to learn more about the charter schools in their community.

*The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) is the authorizing body, while the LDE is the agency that effectuates the policies and decisions authorized by BESE's board members.

Louisiana State Context

Accountability Framework	State Reporting	Alignment to Authorizing Best Practices
The state accountability framework focuses primarily on academic outcomes; all schools receive annual letter grade.	School level data available through Louisiana School Finder (rather than PDF report cards).	State accountability system provides data necessary to complete the academic component of authorizer reporting based on best practices.

Why did we select this performance framework?

The LDE is implementing best practices in that this performance framework is designed to be as accessible to the general public as possible. It is designed to be both a comprehensive, effective accountability tool as well as an informational document for key stakeholders - namely students, families, and other key stakeholders. This means that the driving design orientation was accessibility to readers, regardless of how familiar they are with charter school accountability. For example, the document separates indicators (what we are evaluating) from measures and metrics (how we are evaluating) to make both as clear as possible. *See summary of performance framework taken from CSPC below.*

Performance Frameworks

Academic – A school's SPS and letter grade will be used to determine the school's academic performance within the Academic Performance Framework. We will include additional academic evidence like special education and at-risk student performance and SPS progress points awarded when compiling the annual school review for boards and leaders. We believe this performance is indicative of a school's academic success and dedication to serving all students at a high level.

Financial – The fiscal viability of schools is measured through four indicators: 1) fund balance; 2) audit findings; 3) debt to asset ratio; and 4) timely reporting. These four indicators will be evaluated on an annual basis.

Organizational – The organizational performance framework provides performance targets for the legal and contractual obligations that schools must meet. There are seven areas of focus: 1) enrollment; 2) facilities; 3) special education and at-risk student populations; 4) governance; 5) discipline; 6) health and safety; and 7) compliance and reporting. Schools provide assurances that they will adhere to policies and procedures mandated by statute and bulletin. A school loses points when it does not meet the Credit criteria for the indicator.

There are several indicators that are deemed as "Critical Indicators." These indicators are highlighted in yellow in Appendix A. If schools fail to perform in these highlighted areas, they will bypass Level 1 intervention and automatically receive a Notice of Breach. They must rectify this concern in order to receive an Organizational Performance Framework score.

Under what circumstances should an authorizer adapt this accountability tool for their own use?
1. If an authorizer is responding to a clear demand from parents/families for easy-to-understand accountability systems; AND/OR
2. If an authorizer has the capacity to both track school performance relative to granular performance indicators while summarizing all of that information such that it is easily understood by the public.

On which stakeholder group is this accountability tool focused?
This performance framework is clearly designed to be an informational tool for families and other stakeholders who may not be immersed in the intricacies of charter school accountability.

What is in this performance framework?
Given that this document is intended to inform the public as much as it is to serve as an accountability tool, the majority of sections explain the accountability process.

Section	Description
Section 1: Introduction	This section explains the philosophy behind the CSPC. It presents at a very high level the balance between autonomy and accountability for charters.
Section 2: Objective of CSPC	The objective of the CSPC is to provide charter school operators and boards with clear expectations, fact-based oversight, and timely feedback while ensuring charter autonomy. In addition to achieving this objective, the Performance Compact should deliver important secondary benefits: ● incentives for high-performing charter schools that regularly meet or exceed academic, financial, and organizational benchmarks; ● comprehensive information for data-driven charter extension and renewal determinations; ● differentiated oversight based on school performance;

	● maximum transparency to ensure that all stakeholders understand the areas in which charter schools are succeeding and those in which performance must be improved; and ● objective information for students and families who want to learn more about the charter schools in their community.
Section 3: Performance Compact Assessment Components	This section describes the documents associated with the CSPC, including the data reporting required of charter schools; the performance framework of academic, operational, and financial standards; and the annual report that the LDE produces to share the performance of each charter school.
Section 4: Performance Compact Process Description	This section describes the process that the LDE follows to assess the conditions and performance of schools: ● Ongoing Oversight: Differentiated school reviews (including site visits), routine data submissions, and data analysis. 　○ This includes a comprehensive overview of site visits. ● Performance Frameworks: Academic, Operational, and Financial performance frameworks. ● Annual Review: Compilation of performance ratings, compilations of notices of concern/breach, share with key stakeholders.
Section 5: Performance Compact Process Timeline	This section assigns each of the activities above to an annual timeline throughout the school year.
Appendix A: Detailed Performance Indicator Descriptions	The actual performance indicators are not included in the main portions of the document but are, instead, included as an appendix. Unlike the CPS framework, this framework lists extensive indicators for operational and financial performance. LDE Charter School Performance Compact (CSPC) linked here.

Performance Framework: Learning from the Field

Overview of Authorizer: Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI)
CSI performance framework linked here

Portfolio of Schools	CSI Accountability Staff
CSI is the authorizer of 40 charter schools across the state of Colorado.	The CSI staff is made up of 26 staff members, 7 of whom have work areas relevant to charter school accountability.

Purpose of the CPS Performance Framework
The CSI Performance Framework provides the basis for the CSI Annual Review of Schools (CARS). The Performance Framework explicitly defines the measures by which CSI holds schools accountable to establish expectations, guide practice, assess progress, and inform decision making.[8]

Colorado State Context

Accountability Framework	State Reporting	Alignment to Authorizing Best Practices
The state accountability framework focuses on academic performance, growth, performance and growth relative to other students statewide, and postsecondary readiness.	The Colorado Department of Education provides a performance score for each school that is included in each school's annual School Performance Framework report.	State accountability system provides data necessary to complete the academic component of authorizer reporting based on best practices.

Why did we select this performance framework?
CSI is implementing best practices in that this performance framework is designed to be as accessible to the general public as possible. Rather than name the metrics and performance targets the authorizer will use to evaluate schools, this performance framework instead focuses exclusively on the measures, or (by the definition we have given in this document) the indicators of success. Like the LDE performance framework, this document focuses first on informing the public about charter school accountability. The CSI performance framework is unique, however, in that it focuses on *what* charter schools are accountable for rather than *how* CSI will hold them accountable.

Further, as CSI is focused on improving authorizing practices across Colorado, focusing on Colorado authorizers will support districts seeking best practices that are relevant within the context of their state.

What are the benefits of this accountability tool?
This tool provides another approach to making the charter school accountability system as easily understood by the public as possible. While such an approach requires a higher capacity staff, it also

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[8] https://www.csi.state.co.us/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Performance-Framework-One-Pager-FINAL.pdf

provides public clarity on the authorizers values and focus in determining whether a charter school is succeeding or not.

Under what circumstances should an authorizer adapt this accountability tool for their own use?
1. If an authorizer is responding to a clear demand from parents/families for easy-to-understand accountability systems; AND/OR
2. If an authorizer has the capacity to both track school performance relative to granular performance indicators while separately summarizing all of that information such that it is easily understood by the public.

On which stakeholder group is this accountability tool focused?
This performance framework is clearly designed to be an informational tool for families and other stakeholders who may not be immersed in the intricacies of charter school accountability.

What is in this framework?
Like the CPS performance framework, the financial and operational portions of this framework are notably shorter and more simple than that of the LDE. This framework notes only the indicators of success and does not include how the CSI will measure school's performance relative to those indicators.
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Financial Performance Framework
1. Near Term
a. Has the school met the statutory TABOR emergency reserve requirement?
b. What is the school's current ratio?
c. What is the school's days of cash on hand?
d. Is the school in default with any financial covenants they have with loan agreements?
e. What is the school's funded pupil count variance?
2. Sustainability
a. What is the school's aggregate 3-year total margin?
b. What is the school's net asset position?
c. What is the school's debt?
d. What is the school's cash flow?

Organizational Performance Framework

1. Education Program

a. Is the school complying with applicable education requirements?

2. Diversity, Equity of Access, and Inclusion

a. Is the school protecting the rights of all students?

3. Governance and Financial Management

a. Is the school complying with governance requirements?

b. Is the school satisfying financial reporting and compliance requirements?

4. School Operations and Environment

a. Is the school complying with health and safety requirements?

b. Is the school complying with facilities and transportation requirements?

c. Is the school complying with employee credentialing and background check requirements?

5. Additional Obligations

a. Is the school complying with all other obligations?

The academic performance framework contains a few noteworthy nuances. This framework compares student performance to students in their geographic area as well as to peers statewide of the same demographic. Like the operational and financial framework, however, the framework is accessible to the public, in large part because it discusses only indicators of success rather than detailing the metrics or performance targets according to which CSI will hold schools accountable.

Academic Performance Framework

1. Academic Achievement

a. How are students achieving on state assessments?

b. How are students achieving on state assessments over time?

c. How are students achieving on state assessments in comparison to other schools in their geographic home district or schools that students might otherwise attend?

d. Have students demonstrated readiness for the next grade level/course and, ultimately, are they on track for college and careers?

e. How are students achieving in comparison to similar schools statewide?

2. Academic Growth

a. Are students making sufficient growth on state assessments?

b. Are students making sufficient growth on state assessments over time?

c. How are students growing on state assessments in comparison to other schools in their geographic home district or schools that students might otherwise attend?

d. How is student growth distributed across growth levels?

e. How are students growing in comparison to similar schools statewide?

3. Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

a. How are students achieving on state assessments for postsecondary readiness?

b. Are students graduating high school?

c. Are students dropping out of high school?

d. Are high school students adequately prepared for postsecondary academic success?

e. What is the school's post-completion success rate?

Site Visit Protocols
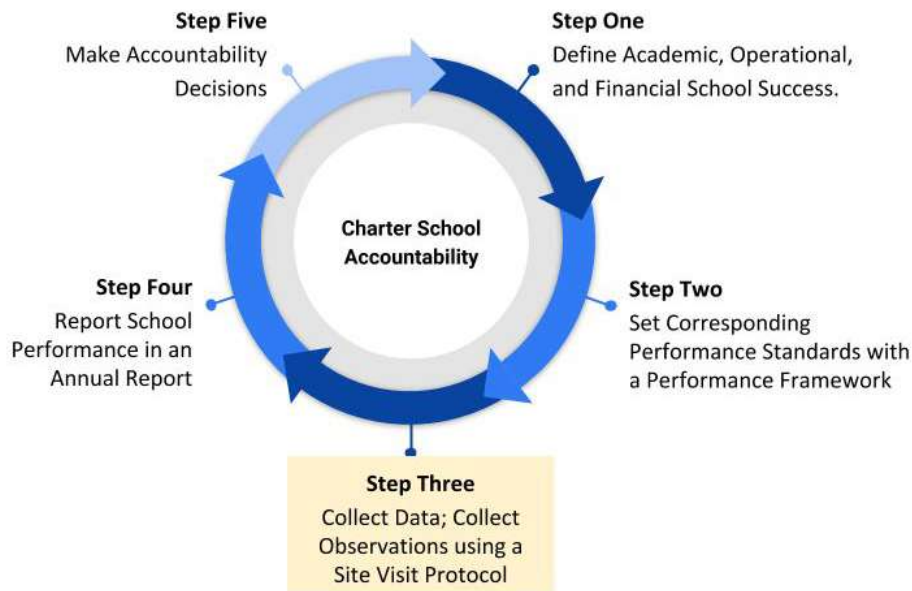
What is the purpose of site visits?

While authorizers collect significant data through both written documentation from schools as well as standardized data submissions (such as standardized testing), it is impossible for an authorizer to have a complete picture of a school without collecting data and observations in person. Site visits give authorizers the opportunity to collect data for themselves - whether by observing school practices, reviewing school record-keeping, directly interviewing staff members, and/or noting the condition of the school facility.

In short, the purpose of site visits is to collect whatever information an authorizer cannot reliably collect through written documentation but must have in order to comprehensively evaluate a school's performance relative to the authorizer's performance standards.

What must authorizers consider in developing a site visit protocol?

As is true for all authorizing tools, authorizers must weigh their own, unique circumstances in order to develop tools customized to meet their needs. One authorizer's site visit protocol may not satisfy all of the needs of another authorizer. Before beginning to review example site visit protocols in the following pages, authorizers must first reflect on what is unique about the environment in which they are operating, their staff, and the schools they are holding accountable.

Trade-offs that authorizers should reflect upon in designing their site visit protocol:
- School perception of their own autonomy vs. High levels of school oversight
- Simplicity vs. complexity

- Low-time commitment vs. thoroughness of information collected
- Consistency of site visit findings vs. number of individuals able to execute site visits

Site Visit Protocols: Learning from the Field

Overview of Authorizer: Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)
[LAUSD site visit protocol is linked here](#)

LAUSD is the largest school district authorizer of charter schools in the country, with approximately 250 schools serving over 130,000 students.	The Charter School Division (CSD) of LAUSD has over 50 employees. Each charter school is assigned to a member of the CSD staff as their point of contact and the person responsible for site visits.

California statute requires that every authorizer conduct at least one site visit at every school that it oversees on an annual basis. The LAUSD CSD staff conducts its annual "performance based oversight visit" to evaluate charter school performance in the areas of: governance; student achievement and educational performance; organizational management, performance, and operations; and fiscal operations.

California Accountability Context

Accountability Framework	State Reporting	Alignment to Authorizing Best Practices
California assesses current performance as well growth relative to the previous year on: cultural indicators, post secondary success indicators, and standardized test performance.	The (new) California School Dashboard provides ratings according to cultural, postsecondary, and academic performance indicators.	California is in the process of completing renewal standards for all charter schools which will support authorizers in having state-vetted academic performance data aligned with best practices. Authorizers will continue to have to collect some operational and financial data independently.

Why did we select this site visit protocol?

While the LAUSD has a large staff, the number of schools for which each staff member is responsible is comparable to that of a smaller district (in other words, an individual employee still has a high degree of responsibility). The site visit protocol that LAUSD implements is set up to be as efficient for each individual staff member as possible, laying out the day in a simple checklist format and minimizing the pre- and post-work required of the individual conducting the site visit. LAUSD's site visit protocol illustrates best practices in executing comprehensive site visits with limited capacity.

Further, as CCAP is a member of the Tri-State Alliance for Improving District-Led Charter Authorizing, focusing on a California authorizer will support California districts in implementing best practices that are relevant within their state.

Under what circumstances should an authorizer adapt this accountability tool for their own use?
If an authorizing staff is prioritizing the efficiency of the site visit day, this is a tool that, given its format, is easily adapted to another authorizer's oversight requirements.

LAUSD Sample Site Visit Schedule
While the schedule for site visits is consistent with that of other authorizers, any preparation for site visits falls on the shoulders of the school staff, allowing the process to be as efficient for the LAUSD staff as possible (see sample checklist below).

The CSD annual performance-based oversight visit typically encompasses the following activities, which provide opportunities to gather evidence (information and data) related to the performance indicators as well as to share "educator-to-educator" information and insights (required activities are in ***bold/italics***):

1. Interview/Discussion
   a. *"Morning Meeting"* with school leadership, which includes reflection and discussion of school academic achievement data and other key aspects of school performance
   b. ***Interview/discussions with organization and school-site leadership*** on specific topics (e.g. special education) and as needed to clarify and/or augment information already gathered
   c. ***Interviews of stakeholder groups*** (students, parents, staff) as determined by CSD staff
   d. ***Debriefing of visit with school leadership***
2. Observation
   a. ***Classroom observation***
   b. ***Site observation***
3. Document Review
   a. ***Review of documentation provided by school*** (see guidance below)
   b. ***Request and review of additional documentation***
4. Fiscal Review[1]
   See section below on preparation for fiscal review

Sample Checklist from the LAUSD Site Visit Protocol
The site visit protocol that LAUSD shares with each charter school outlines the preparation required of schools prior to their site visit. For each of the indicators according to which the staff is evaluating the school, the school staff must prepare a binder of the corresponding, relevant documents. Below is a portion requiring a binder of documents relevant to school safety:

BINDER 3: ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT, PROGRAMS, & OPERATIONS DOCUMENTATION
Please organize the documentation provided in this binder in the order listed below. Include tabbed dividers or file names numbered in accordance with the numbering below.

☐ 3.1 **School Safety and Operations** (School Safety Plan & Procedures)
  a. **Visitor's Policy**: Copy of policy in Parent-Student Handbook and evidence that policy is posted for the public
  b. **School Safety Plan**: Comprehensive Health, Safety, and Emergency Preparedness Plan, staff roles and assignments, including evacuation route maps (that complies with co-location requirements if co-located) and includes Threat Assessment protocol. For Co-locations, include copy of District school's Safe Schools Plan incorporating the charter school
  c. **Emergency Drills and Training**: Documentation of evidence of conducting safety drills and emergency preparedness staff training
  d. **Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training**: Documentation of Child Abuse Mandated Reporter training for all staff and other persons working on behalf of the school who are mandated reporters (Include employee training documentation in Binder 3A)
  e. **Bloodbourne Pathogens Training**: Documentation of Bloodbourne Pathogens training for all staff (Include employee training documentation in Binder 3A)
  f. **Suicide Prevention Policy** for schools serving students in grades 7-12: (Provide if changed after Fall 2018 submission date) Inclusive, including evidence of board adoption of the policy; how stakeholders and mental health experts were consulted when developing the policy; professional development on suicide awareness and prevention; and any other activities that support AB 2246.

Logistical Preparation

The LAUSD site visit protocol specifies the logistical preparation required of schools such that LAUSD staff are able to complete the their overview activities without interruption.

LOGISTICS
In order to facilitate a productive and efficient review process, the CSD requests each charter school to provide appropriate space(s) for the following visit activities:

☐ Small confidential work area containing a table and chairs with at least one nearby electrical outlet and **internet access**, for the use of the CSD visiting team to conduct document review and other team activities
☐ Room or other space in which the CSD team and the school leadership team can gather together for the Morning Meeting and visit debriefing
☐ If the school has been notified in advance that the visit will include stakeholder focus group interviews, a room or other space appropriate for conducting these confidential interviews.
  Note: A single room or space may be appropriate, of course, to serve multiple purposes.

Site Visit Protocols: Learning from the Field

Overview of Authorizer: SUNY Charter Schools Institute (SUNY)	
[SUNY's site visit protocol is linked here](#)	
SUNY is the authorizer of 214 schools that serve a total of 104,000 students.	"[Site visit] teams often include external consultants as well as Institute staff members. The Director of School Evaluation builds visit teams with expertise that corresponds to the unique profile (performance, school size, location) of each school."[9]
SUNY site visits are designed to collect the information needed to assess "the quality of curriculum and instruction, the system of assessment and feedback, fidelity to the school charter and mission, and the culture of the school."[10]	

New York State Accountability Context

Accountability Framework	State Reporting	Alignment to Authorizing Best Practices
The state accountability framework focuses on student achievement and growth, progress of English Learners, absenteeism, and postsecondary success indicators.	School Report Cards provide a status for each school indicating whether the school is in good standing or requiring some kind of intervention. Report cards then provide data corresponding with each indicator informing the school status.	State accountability system provides most academic data necessary to complete the academic component of authorizer reporting based on best practices. The authorizer has to collect some academic data and all financial and operational data.

Why did we select this site visit protocol?

SUNY does not necessarily conduct site visits annually and, therefore, differentiates the site visit protocol depending upon where a school is within a particular term and the school's age (for example: close to renewal or in its first year). As SUNY is not required to conduct a site visit for each school annually, this demonstrates best practices in conducting effective site visits that are aligned with the priorities and expected pain points at various points throughout schools' lifespans.

Under what circumstances should an authorizer adapt this accountability tool for their own use?

1. If an authorizer is not required to complete site visits on an annual basis; and
2. If an authorizer places an emphasis on qualitative data (for example: classroom observations and school leader interviews) in their oversight processes.

Components of the SUNY Site Visit Protocol	
Pre-Visit Documentation	Prior to the site visit, SUNY requires that schools submit extensive pre-site

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[9] [SUNY School Evaluation Guidance for School Leaders](#)
[10] https://www.newyorkcharters.org/accountability/school-visits/

	visit documentation including the following: ● Student enrollment and discipline data; ● At-risk student data and programming information; ● Student enrollment and teacher retention data; ● Staff director and teacher certification information; ● Assessment list and calendar; ● Organizational chart; ● Professional development calendar; and ● Teacher schedules.
Document Review	The list below provides a sample of typically requested documents during a SUNY site visit: ● Map of School: Provide a basic floor plan that evaluators can use to locate classrooms and offices. ● Core Curriculum Documents: Present documents that demonstrate a comprehensive curriculum aligned to state standards, such as curriculum frameworks or maps, scope and sequences, pacing guides, unit plans and lesson plans. ● Lesson Plans: Provide copies of English language arts and mathematics lesson plans occurring during the visit. ● Assessment Documents: Provide examples of the school's key assessments, such as interim assessments or unit tests. In addition, documents, tools and results should be provided that demonstrate the school's systems for collecting and analyzing data and indicate how the school leader and staff use assessment results. These documents might include sample data binders, rubrics, item analysis, action plans or report cards. ● Student Writing Samples ● Evaluations: Provide all protocols for evaluations of teachers, administrators, school leaders, the board and management company or partner organization, if applicable.
Classroom Observations	Visit team members observe a representative sample of classrooms, particularly those in the core areas of instruction. Visit team members observe instruction, review curricular resources, and observe the work of students on display as well as in folders, journals, and written assignments.
Staff & Board Interviews	The school evaluation team will conduct interviews with a number of school stakeholders. Interviews typically take 45-60 minutes and may not require all of the time set in the visit schedule. In addition, the Institute may choose to cancel an interview noted in the schedule if team members feel they have sufficient evidence to support a given conclusion. ● School Leadership Interviews ● Teacher Interviews ● Administrator Interviews ● Board Member Interviews

Debrief with School Leaders	At the end of the visit, the visit team typically generates preliminary conclusions based on the information collected during the visit and shares them with school leaders.
Post-Visit	After the school evaluation visit, the Institute produces a draft School Evaluation Report based on the findings of visit team during the school evaluation visit. Using SUNY's Qualitative Evaluation Benchmarks as a guide, the report focuses substantively on the school's progress in providing students with the academic and organizational program promised in its charter and Accountability Plan. The Institute publishes the final School Evaluation Report on its website about two weeks after the report is sent to the school.

Additional Site Visit Schedule Procedures
- Visit teams conduct evaluation visits over the course of one to two and a half days, depending on the school.
- For schools that are not meeting or coming close to meeting their Accountability Plan goals, the Institute will coordinate time to meet with the board to discuss the Performance Summary and Review and then send a letter to the board chair with an overview of the meeting.[11]

Sample Site Visit Schedule

	Visit Team Lead	Team Member 2	Team Member 3
7:45-8:15	Team Arrival and Team Meeting		
8:15-9:00	School Leader Interview		
9:00-9:45	Classroom Observations	Teacher Interview	Dean of Students Interview
9:45-10:30	Teacher Interview	Classroom Observations	Classroom Observations
10:30-10:45	Drop Everything and Meet (DEAM)		
10:45-11:30	SETSS Teacher Interview	Document Review	Classroom Observations
11:30-12:30	Team Lunch and Debrief		
12:30-1:15	Interview with Assistant Principal	Teacher Interview	Interview with Director of Operations
1:15-2:00	Classroom Observations	ELL Teacher Interview	Special Education Teacher Focus Group
2:00-2:45	Document Review	Classroom Observations	Document Review
2:45-3:30	Special Education Coordinator Interview		Classroom Observations
3:30-5:15	Team Meeting & Debrief		
5:15-5:30	Reporting Initial Feedback to School Leadership		
5:30-6:30	Board Meeting		

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[11] [SUNY School Evaluation Guidance for School Leaders](#)

Site Visit Protocols: Learning from the Field

Overview of Authorizer: D.C. Public Charter School Board (PCSB)
PCSB's Qualitative Site Review protocol is linked here.

PCSB is the authorizer of 123 schools that serve a total of approximately 43,000 students.	A staff of approximately 40 people **i**s dedicated to PCSB charter school authorizing, oversight and accountability.

The Qualitative Site Review (QSR) provides DC Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB), public charter school leaders, and other community members with qualitative evidence to complement the quantitative evidence gathered in the Performance Management Framework (PMF) and charter goal attainment to be used for determining charter continuance at high stakes reviews.[12]

Washington D.C. Public Schools Accountability Context

Accountability Framework	State Reporting	Alignment to Authorizing Best Practices
D.C. Schools uses the School Transparency and Accountability Framework (STAR) which is made up of indicators focusing on student performance, growth, attendance, and re-enrollment.	DC Schools produces a report card for each school which includes a star rating out of five stars based upon the STAR framework.	DC Schools collects and reports data that address some components of the PCSB accountability framework. PCSB collects and reports additional data related to student culture and mission-specific measures.

Why did we select this site visit protocol?

PCSB collects and reports significant portions of school-specific data that go beyond the DC Schools accountability framework. This site visit protocol illustrates best practices in implementing highly customized accountability tools that are responsible to both the needs of the authorizer's jurisdiction as well as the authorizer's values. This site visit protocol also illustrates the capacity required if an authorizer develops an accountability framework that goes well beyond the data that the state collects and reports.

Under what circumstances should an authorizer adapt this accountability tool for their own use?

3. If an authorizer feels that the state accountability framework for school performance is insufficiently comprehensive; AND
4. If an authorizer has the capacity to collect and report complex performance data.

Noteworthy Elements of this Site Visit Protocol

1. Pre-Meeting: DC PCSB will invite the school leader(s) to meet prior to the two-week site visit window to discuss the following items: (1) Overview of Qualitative Site Review process; (2) Overview of the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching and the Literacy Observation

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[12] D.C. PCSB Qualitative Site Reviews

Protocol; (3) Site visit logistics and details about unannounced site visit window; (4) Discussion about governance and school events (if applicable)

2. Site Visit is Unannounced: At the pre-visit meeting, DC PCSB and the school agree upon a two-week window during which the QSR team may arrive at various times to observe classrooms and the school.

3. Focus on Classroom Observation & Special Student Populations: PCSB aims to observe 75% of classrooms in each school, including those that long-term substitute teachers lead. Portions of these classroom observations are dedicated specifically to instruction and programming tailored to special student populations.

Types of Quality School Reviews

PCSB conducts QSRs for two reasons: to either monitor low-performing/struggling schools or to collect data necessary to make upcoming accountability decisions.

Qualitative Site Review (QSR)		
Reason for Review	**Timeline**	**Type of Review**
New School Visit	First year of operation	New School Review
Tier 3 Monitoring	Each year of Tier 3 status	QSR
OSSE-identified	Once per three-year identification	QSR
Charter Review	Year prior to charter review	QSR
Charter Renewal	Year prior to charter renewal	QSR

**Snapshot of this Site Visit Protocol**

Pre-Visit Meeting	Timeline
DC PCSB: Sends out initial email with pre-visit meeting dates and QSR protocol	At least two to three months prior to the Two-Week Window
SCHOOL: Confirms date for pre-visit meeting and two-week window	As soon as possible upon receipt
SCHOOL: Prepares pre-visit documents and sends electronically to DC PCSB	Electronically submitted after the pre-visit meeting
DC PCSB: Organizes QSR teams and disseminates school information to the members of each team	Two-weeks prior to Two-Week Window
After the Two-Week Window	Timeline
DC PCSB team lead (with input from team members): Creates a draft QSR report, with evidence-based findings	Within one week after the Two-Week Window
DC PCSB QSR Team: Reviews the draft report to ensure that it is accurate and aligned with the QSR team's impressions and opinions of the school	Within two weeks after the Two-Week Window
DC PCSB: Issues the final QSR report to the school's board and school leadership that will also go in the school's permanent file and be used to evaluate the school's performance for high-stakes reviews (e.g., 5- and 10-year charter reviews, low PMF performance reviews), and charter renewal.	Within eight to ten weeks after the Two-Week Window
SCHOOL: May prepare a written response to the QSR report	Within ten business days of receiving the QSR Report

Annual Reports: Overview
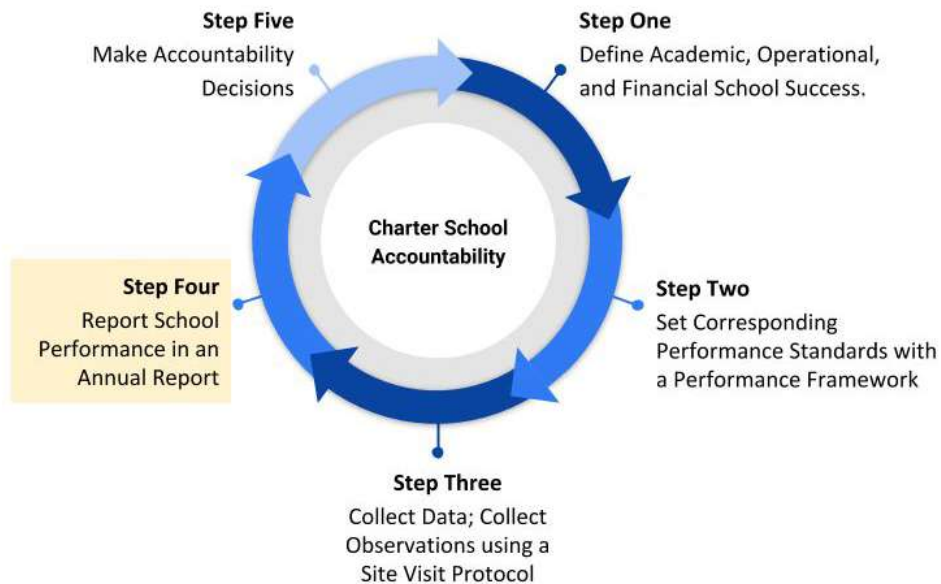
What is an annual report?

An annual report is a public document produced by a charter authorizer that provides a summative assessment of a school according to the authorizer's school performance framework.

What is the purpose of an annual report?

This is a critical step for authorizers to establish a shared understanding between the authorizer and a school on that school's performance relative to the authorizer's expectations, and the implications of that performance for future accountability decisions (charter renewal, for example). These documents guide renewal/non-renewal decisions for the authorizer and provide an annual checkpoint for schools.

What must authorizers consider in developing an annual report?

While all annual reports serve the same basic purpose of providing an assessment of school performance, the samples included here show the key considerations that impact how an authorizer designs their annual report. Is it intended first to be an informational/educational tool for the public? Is it intended to increase the efficiency of the authorizing staff? Is it meant to support accountability that is as rigorous and thorough as possible? All of these questions play out in the samples that follow.

Annual Reports: Learning from the Field

Overview of Authorizer: Louisiana Department of Education (LDE)*
The LDE's most recent Annual Report is linked here.

LDE is the authorizer of 89 schools that serve a total of 46,835 students.	The LDE staff that oversees and holds charter schools accountable is made up of about 10-15 people.

The LDE uses its annual report exclusively to track outcomes that will directly inform charter renewal and extension authorization decisions. Because the CSPC (see linked under Performance Frameworks) acts as an extensive informational document for the public, the annual report simply lists school outcomes.

*The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) is the authorizing body, while the LDE is the agency that effectuates the policies and decisions authorized by BESE's board members.

Louisiana State Accountability Context

Accountability Framework	State Reporting	Alignment to Authorizing Best Practices
The state accountability framework focuses primarily on academic outcomes; all schools receive annual letter grade.	School level data available through Louisiana School Finder (rather than PDF report cards).	State accountability system provides data necessary to complete the academic component of authorizer reporting based on best practices. Authorizers must collect most operational and financial on their own.

Why did we select this annual report?
The LDE designed the Charter School Performance Framework (CSPC), included as a performance framework exemplar, to be an almost purely informational document for key stakeholders. This allows the Annual Report (called the "annual review") to simply provide school performance relative to school performance standards. This document serves the sole purpose of providing the authorizer and schools that it oversees with the information that the authorizer will use to make renewal and extension decisions. Taken together, the LDE's CSPC and Annual Report are illustrating best practices in that they are both making the accountability system accessible to the general public while simultaneously setting up the LDE for efficient accountability decisions.

What are the benefits of this accountability tool?
This document provides the comprehensive set of information that the authorizer will use to make authorizing decisions.

Under what circumstances should an authorizer adapt this accountability tool for their own use?
If the authorizer is able to provide corresponding informational documents that will support stakeholders in understanding the information that an authorizer uses to make accountability decisions

Snapshot of LDE Annual Report
The LDE's annual report (called the "annual review") provides only the school's performance against the metrics outlined in the charter school performance compact the rubric according to which the LDE makes charter school renewal recommendations to its board.

2018-2019 CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REVIEW
(TYPE 2, 4, & 5 CHARTERS)

Acadiana Renaissance Charter Academy
Non-Profit: Lafayette Charter Foundation

Parish: Lafayette Parish	Year Opened: 2014-2015	Charter Type: Type 2	Charter Contract Extension/Renewal: 2nd Renewal : 2023	Grade Configuration: K-8th

ANNUAL REVIEW OVERVIEW

Academic Overall Rating: A	Financial Overall Rating: Meets All Expectations	Organizational Overall Rating: Meets Most Expectations

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

2019 School Performance Score: 91.6	2019 Letter Grade: A

2019 K8 & High School Assessment Letter Grade Equivalent: B

2019 K8 & High School Progress Letter Grade Equivalent: A

2019 K8 & High School Assessment Index	2019 K8 & High School Progress Index	2019 K8 Assessment Index	2019 K8 Progress Index	2019 Dropout Credit Accumulation Index	2019 High School Assessment Index	2019 High School Progress Index	2019 ACT Index	Strength of Diploma (Graduation Index) (2017-2018 Cohort)	Cohort Graduation Rate Index (Points Earned for Cohort Graduation Rate) (2017-2018 Cohort)	Cohort Graduation Rate (Actual Graduation Rate) (2017-2018 Cohort)
87.7	93.3	87.7	93.3	137.8						

Letter Grade Scale				
A	B	C	D	F
150–90.0	89.9–75.0	74.9–60.0	59.9–50.0	49.9–0.0

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Financial Overall Rating: Meets All Expectations		
LDOE Fiscal Risk Assessment: No Action	Annual External Audit Performance*: Unqualified audit with no consecutive or material finding	Financial Notices of Concern/Breach: No Notices of Concern or Breach

*2017-2018 audit data

See details on how the overall rating and individual indicators are calculated.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Organizational Overall Rating: Meets Most Expectations | **Organizational Overall Score:** 18.6/20

Organizational Performance Rating: 17.1/20 | **Organizational Compliance Rating:** 20/20

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE DATA DETAILS

Category	Indicator	School Result	Expectation for Full Credit	Points Earned
Enrollment: Schools enroll and serve all students through prioritizing equity in their enrollment and discipline policies and procedures.	Economically Disadvantaged Percentage	41.1%	School meets legal expectation in R.S. 17:3991	
	Students With Disabilities Percentage	6.2%	School meets legal expectation in R.S. 17:3991	
	Overall Economically Disadvantaged and Students with Disabilities Percentages Score (Type 2 and 4 charters only)	Does Not Meet Either Required Percentage	Meets required percentage in both economically disadvantaged and SWD	0
	Re-enrollment Rate	92.9%	More than or equal to 80% of students return	20
	PK-4 Out-of-School Suspension Rate	0.4%	At or below the national average (2.6%)	
	5-12 Out-of-School Suspension Rate	2.6%	At or below the national average (10.1%)	
	Overall Out-of-School Suspension Rate Score	PK-4 Suspension Rate: At or below national average 5-12 Suspension Rate: At or below the national average	At or below the national average	20
Special Populations: All special student populations receive the services and supports they need to ensure academic success in accordance with applicable law and policy	SPED Evaluations Percentage	0.0%	0 to 5% of total evaluations out of compliance	20
	IEP Timeline Compliance Percentage	0.0%	0 to 5% of total IEPs out of compliance	20
	Least Restrictive Environment Percentage	93.8%	Between 63.5% and 100% of total students with disabilities population	20
	Subgroup Performance	0 subgroups identified as UIR-A	School has not been identified as "Urgent Intervention Required" for any subgroup	20
Organizational Performance Rating (average of points earned for each indicator):				17.1

See details on how the overall rating and individual indicators are calculated.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPLIANCE

Category	Indicator	Details
Enrollment: Schools enroll and serve all students through prioritizing equity in their enrollment and discipline policies and procedures.	School is non-discriminatory and compliant with laws and policies related to student admissions, discipline, attendance, and truancy	No Notices of Concern or Breach
	School admissions process is non-discriminatory and compliant with laws and policies related to students with disabilities	No Notices of Concern or Breach
Special Populations: All special student populations receive the services and supports they need to ensure academic success in accordance with applicable law and policy	School complies with all state and federal requirements regarding services for students with IEPs, IAPs and LEP plans	No Notices of Concern or Breach
Law and Policy: Schools and governing boards responsibly follow all laws, policies, and contractual obligations* *Notices of Concern or Breach received by a board for a board action may impact the scores of all schools governed by that board.	Board adheres to state policies regarding governance and compliance	No Notices of Concern or Breach
	School and board have no evidence of violations of Louisiana ethics laws	No Notices of Concern or Breach
	School and board have no evidence of violations of legal and contractual obligations	No Notices of Concern or Breach
	School has no evidence of intentional violations of required test procedures	No Notices of Concern or Breach
ORGANIZATIONAL COMPLIANCE RATING:		20/20 pts

Annual Reports: Learning from the Field

Overview of Authorizer: D.C. Public Charter School Board (PCSB)
PCSB's most recent Annual Report (called the "School Quality Report") is linked here.

PCSB is the authorizer of 123 schools that serve a total of approximately 43,000 students.	A staff of approximately 40 people is dedicated to PCSB charter school authorizing, oversight and accountability.
The PCSB annual report tracks outcomes that directly inform accountability decisions. While the landing page information simplifies each school's performance into easily-understood "tiers," the detailed report houses multiple links to more complex, comprehensive information related to academic, operational, and financial data.	

Washington D.C. Public Schools Accountability Context

Accountability Framework	State Reporting	Alignment to Authorizing Best Practices
D.C. Schools uses the School Transparency and Accountability Framework (STAR) which is made up of indicators focusing on student performance, growth, attendance, and re-enrollment.	DC Schools produces a report card for each school which includes a star rating out of five stars based upon the STAR framework.	DC Schools collects and reports data that address some components of the PCSB accountability framework. PCSB collects and reports additional data related to student culture and mission-specific measures.

Why did we select this annual report?

The PCSB annual report focuses on being comprehensive and speaking in terms of the metrics that the authorizer will use to make high stakes accountability decisions. While the report is likely less accessible to school families and other key stakeholders, it is demonstrating best practices in that it houses as much information as both the authorizer and a given school could need to understand the school's performance.

Under what circumstances should an authorizer adapt this accountability tool for their own use?
1. If an authorizer feels that the state accountability framework for school performance is insufficiently comprehensive; AND
2. If an authorizer has the capacity to collect and report complex performance data.

On which stakeholder group is this accountability tool focused?

This annual report is most informative for school leaders and authorizing staff who have a clear understanding of charter school accountability.
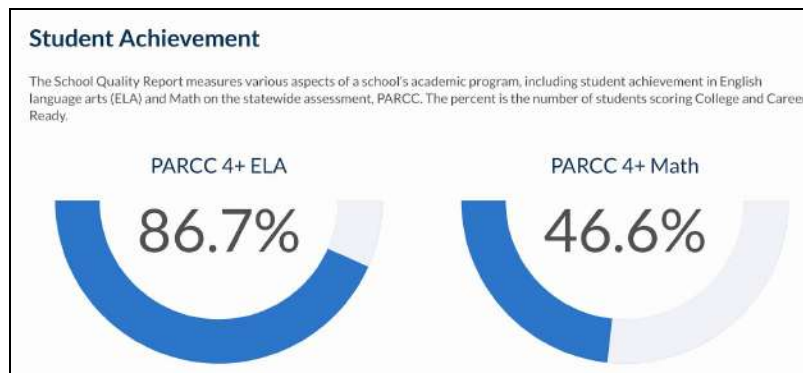
Snapshot:
The website that houses each School Quality Report shows a list of all DC Public schools with each school's name, location/ward, academic performance "Tier" (Tiers 1 - 3 possible), Performance Management Framework Score, and grade configuration

Name	Ward	Tier	PMF	Grades
Academy of Hope Adult PCS	5	Tier 2 ■	57.7%	Adult Education

Each School Quality Report shows summary data for academic, operational, and financial performance and also provides linked to more detailed reports on each area.

Sample summary data on academic achievement as shown in each school's report

Student Achievement

The School Quality Report measures various aspects of a school's academic program, including student achievement in English language arts (ELA) and Math on the statewide assessment, PARCC. The percent is the number of students scoring College and Career Ready.

PARCC 4+ ELA
86.7%

PARCC 4+ Math
46.6%

Snapshot from each school's more detailed "School Report Card" included as a hyperlink in the School Quality Report.

STAR RATING

OVERALL STAR RATING	OVERALL SCORE
⭐⭐⭐⭐	88.42%

Student Group Scores

All Students	93.53%
Students with Disabilities	87.35%
At Risk	42.83%
At Risk Students with Disabilities	*N/A*
English Learners	45.98%
Black/African-American	83.29%
Asian	83.43%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	*N/A*
Hispanic/Latino, any race	83.61%
Two or more races	80.50%
American Indian/Alaskan	*N/A*
White	84.05%

Annual Reports: Learning from the Field

Overview of Authorizer: Denver Public Schools
DPS's most recent annual reports (called the "School Summary Report") are linked here.

DPS is the authorizer of 117 charter and "innovator" schools that serve approximately 43,000 students.	A staff of 12-15 people is dedicated to DPS charter school authorizing, oversight and accountability.

"Throughout DPS, we use the information we get from each year's SPF to monitor school progress, support schools where they need it and ensure we hold ourselves accountable for the success of every child."[13]

Colorado State Accountability Context

Accountability Framework	State Reporting	Alignment to Authorizing Best Practices
The state accountability framework focuses on academic performance, growth, performance and growth relative to other students statewide, and postsecondary readiness.	The Colorado Department of Education provides a performance score for each school that is included in each school's annual School Performance Framework report.	State accountability system provides data necessary to complete the academic component of authorizer reporting based on best practices.

Why did we select this annual report?
This accountability tool includes the accountability data that the authorizer needs to make authorizing decisions and clearly communicates the values based upon which the authorizer is holding schools accountable. While it may be less accessible to parents/families, the report still serves to communicate what the authorizer cares about in school performance.

Further, as CSI is a member of the Tri-State Alliance for Improving District-Led Charter Authorizing, focusing on Colorado authorizers will support Colorado districts seeking best practices that are relevant within the context of their state.

Under what circumstances should an authorizer focus on this tool as an exemplar?
This is an example of a highly customized annual report. If an authorizer has the capacity to develop an annual report that speaks directly to its unique jurisdiction, this tool presents an example of integrating the state's accountability framework with its own requirements for charter schools and creating an outward facing tool that communicates school performance through a specific frame.

On what stakeholder group is this accountability tool focused?
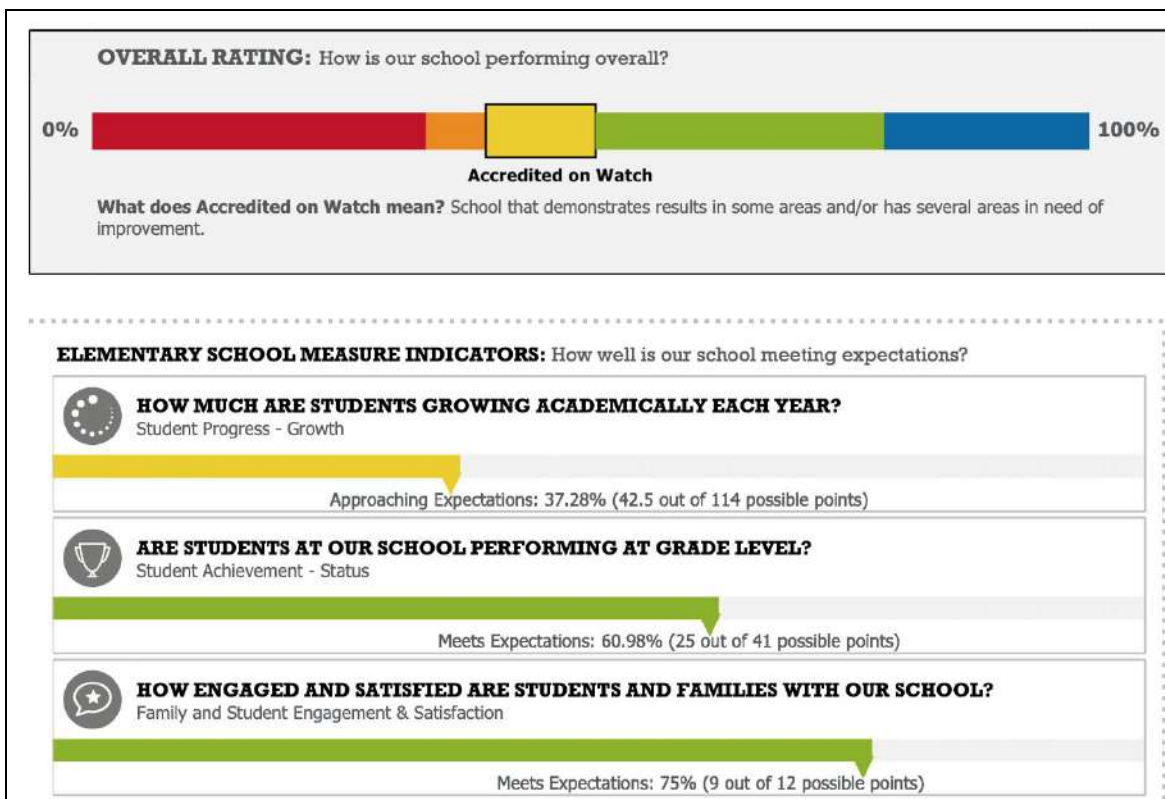
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[13] https://spf.dpsk12.org/en/what-are-spf-ratings-used-for/

The DPS SPF Report is unique in that the second of its two pages focuses almost exclusively on how equitably a given school is serving students who are at risk. This district's focus on equitably serving students takes clear priority in this report; both the landing page for the report-related documents as well as the report itself provide extensive explanations of indicators of success and corresponding school performance on this measure. A breakdown on how equitably schools are serving all students is featured in each school's report.

Snapshot:

The SPF Report landing page includes links to documents that show district-wide school performance comparisons as well as a dropdown menu for each school with links to both detailed reports as well as summary reports for the last three school years. Each School Summary Report shows summary data for academic performance and growth, family engagement, and equity gaps in academic performance.
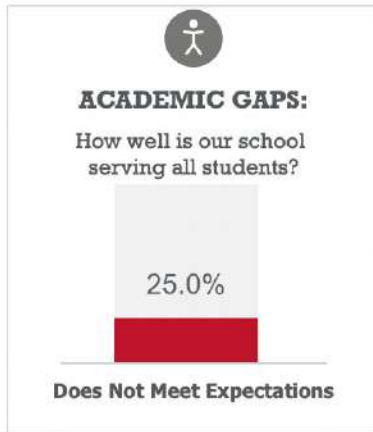
First Page of SPF Report (Second Page is Below)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ACADEMIC GAPS:

How well is our school serving all students?

25.0%

Does Not Meet Expectations

BREAKDOWN OF ACADEMIC GAPS:
We are especially concerned about closing opportunity gaps for students in historically underserved groups:

HOW WELL IS OUR SCHOOL CLOSING ACADEMIC GAPS FOR **STUDENTS IN POVERTY?**

Does Not Meet Expectations: 20.83% (7.5 out of 36 possible points)

HOW WELL IS OUR SCHOOL CLOSING ACADEMIC GAPS FOR **STUDENTS OF COLOR?**

Does Not Meet Expectations: 23.61% (8.5 out of 36 possible points)

This explanation is included at the bottom of every school's report. The website shows similar language.

WHY DOES CLOSING ACADEMIC GAPS MATTER FOR ALL STUDENTS?

In DPS, we believe in the potential of every child. We also believe that a great school is one that serves, challenges and supports all students well. By highlighting the academic growth and performance of specific student groups, we will all become more aware of the opportunities we have to help each student reach his or her full potential.

Each school's overall SPF rating is affected by the school's academic gaps rating. Schools must meet expectations in Academic Gaps in order to be eligible to receive our highest overall SPF ratings. If a school does not meet expectations in Academic Gaps, it cannot earn an overall SPF rating higher than yellow. We believe this approach will improve the quality of all schools in DPS, and ensure that Every Child Succeeds.

Closing

While the fundamental work of authorizing does not vary significantly between jurisdictions, authorizing offices diverge dramatically in their size, capacity, and financial resources. For this reason, there is not one best tool or protocol for authorizing work. In seeking to adopt and adapt national best practices for their use, authorizers should begin by asking themselves fundamental questions about their schools, the circumstances surrounding the area within which they authorize schools, the capacity of their staff, the needs and desires of their stakeholders, and the purpose that each of these tools will serve. While there are many lessons that authorizers can learn from each other about how to manage accountability systems effectively, those who do it best begin with clarity about their own context and goals.

Appendix

Once authorizers are ready to review examples from other authorizers (in addition to those included in this document), they should review the accountability websites and resources of the following authorizers:

- [Central Michigan University](#)
- [Indiana Charter School Board](#)
- [Massachusetts Board of Education](#)
- [Metro Nashville Public Schools](#)
- [Miami-Dade County Public Schools](#)
- [Missouri Public Charter Schools Commission](#)
- [NOLA Public Schools](#)
- [South Carolina Public Charter School District](#)
- [Tennessee Achievement School District](#)
- [Thomas B. Fordham Institute](#)