



**Application Narrative  
Rubric**

**Attachment to RFA**

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| <b>Federal Program Title:</b> | <b>Expanding Opportunities Through Quality Charter Schools Program (CSP) to State Entities</b> |
| <b>Federal Agency:</b>        | U.S. Department of Education   |
| <b>State Entity:</b>          | Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools   |
| <b>CFDA Number:</b>           | 84.282A  |
| <b>Award Name:</b>            | Pennsylvania CSP Grant Program   |
| <b>Award Number:</b>          | S282A200005  |

For each indicator, review the performance level descriptions. Based on your analysis, determine the school's performance level for each indicator by selecting Absent, Emerging, Effective, or Exemplary. Below each indicator there is space to provide a brief rationale for why you have identified the school as performing at the selected level and to enter the corresponding point value for the performance level.

**STANDARD 1: ACADEMIC AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: A quality school maintains a culture of high academic expectations and focuses on continuous improvement by defining measurable academic goals for all of its students; articulating a fully aligned, rigorous curriculum and employing research-based instructional strategies; regularly tracking student progress; employing differentiated professional development and student intervention; and fostering a collaborative and highly effective cadre of teachers, while also maintaining compliance with applicable laws and regulations.**

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| <b>ABSENT = 0 points</b> | <b>EMERGING = 1 point</b> | <b>EFFECTIVE = 2 points</b> | <b>EXEMPLARY= 3 points</b> |
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**1.1 CULTURE OF HIGH EXPECTATIONS:** The school commits to high academic expectations for all students and holds all staff and students accountable to these expectations.

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| The school lacks a commitment to high achievement for all students. The school focuses on teaching rather than student learning. | The school's mission reflects high academic expectations for all students. The school has established goals and expectations for all students in at least reading, writing and math. The school has begun to shift its focus from teaching inputs to students' learning outcomes. | The school's mission and day to day behaviors reflect high academic expectations for all students. The school has established goals and high expectations for all students in all content areas. The school has shifted its focus from teaching inputs to student learning outcomes. The school monitors evidence of student learning to determine if sufficient progress is being achieved and holds staff and students accountable for student learning. | The school's mission and day to day behaviors reflect high academic expectations for all students that extend beyond graduation from the school. All members of the school community establish goals and create high expectations for student learning in all content areas, including goals for closing achievement gaps, when applicable. The focus of the school is student learning outcomes and data is monitored frequently to make adjustments to student outcomes. The school staff and students hold themselves accountable for student learning. |
| The school does not monitor evidence of student learning and it fails to respond to its data.                                    | However, the school inconsistently monitors evidence of student learning and fails to utilize data effectively for school improvement   |  |  |

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| <b>Rationale:</b> | <b>Score:</b> |
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**1.2: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION:** The school creates a comprehensive curriculum, instruction, and assessment system aligned to required standards, college and career readiness measures, and the school's mission and vision. The curriculum and instruction include effective strategies to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

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| The school has no written curriculum (i.e. curriculum map, scope and sequence, content resources, etc.). Teacher's lesson plans do not articulate standards or performance objectives related to the standards.  | The school has a written curriculum; however, it is not fully aligned and articulated to state standards or college and career readiness measures, or the curriculum doesn't provide the necessary scope and sequence for teachers. Teachers submit lesson plans with specific outcomes, but mainly utilize the instructional resources to pace their instruction rather than their curriculum materials. Some curriculum aligned assessment is administered but does not inform the differentiation in instruction based on student need. | The school has a written curriculum that is aligned to state standards and teachers have identified the essential learning outcomes in at least reading, writing and math, and these documents provide the scope and sequence for instruction.  | The school has a written curriculum and scope and sequence of instruction that exceeds state standards in all content areas. Teachers' plan collaboratively to provide instruction on the essential learning outcomes and have agreed to the pacing of instruction as demonstrated in common unit and lesson plans that articulate specific standards and performance objectives to be mastered. |
| Teachers solely utilize the instructional resources (e.g., textbooks) as their curriculum and do not regularly assess students nor differentiate instruction based on learning style or specific academic needs. |  | Teachers' unit and lesson plans articulate specific standards and performance objectives to be mastered and are aligned to the mission, essential learning outcomes, and scope and sequence established in the curriculum. Teachers utilize the instructional resources as well as some supplementary materials to provide instruction that addresses multiple academic levels and learning styles. | Teacher's unit and lessons plans represent mission-aligned exemplary instructional practice and demonstrate differentiation of instruction based on each individual student's needs.   |
|  |  | Formative and summative assessments are regularly administered; curriculum materials are reviewed annually for effectiveness based on student academic data and revised, if needed.   | Teachers use a variety of formative and summative assessments to monitor student achievement and inform instruction. A documented process for curriculum monitoring and review for effectiveness is established and employed as soon as it is needed, which may include multiple times per year.   |

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| <b>Rationale:</b> | <b>Score:</b> |
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**1.3: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:** The school implements a systematic process of monitoring and improving the effectiveness of their academic program based on data.

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| <p>No record of school review of teacher or program effectiveness exists.</p>   | <p>The school fails to fully address the alignment of curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development in its continuous improvement plan. The professional development of teachers and staff are based only on individual teacher interests or requests rather than a response to student needs or program enhancement needs identified by student achievement data. Professional development is primarily based on workshops; it does not include knowledge developed in collaborative teams and job embedded opportunities are not available. Continuing education is not targeted to specific long- term institutional improvement</p> | <p>The school creates a continuous improvement plan that incorporates curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development to respond to students' needs. Teachers and staff quarterly review the implementation and effectiveness of the plan utilizing student and school achievement data. Teachers actively participate in giving input on areas of institutional improvement. The school leadership values collaboration as a means of professional development, encourages teachers to focus on student learning, and models the use of data driven decision making.</p> | <p>The school creates a continuous improvement plan that is regularly monitored and aligns high expectations for student and staff learning, effective instructional strategies and data analysis to monitor effectiveness. School leadership has developed a Professional Learning Community with clearly established expectations for teacher collaboration; a focus on student learning rather than teaching; and a results orientation which requires that teachers monitor student achievement results. School staff engages in program development and modifications based on internal and external evaluation of student and school outcomes. Staff development is based on valid and reliable research; it is frequently job embedded and aligns to student achievement needs, increasing knowledge and capacity for collaborative team work and/or teachers' professional goals.</p> |
| <p>Professional development is infrequent and available in response to compliance activities rather than focusing on curriculum, instruction, assessment and data analysis.</p>   |  | <p>Teachers' professional development is based on identified needs for instructional strategies, interventions or other program enhancements.</p>  |   |
| <p><b>Rationale:</b></p>  |  |  | <p><b>Score:</b></p>  |
| <p>1.4: HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHERS: The school hires, develops, and retains a cadre of dedicated and effective educators who review student data, adjust instruction, and provide intervention when necessary.</p>   |  |  |   |
| <p>Teacher qualifications do not reflect content expertise or pedagogical training. Teacher effectiveness is not reviewed, and evaluations are not conducted and/or do not include student achievement data. No training or professional development program exists to provide training in curriculum, instruction, assessment and data analysis.</p> | <p>Some teacher qualifications do not match content areas taught. Teacher's effectiveness is reviewed, but teachers are not consistently provided constructive feedback focused on improvement.</p>  | <p>All teachers are mission-aligned, and their qualifications match content areas taught. Teachers receive formative and summative evaluations that include student achievement data in the teacher's content area with the goal of improving instruction.</p>   | <p>The school employs a stringent hiring protocol ensuring that all teachers are mission-aligned, and their qualifications match content areas taught. Teachers receive formative and summative evaluations for the purpose of improving instruction. All evaluations include the use of student achievement data in the teacher's content area(s).</p>   |
|   | <p>Teachers do not engage in collaboration; teachers have limited access to professional development in curriculum, instruction, assessment or data analysis. Teachers lack strategies to adjust instruction or interventions for use based on students' needs.</p>  | <p>Teachers participate in collaborative teams and receive professional development in the areas of curriculum, instruction, assessment and data analysis.</p>   | <p>Teachers actively participate in at least one collaborative team which focuses on identifying student outcomes, developing and using common assessments to drive instruction and work to systematically provide intervention or enrichment when needed for the purpose of increasing student achievement. Teachers are trained to evaluate assessment data and respond appropriately with the use of differentiation, intervention and enrichment. A culture of collaboration and peer to peer learning and support is clearly present.</p>  |
| <p><b>Rationale:</b></p>  |  |  | <p><b>Score:</b></p>  |
| <p>1.5: LAWS AND REGULATIONS: The school ensures compliance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations regarding the academic program, including compliance with the charter agreement regarding the academic program.</p>   |  |  |   |
| <p>The school makes very little effort to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations as well as its charter agreements and authorizer requirements. Staff members do not participate in training opportunities and have very little communication with regulatory agencies.</p>  | <p>The school makes some effort to ensure compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. The school also monitors compliance with its charter agreements and authorizer requirements. Staff members may not participate in training opportunities when available nor have consistent communication with regulatory agencies.</p>  | <p>The school has an articulated process and designated staff assigned to ensure compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. The school also ensures compliance with its charter agreements and authorizer requirements. Relevant staff members participate in training opportunities and maintain communication with applicable regulatory agencies to ensure compliance and good standing.</p>   | <p>The school has an articulated process and designated staff assigned to ensure compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations. If relevant, the school also ensures compliance with its charter agreements and authorizer requirements. Relevant staff members proactively seek out training opportunities and maintain regular and timely communication with applicable regulatory agencies to ensure compliance and good standing.</p>  |
| <p><b>Rationale:</b></p>  |  |  | <p><b>Score:</b></p>  |

For each indicator, review the performance level descriptions. Based on your analysis, determine the school's performance level for each indicator by selecting Absent, Emerging, Effective, or Exemplary. Below each indicator there is space to provide a brief rationale for why you have identified the school as performing at the selected level and to enter the corresponding point value for the performance level.

**STANDARD 2: EFFECTIVE AND ETHICAL LEADERSHIP:** The leaders of a quality public school are responsible stewards of the school's mission and vision and of public funds and trust. The school leaders carry out their duties in a professional, responsible, and ethical manner at all times and use their influence and authority for the primary purpose of achieving student success and creating the highest quality learning environment.

| ABSENT = 0 point  | EMERGING = 1 point  | EFFECTIVE = 2 points   | EXEMPLARY= 3 points  |
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| <b>2.1 MONITORING EFFECTIVENESS:</b> Leaders regularly monitor and evaluate the success of the school's program and hold themselves accountable for results.                              |   |  |  |
| The leader does not monitor any assessment results nor discusses the success of the academic program with any stakeholder.  | The leader ensures that students participate in academic assessments and reviews overall school assessment results. | The leader works with staff to align state standards, school curriculum, instruction and assessment and regularly monitors progress by analyzing valid assessment data for improvement planning.   | The leader works collaboratively with staff to ensure that formative and summative assessments are aligned with the curriculum and instruction. The leader holds oneself accountable by frequently monitoring results for continuous improvement and creates specific interventions for struggling programs or eliminates nonproductive programs.  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |  | <b>Score:</b>  |
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| <b>2.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:</b> Leaders engage in regular professional development and reflective practice.  |   |  |  |
| The school leader takes no action to reflect on practices and does not participate in any professional development opportunities.   | The leader occasionally attends a relevant conference/training event and reviews professional literature.           | The leader regularly seeks out and attends professional development opportunities in response to identified areas of need and reviews current professional literature and integrates information.  | The leader continually seeks out and attends relevant professional development opportunities that align with the school's vision and mission and identified needs. The leader reviews current professional literature and timely integrates information.   |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |  | <b>Score:</b>  |
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| <b>2.3 AVOIDING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:</b> The school leader abstains from any decision involving a potential or actual conflict of interest.   |   |  |  |
| The leader is oblivious to any conflicts of interests, makes no attempt to avoid any future conflicts of interest, and/or participates in decisions despite a known conflict of interest. | The leader does not participate in a decision when someone else points out a potential conflict of interest.        | The leader identifies all potential conflicts of interest and recuses oneself when appropriate.  | The leader(s) actively avoids creating a conflict of interest. When necessary, the leader(s) makes a conflict of interest known at the beginning of a potential situation and recuses oneself when appropriate.  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |  | <b>Score:</b>  |
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| <b>2.4 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP:</b> Leaders make decisions with the goal of optimizing successful teaching and learning experiences.   |   |  |  |
| The leader makes no reference to optimizing teaching and learning experiences when making management decisions.   | The leader has codified a plan to unite ongoing management to the school's instructional improvement.               | The leader has codified a plan to unite both ongoing management and strategic planning to the school's instructional improvement that includes ample teaching and learning time, and sufficient resources and support for teaching staff. The plan is reviewed and revised as needed to meet changing conditions and maintain alignment with the school's vision, mission, and values. | The leader has a codified plan to unite both ongoing management and strategic planning to the school's instructional improvement that optimizes the time and resources dedicated to teaching and learning. The plan is frequently reviewed and revised as needed to meet changing conditions. Changes are made only in relation to the school's vision, mission and values, and are vetted and approved by the community and finalized by the governing authority. |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |  | <b>Score:</b>  |
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| <b>2.5 COMPLIANCE:</b> Leader maintains awareness of and complies with local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including those pertaining to Special Education.                   |   |  |  |

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| The leader is not aware of applicable laws and regulations and has no plan in place to review school compliance.  | The leader is aware of all legal and regulatory issues but may not be in full compliance.   | The leader is aware of and complies with all applicable laws and regulations. The leader actively monitors changes to all applicable laws and regulations and ensures compliance within the school by receiving training to understand the school's responsibility in order to adjust or modify procedures and processes in response. | The leader is aware of and complies with all applicable laws and regulations. The leader actively monitors changes to all applicable laws and regulations. The leader actively participates in advocacy related to laws and regulations that impact his or her school. The leader also collaborates with staff, vendors, and other stakeholders to monitor compliance.   |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |   | <b>Score:</b>  |
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| 2.6 DIVERSITY: Leaders implement practices that are inclusive to diverse learners.  |   |   |  |
| The leader lacks a plan to address diversity among students' learning needs.  | The leader respects diversity but has not created a system in which all students learning needs are met.  | The leader ensures the school has policies in place which respect the diversity of students' learning needs.  | The leader monitors that school policies regarding diversity of students learning needs are implemented by all staff members. The leader works with staff to establish systematic responses to student needs based on a pyramid of intervention and enrichment to meet both academic and social needs. The leader monitors the implementation of interventions as well as the use of differentiation. The leader models behaviors with teachers and staff which create the rigorous environment necessary for all students to learn and achieve. |
|   | Teachers are not aware of or trained in the use of interventions and enrichments nor are they trained to differentiate instruction.   | Teachers receive training in differentiated instruction and the use of intervention and enrichment. The leader works with staff to identify students' needs based on data and has developed effective interventions and enrichment for students with diverse learning styles and needs.   |  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |   | <b>Score:</b>  |
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| 2.7 SELF-REFLECTION: Leaders engage actively in reflective self-assessment and school-wide assessment to identify areas in need of improvement. Leader practices collaboration and distributive leadership. Once identified, leaders take the appropriate action to improve the identified needs. |   |   |  |
| The leader does not implement reflective self-assessment at any level and does not expect others to do either (individual or school).   | The leader engages in reflective self-assessment and/or school-wide assessment, but does not take the time to translate these results into improvement. The leader may or may not expect others to engage in reflective self-assessment either. | The leader engages in reflective self-assessment and school- wide assessment and expects others to engage in reflective self-assessment as well. The leader and staff identify areas of improvement and develop a plan to address the identified needs and implement the planned improvements.  | The leader regularly and reflectively assesses his or her own success as a school leader and actively solicits feedback from other members of the school community. The leader engages with all members of the school community to identify areas in need of improvement. The leader is responsive to these assessments and moves to meet the identified needs based on a clearly articulated improvement plan.  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |   | <b>Score:</b>  |
|   |   |   |  |

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**STANDARD 3: CULTURE, COMMUNITY, AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: A quality school cultivates effective relationships with and among its stakeholders including effective communication, openness, and actively seeking opportunities to collaborate insuring shared accountability for student achievement and positive, productive community relations.**

| ABSENT = 0 point  | EMERGING = 1 point  | EFFECTIVE = 2 points  | EXEMPLARY= 3 points   |
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| 3.1 SCHOOL SUPPORT: The Board of Trustees promotes and supports the school in the community.  |   |   |   |
| The Governing Authority lacks a plan to promote and support the school in the community.  | The Governing Authority has made limited attempts to promote or support the school in the community but lacks a consistent plan that communicates the expectations for Governing members to behave in this manner. Governing members do not have a way to communicate their activities. | The Governing Authority has a strategic plan that communicates expectations for Governing members regarding the promotion and support of the school in the community. Governing members regularly engage in activities in promoting their school. The strategic plan is reviewed and updated annually through discussions that occur during Governing Authority meetings. | The Governing Authority has a strategic plan that communicates the expectations and appropriate activities for Governing members regarding the promotion and support of the school in the community. Governing members have opportunities to communicate and monitor their activities in promoting their school during meetings. The strategic plan is reviewed and updated, at least, annually to determine progress, areas of improvement and possible modifications. These discussions occur during Governing Authority meetings.                            |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |   | <b>Score:</b>   |
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| 3.2 COMMUNICATING MISSION AND VISION: Leaders effectively communicate and engage stakeholders in the mission, vision, and values of the school, ensuring understanding and buy-in by the stakeholders.            |   |   |   |
| Stakeholders have little or no knowledge of the school's mission, vision and values.  | The leader lacks a communication plan which results in inconsistent engagement and communication with stakeholders.<br><br>Stakeholders are unclear of the school's mission, vision and values.   | The leader has created a communication plan that provides varied opportunities to share the school's mission, vision and values. The leader implements the plan to deepen the stakeholders' understanding of the school's mission, vision and values.   | The leader has created a communication plan through collaboration with stakeholders that provides varied methods and opportunities to share the school's mission, vision and values. The leader implements the plan and evaluates the effectiveness of the communication plan by determining which methods are most effective in reaching stakeholders as well as measuring the stakeholders' understanding of the school's mission, vision and values.   |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |   | <b>Score:</b>   |
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| 3.3 SCHOOL CULTURE: The school generates and sustains a school culture reflective of the charter's mission and vision that is conducive to the learning and growth of students, staff, faculty, and stakeholders. |   |   |   |
| There is no evidence or artifacts to support a school culture conducive to learning.  | The culture of the school does not fully reflect the charter's mission and vision. The school is beginning to develop ownership by all staff for high expectations for students and adults that includes learning and a focus on growth.  | The culture of the school clearly reflects the charter's mission and vision; it establishes high expectations for learning for students and adults. The school's culture is designed around a continuous quality improvement model that honors learning growth and change overtime and is regularly monitored by school leaders and stakeholders.                         | The culture of the school clearly reflects the charter's mission and vision; it establishes high expectations for learning for students and adults that is purposeful and active; the school is organized into a collaborative learning environment to address student and professional learning. The school's culture is designed around a continuous quality improvement model that honors learning growth and change overtime and is monitored and celebrated regularly by stakeholders to ensure that it continues to positively impact student and adults. |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |   | <b>Score:</b>   |
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| 3.4 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: The school actively fosters collaboration with and solicits knowledge and skills from community entities and stakeholders to support student learning and achievement.                |   |   |   |

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| <p>There is no evidence or artifacts to support collaboration with community entities and stakeholders.</p>  | <p>The school leader has identified community members and stakeholders that he/she needs to begin communicating. The leader understands the importance of community involvement but has yet to actively engage community members and stakeholders.</p> | <p>The school leader regularly communicates with community members and stakeholders. The school has begun to develop policies that encourage the community to support student achievement through donations of resources, and/or time, and/or expertise, but not all. The community is welcome at the school, but no specific purpose has been established.</p>  | <p>The school leader actively communicates with community members and stakeholders to garner support for the school's mission and vision. The school has policies that encourage the community to support student achievement through donations of resources, time, and expertise. Community members are welcome and invited to support student learning by creating opportunities for students to apply their learning in practical ways.</p>   |
| <p><b>Rationale:</b></p>   |  |  | <p><b>Score:</b></p>   |
| <p>3.5 COMMUNICATING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT RESULTS: The school communicates the expectations for student learning and goals for improvement to all stakeholders in the spirit of open communication and transparency.</p> |  |  |  |
| <p>There is no evidence or artifacts to support the school's effective and transparent communication with stakeholders.</p>  | <p>The school leader has identified the need to communicate the schools' expectations for student achievement as well as their school improvement goals but lacks the system or procedures by which to communicate these to stakeholders.</p>          | <p>The school leader and teachers share both the expectations for student learning as well as the goals for school improvement to all stakeholders. The school has access to various levels of data relating to school improvement and student achievement from the individual student to the school as a whole; these data are shared at the appropriate levels with stakeholders to ensure transparency and communication.</p> | <p>The school leader and teachers regularly share both the expectations for student learning as well as the goals for school improvement to all stakeholders. The school has access to and systems to monitor various levels of data relating to school improvement and student achievement from the individual student to the school as a whole; these data are shared at the appropriate levels with stakeholders and a system is in place to receive feedback from stakeholders regarding the outcomes and goals.</p> |
| <p><b>Rationale:</b></p>   |  |  | <p><b>Score:</b></p>   |

For each indicator, review the performance level descriptions. Based on your analysis, determine the school's performance level for each indicator by selecting Absent, Emerging, Effective, or Exemplary. Below each indicator there is space to provide a brief rationale for why you have identified the school as performing at the selected level and to enter the corresponding point value for the performance level.

**STANDARD 4: OPERATIONS:** A quality school conducts operations that are aligned with a mission driven culture, are compliant with legal and regulatory mandates, effectively manages risk through effective management of the physical plant, student discipline, and safety protocols, employs effective support services, supports employees according to best practices and mandates, engages and communicates with stakeholders, and manages data and technology.

| ABSENT = 0 point  | EMERGING = 1 point   | EFFECTIVE = 2 points  | EXEMPLARY= 3 points  |
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| 4.1 LAWS AND REGULATIONS: The school maintains access to legal counsel and ensures compliance with charter agreement requirements as well as all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, standards and mandates related to charter schools and non-profit organizations. |  |   |  |
| The school has no process in place to monitor charter and public school legislation and policy.   | The school periodically monitors charter and public school legislation and policy.   | The school regularly monitors charter and public school legislation and policy.   | The school is actively engaged in ongoing monitoring and advocacy related to charter and public school legislation and policy.   |
| The school employs discrete actions in reaction to notice by authorizers or other third-party informants related to compliance matters.   | The school employs discrete actions to periodically address applicable changes to policy and practice to remain compliant.   | The school employs a system to regularly address applicable changes to policy and practice to remain compliant.   | The school employs a developed system that is consistently used to address applicable changes to policy and practice to remain compliant.  |
| The charter fails to employ action to remain in compliance.   | The school is cited for some legal and regulatory compliance deficiencies by authorizers or other agencies.  | The school is fully compliant with legal and regulatory compliance deficiencies.  | The school is fully compliant with legal and regulatory mandates and takes proactive steps to avoid deficiencies in the future.  |
| The school is cited for multiple legal and regulatory compliance deficiencies by authorizers or other agencies.   | The school utilizes legal expertise periodically to determine actual risk or for advice on potential legal exposure. The school may use them intermittently related to policy development.                                       | The school regularly utilizes legal expertise to determine actual risk associated with decision-making and to ensure policies are both legally compliant and enforceable.                           | The school frequently utilizes legal expertise to project potential and actual risks associated with decision-making and to ensure policies are both legally compliant and enforceable.  |
| The school irregularly uses legal expertise and only when pending legal action is imminent and rarely to never for policy development.  |  |   |  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |  |   | <b>Score:</b>  |
| 4.2 RISK MANAGEMENT: The school develops, implements, and enforces policies that reduce hazards and risks to the school.  |  |   |  |
| The school carries inadequate levels of insurance in major areas of risk. Does not employ any relevant factors in vendor or contractor selection. Does not maintain documentation.  | The school carries adequate levels of coverage in most major areas of risk.  | The school carries adequate levels of coverage in a variety of areas of risk and regularly employs a system for contractor and vendor review, selection, and documentation.                         | The school carries extensive levels of coverage in a variety of areas of risk and consistently employs a comprehensive system for contractor and vendor review, selection, and documentation. The school proactively identifies new areas of risk and ways to mitigate them. The school employs criminal background checks and financial checks. |
| The school does not employ criminal background checks or financial checks. The school does not provide a bond for employees.  | Employs some factors in vendor and contractor selection. Maintains some documentation.   | The school employs criminal background checks and financial checks. The school utilizes decisions to evaluate findings. The school provides a bond for key employees and board members.             | The school utilizes a documented system to evaluate findings. The school provides a bond for key employees and board members. The school maintains a codified system for training that is consistently implemented and regularly reviewed for improvements.  |
| The school provides little to no training. Training is out of date with best practices or compliance.   | The school employs criminal background checks but may not employ financial checks. The school lacks a system or decision making to evaluate findings. The school provides limited to no bonding for employees and board members. | The school maintains a system for training that is regularly implemented and modified periodically for improvements. Training is documented.  |  |
| Documentation is not retained.  | The school provides some training implemented periodically or irregularly. Training is rarely modified for improvements.   | The school has a codified crisis management plan with aligned resources and budgets to respond. Plans are periodically reviewed and modified. Crisis drills are practiced regularly and documented. | Training is documented. The school has a codified and comprehensive crisis management plan with aligned staff, community supports and budgets to respond. The plans are frequently reviewed and modified. Crisis drills are practiced regularly and documented.  |
| The school lacks established crisis management plans or elements. Resources and budgets to support crisis situations are not identified or adequate. Crisis drills are not practiced regularly.   | Documentation is inconsistent.   | Policy manual is comprehensive, regularly reviewed, and published. Decisions are made based on policy.  | The policy manual is comprehensive, frequently reviewed, and published. Decisions are made based on policy.  |



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| The school does not maintain a policy manual. Decisions are made on an ad-hoc basis.  | The school has elements of a crisis management plan with some resources to support the plan. The plans are irregularly reviewed and modified. Crisis drills are practiced periodically.                   | Policy manual is comprehensive, regularly reviewed, and published. Decisions are made based on policy.   | The policy manual is comprehensive, frequently reviewed, and published. Decisions are made based on policy.   |
|   | The policy manual contains most key policies. Policy manual is periodically reviewed and updated.   |  |   |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |  | <b>Score:</b>   |
| 4.3 STUDENT ENROLLMENT: The school has fair and equitable enrollment practices compliant with regulations and the PA Charter School Law.  |   |  |   |
| Actual or potential discriminatory and/or unethical enrollment practices are evident. Process is undocumented and communication with stakeholders is lacking.   | Enrollment processes may provide opportunity for discriminatory and/or unethical enrollment practices. Process may be poorly documented and infrequently reviewed.  | The school provides for a fair and transparent process devoid of discriminatory and unethical enrollment practices through documented processes, periodic review and external certification of processes, and timely and consistent communication with stakeholders. | The school provides for a fair and transparent process devoid of discriminatory and unethical enrollment practices through documented processes, frequent review, monitoring and external certification of processes, and timely communication with stakeholders.                   |
|   | Communication with stakeholders may be lacking timeliness or consistency.   |  |   |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |  | <b>Score:</b>   |
| 4.4 SUPPORT SERVICES: The school conducts a systematic approach for support services (student health, finance/business processes, transportation, food service) and evaluates efficiency and effectiveness of each program.   |   |  |   |
| The school lacks adequate personnel, financial, or other resources for implementation.  | The school includes most personnel, financial, or other resources for implementation.   | Includes adequate personnel, financial and other resources for implementation.   | Includes ample personnel, financial and other resources for implementation.   |
| The school does not employ practices related to training and standard operating procedures.   | The school employs discrete practices related to training, and standard operating procedures.   | Employs systems related to training and standard operating procedures.   | Employs codified, coordinated systems related to training and standard operating procedures.  |
| The school does not evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of support services or only does so when issues arise. The school lacks timely and effective response to issues.  | The school periodically evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of support services and usually responds to issues as they arise.  | The school regularly evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of support services and responds to issues as they arise.  | The school has an established process to frequently evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of support services and proactively addresses issues before they arise.   |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |   |  | <b>Score:</b>   |
| 4.5 EMPLOYEES: The school is fully staffed with appropriate qualifications, has a defined hiring process, maintains accurate documentation on employees, and provides administration for human resources processes such as onboarding, compensation packages, benefits, retirement, conflict resolution, staffing levels, and employee performance. |   |  |   |
| The school does not inventory staffing needs and frequently has open positions or positions filled with unqualified staff.  | The school periodically inventories staffing needs. Sometimes has open positions or positions filled with unqualified staff for short periods of time.  | The school regularly inventories staffing needs and maintains a full staffing roster with competent, credentialed staff.   | The school employs a systematic process for inventorying staffing needs and growth trajectories and maintains a full staffing roster with highly competent, credentialed staff.   |
| The school lacks a process for planning growth trajectories and succession. The school has limited to no career ladder pathways and lacks a succession plan for key board and administrative team members.  | The school employs a process for planning growth trajectories and/or succession. The school has limited career ladder pathways and lacks a succession plan for key board and administrative team members. | The school employs a systematic process for planning growth trajectories and succession. The school has a documented career ladder and succession plan for key board and administrative team members.  | The school employs a codified, systematic process for planning growth trajectories and succession. The school has a documented career ladder and succession plan for key board and administrative team members and incorporates mentoring, shadowing and other transition supports. |
| School improvement plans and strategic plans, if implemented, lack consideration for staffing, and the budget lacks proper consideration to staff the school in the current year.   | School improvement plans and strategic plans address staffing to a limited degree, and the budget mostly reflects the needs of the school and the current year's plans.                                   | School improvement plans and strategic plans address staffing, and the budget reflects the needs of the school and the current year's plans.   | School improvement plans and strategic plans fully anticipate needed staffing to execute, and the 5-year budget fully reflects these plans.   |
| Hiring processes are not documented and lack policies and procedures to select staff based on verified credentials.   | Hiring processes are somewhat documented and include policies and procedures to select staff based on credentials.  | Hiring processes are codified, are transparent, and include policies and procedures to select staff based on verified credentials.   | Hiring processes are codified, are transparent, and include policies, procedures, and strategies to select staff based on verified credentials and employee and alignment with mission and culture of the school.   |
| The school maintains employment records that are substantially out of compliance.   | The school maintains employment records that are mostly legally compliant. Records somewhat support or defend employment decisions. Records are irregularly audited.                                      | The school maintains employment records that are legally compliant and supports and defends employment decisions.  |   |
| Records lack evidence to support or defend employment decisions.  |   | Records are periodically audited.  |   |

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| Records are not audited.  | The school provides some support of new staff through orientation.   | The school supports new staff through supportive processes such as orientation and a mentoring.   | Has a codified process for maintaining employment records that are legally compliant and supports and defends employment decisions. Records are frequently audited.   |
| The school lacks new staff support processes such as orientation and mentoring.   | Compensation and benefits are infrequently reviewed and/or published.  | Compensation and benefits are reviewed and published periodically.  | The school supports new staff through supportive processes such as orientation and a trained mentor and/or documented mentoring program.  |
| Compensation and benefits are rarely or never reviewed and/or published.  |  |   | Compensation and benefits are reviewed and published annually.  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |  |   | <b>Score:</b>   |
| 4.6 COMMUNICATIONS: The school employs a process to develop and implement external and internal communication plans aligned with the school's mission and ensures the security and appropriate accessibility of all data and records. |  |   |   |
| The school lacks a formal communication plan.   | The school has elements of a communication plan or discrete communication protocols.   | The school has a formal communication plan that is consistently implemented and aligned with the mission and culture of the school.   | The school employs a documented communication plan and systematic processes for engaging parents and community members and maintaining engagement are employed. The communication plan is aligned with the mission and culture of the school.   |
| School records do not follow records retention guidelines or policies and procedures.   | School records may loosely follow records retention guidelines and procedures.   | The school maintains records according to a records retention schedule and has corresponding policies and procedures in place. Records and data systems are secure, accurate, and accessible to authorized personnel.             | The school maintains records according to a records retention schedule and has corresponding policies and procedures in place that are regularly monitored. Records and data systems are secure, accurate, and accessible to authorized personnel, procedures and documentation are maintained related to monitoring. |
| Records and data systems may be insecure, inaccurate, or inaccessible to authorized personnel.  | Formal policies may be lacking. Records and data systems are somewhat secure, accurate, and accessible to authorized personnel.                                    |   |   |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |  |   | <b>Score:</b>   |
| 4.7 PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT: The school maintains sites, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe, orderly, and healthy environment.  |  |   |   |
| The school lacks an established cleaning and maintenance regimen.   | The school follows established regimens for cleaning and maintenance.  | The school uses documented plans for cleaning and maintenance of site and facility. Consistently follows established regimens.  | The school proactively addresses cleaning and maintenance with documented short and long-range plans for site and facility. The school consistently follows established regimens.   |
| The school has multiple compliance issues with OSHA and other health and safety laws, regulations and mandates.   | The school is mostly compliant with OSHA and other health and safety laws, regulations and mandates.   | The school uses established protocols and is compliant with OSHA and other health and safety laws, regulations and mandates.  | The school uses established protocols to implement and monitor compliance with OSHA and other health and safety laws, regulations and mandates.   |
| The school's site or buildings lacks safe accessibility to, around and within areas of the site and building(s) or accessibility is compromised to a significant degree.  | The school provides safe access to, around, and within most areas of the site and building(s).   | The school ensures safe access to, around, and within site and building(s).   | The school ensures safe access to, around, and within site and building(s). Access is regularly monitored.  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |  |   | <b>Score:</b>   |
| 4.8 SAFETY: The school prioritizes student, employee, and visitor safety, and utilizes a safety committee or review process to oversee and report safety concerns to the administration.  |  |   |   |
| The school lacks an established safety committee or protocols for reviewing safety concerns.  | The school establishes a safety committee that monitors safety infrequently and without established protocols. Concerns identified are reported to administration. | The school establishes a safety committee with established protocols that are consistently implemented.   | The school establishes a trained safety committee with established protocols that are consistently implemented. Reports are documented and measurable action plans are established and monitored for resolution.  |
| Access to buildings and grounds are unrestricted or unmonitored.  | Access to buildings and grounds are somewhat restricted to authorized personnel only.  | Reports are documented, and action plans are established and implemented.<br>Access to buildings and grounds are restricted to authorized personnel only. The school has periodic training, protocols, and monitoring of systems. | Access to buildings and grounds are highly restricted to authorized personnel only. The school has frequent training, protocols, and monitoring of systems.   |
| <b>Rationale:</b>   |  |   | <b>Score:</b>   |
| 4.9 STUDENT BEHAVIOR: The school develops, implements, and monitors its student behavior system to ensure a safe learning environment for all students.   |  |   |   |

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| The school inconsistently addresses disciplinary issues.   | The school addresses disciplinary issues as they occur but lacks a monitoring system to identify trends.  | The school uses quantitative data to track trends and address disciplinary issues.   | The school proactively emphasizes intervention, prevention, and teaching appropriate behavior.   |
| The school lacks a formal Discipline Code. Policies and practices may not be documented and/or are irregularly enforced.   | The school establishes a Discipline Code and documented policies and practices that are generally enforced and address inappropriate behavior.  | The school establishes a Discipline Code and codified and consistently enforced policies and practices that both prevent and address inappropriate behavior and supports the mission driven culture of the school. | Identifies causal reasons for disciplinary issues and trends in discipline through quantitative and qualitative data.  |
| The school lacks establishment or enforcement of due process policies and procedures.  | The school protects the rights of all students through due process policies and processes that are generally adhered to, zero tolerance provisions, and documentation that somewhat supports and defends decisions. | The school protects the rights of all students through due process policies and processes that are consistently adhered to, zero tolerance provisions, and documentation that supports and defends decisions.      | The school establishes a Discipline Code and codified, consistently enforced and monitored policies and practices that both prevent and address inappropriate behavior and supports the mission driven culture of the school.              |
| Discipline Code lacks zero tolerance provisions or fails to uphold them.   |   |  | The school protects the rights of all students through due process policies and processes that are consistently adhered to and monitored for compliance, zero tolerance provisions, and documentation that supports and defends decisions. |
| Documentation lacks specificity, accuracy, or completion to adequately support and defend decisions.   |   |  |  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>  |   |  | <b>Score:</b>  |
| 4.10 TECHNOLOGY AND DATA SYSTEMS: The school ensures technology infrastructure and staff is in place to fully support student needs and employee work processes. |   |  |  |
| The school does not address hardware, software, networks, maintenance, and staffing for technology.  | The school addresses hardware, software, networks, maintenance, and staffing for technology as needed.  | The school establishes and implements, a technology plan that addresses hardware, software, networks, maintenance, staffing, and use.  | The school establishes, implements, and monitors short and long-range technology plans that address hardware, software, networks, maintenance, staffing, and use.  |
| Hardware is inadequate to run technology programs and/or to support school operations.   | Maintains hardware to run technology programs and to support school operations.   | Maintains appropriate hardware to run technology programs and to support school operations.  | Maintains appropriate hardware to run technology programs and to support school operations, both currently and for future expansion.   |
| Software is inadequate to support school operations or the instructional program. Systems and data are unprotected.  | Utilizes software to support school operations and the instructional program. Software may not fully protect the systems and data.  | Utilizes software to support school operations and the instructional program and to protect the systems and data.  | Utilizes software to efficiently support school operations and the instructional program and to protect the systems and data.  |
| Technology support is not identified or is solely dependent upon volunteers.   | Technology support is intermittent or unreliable. Technology policies are enforced irregularly.   | Technology staff maintains equipment, systems, and enforces established policies.  | Dedicated technology staff maintains equipment, systems, and enforces established policies.  |
| The school lacks policies and practices related to managing, storing and accessing data.   | Implements discrete practices related to managing, storing, and accessing data. Some deficiencies with legal compliance may exist.  | Establishes and enforces policies and practices related to managing, storing, and accessing data that ensures legal compliance.  | Establishes, enforces, and monitors policies and practices related to managing, storing, and accessing data that ensures legal compliance.   |
| Multiple deficiencies with legal compliance exist.   |   |  |  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>  |   |  | <b>Score:</b>  |

For each indicator, review the performance level descriptions. Based on your analysis, determine the school's performance level for each indicator by selecting Absent, Emerging, Effective, or Exemplary. Below each indicator there is space to provide a brief rationale for why you have identified the school as performing at the selected level and to enter the corresponding point value for the performance level.

**Standard 5: GOVERNANCE: A quality school is governed by a Board of Trustees, a collective of individuals, who are responsible stewards of the school's mission and of public funds and trust. The Board of Trustees members carry out their duties in a professional, legal, and ethical manner at all times for the purpose of achieving overall school and student success.**

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| <b>ABSENT = 0 point</b> | <b>EMERGING = 1 point</b> | <b>EFFECTIVE = 2 points</b> | <b>EXEMPLARY= 3 points</b> |
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5.1 ACADEMIC OVERSIGHT: The Board of Trustees understands the charter's academic goals and objectives related to student achievement and have the systems in place to monitor student achievement.

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| <p>The Board does not understand what academic excellence means at the school and does not monitor student achievement or support school leadership in its academic performance efforts.</p> | <p>The Board can define academic excellence for the school and knows the charter promises. School leadership reports on student achievement to the Board but does not have a formalized reporting structure. The Board takes a hands-off approach to academic oversight and minimally supports the school leader related to increasing academic performance and effectiveness.</p> | <p>The Board can articulate a shared definition of academic excellence for the school that is aligned with the charter and knows how achievement is assessed, regularly reviewing school results and advancing academic goals. The board or academic excellence committee (or equivalent subgroup) works closely with school leadership to understand and inform the steps the school is taking to increase achievement.</p> | <p>The Board can articulate a shared definition of academic excellence for the school that is aligned with the charter and knows how achievement is assessed, regularly reviewing school results independently and in comparison to state averages and benchmarked district and charter schools. The academic excellence committee or equivalent group works closely with school leadership to understand and inform the steps the school is taking to increase achievement and to educate all board members about employed strategies.</p> |
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| <b>Rationale:</b> | <b>Score:</b> |
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5.2 FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT: The Board of Trustees understands the short and long-term economics of the school and has systems in place to monitor short and long-term financial health.

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| <p>The Board does not have the financial expertise to ensure financial stability and regulatory compliance and has not established financial policies and procedures or consistent reporting. The audit results in a qualified opinion with major findings on financial controls, policies, or stewardship</p> | <p>Some members of the Board understand the economics of the school and regulatory requirements. A financial policy and procedures manual has been developed, but financial reporting may occur less than monthly, and the audit may result in a qualified opinion or concerns about internal controls.</p> | <p>The Board fully understands the short and long-term economics of the school, the impact of programmatic choices on finances, and regulatory requirements. A financial policy and procedures manual is updated in a timely manner, and financial reporting, which is reviewed by the full board or finance committee, occurs monthly, while the audit results in an unqualified opinion with few or no concerns about internal controls. Multi-year financial planning is monitored with considerations for anticipated future needs or changes in revenue.</p> | <p>The Board fully understands the short and long-term economics of the school, the impact of programmatic choices on finances, and regulatory requirements. A financial policy and procedures manual is updated as soon as a change in practice are made, and financial reporting, which is reviewed by the full board or finance committee, occurs in accordance with an annual reporting schedule, while the audit results in an unqualified opinion and no concerns about internal controls. The full Board or finance committee works closely with staff to develop at least five-year projections and proactively works to ensure adequate resources to meet future demands.</p> |
| <p>Multi-year financial planning is not required nor monitored by the Board.</p>   |   |   |  |

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| <b>Rationale:</b> | <b>Score:</b> |
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5.3 REGULATORY OVERSIGHT: The Board of Trustees monitors compliance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations, monitors compliance with charter agreement, and has a process for developing, approving, and enforcing appropriate policies and procedures.

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| <p>The Board makes very little effort to no effort to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations, as well as its charter agreements and authorizer requirements. No process is in place for developing appropriate policies and procedures.</p> | <p>The Board makes some effort to ensure compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations.</p> | <p>The Board monitors compliance with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations and compliance with its charter agreements and authorizer requirements based on an established annual review calendar. Policies and procedures have been developed related to governance, finance, personnel, and students and families. A process to review and further develop all policies and procedures is employed at least annually.</p> | <p>The Board works closely with staff to understand and monitor compliance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations. The Board also proactively ensures compliance with its charter agreements and authorizer requirements at monthly board meetings. Policies and procedures related to governance, finance, personnel, and students and families are reviewed and updated annually.</p> |
| <p>The Board also monitors the school's compliance with its charter agreements and authorizer requirements. Policies and procedures have been developed or are in process of being developed related to governance, finance, personnel, and/or students and families.</p>  |  |  |  |

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| <b>Rationale:</b> | <b>Score:</b> |
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5.4 SCHOOL LEADER SUPPORT AND EVALUATION: Organization-wide performance goals are developed collaboratively. The Board evaluates the school leader's performance and provides adequate support for the school leader.

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| <p>The Board is unaware of the performance goals of the charter and does not set goals for the school leader, nor monitor or measure the school leader's performance annually. The Board takes a hands-off approach and abdicates all or most oversight responsibility for the school to the school leader.</p> | <p>The Board understands the charter promises and has a clear job description and an annual evaluation process for the school leader, but performance goals aligned with the charter are not included in the evaluation process, and broad feedback on the school leader's performance is not sought. Very little support is provided to improve the school leader's performance and little to no consideration for succession planning is in place.</p> | <p>The Board approves annual performance goals for the school leader, ones that are aligned with the charter, authorizer accountability framework, and the leader's up-to-date job description.</p> <p>Performance against goals is monitored periodically, reviewed annually and informed by feedback from the school leader through his/her self-assessment. A leadership development plan for the school leader is established and reviewed annually, and a short-term/emergency succession plan for the school leader is developed.</p> | <p>The Board or its designated task force works collaboratively with the school leader to develop measurable, annual performance goals, ones that are aligned with the charter and the leader's up-to-date job description. Performance against goals is informed by feedback from the leader's self-assessment, the broader school community, and through formal check-ins frequently throughout the year. The school leader is supported with regular feedback, mentorship, and ample opportunities for training. Further, a formal, long-term succession plan for the school leader is developed and reviewed annually.</p>   |
| <p><b>Rationale:</b></p>  |  |   | <p><b>Score:</b></p>   |
| <p>5.5 COMPOSITION AND STRUCTURE: The Board of Trustees ensures the board has a diverse set of skills and backgrounds adequate for effectively governing the school and has a clear and active structure of officers, members, and committees .</p>   |  |   |  |
| <p>The Board membership has only a few members who collectively do not represent the diverse set of skills and backgrounds needed to govern the school, and the Board does not have a plan for recruiting new members.</p>  | <p>The membership of the Board consists of at least 5 members, representing several of the skill sets and backgrounds needed to govern the school, and the Board understands its future membership needs but does not have a formal plan for recruiting new members. Bylaws and board policies (to the extent existing) minimally address officers, members, and committees, and some roles are established but may not be fully functioning.</p>        | <p>The membership of the Board consists of at least 7 members, representing the broad cross section of skill sets and backgrounds and the capacity needed to govern the school. The Board adheres to its formal recruitment plan that ensures the selection of experienced and independent members who will complement the existing skills sets of current members.</p>   | <p>The membership of the Board consists of at least 7 members, representing the broad cross section of skill sets, backgrounds, capacity, and diversity needed to govern the school. The Board adheres to its formal recruitment plan that ensures the selection of experienced, well-tested, well-oriented, and independent members who are aligned with the mission, act independently from management, and complement the existing skills sets of current members. Bylaws and board policies thoroughly define roles of officers, members, and committees, and all are established and function effectively to tactically and strategically plan business of the board.</p> |
| <p>Committees are not established or are non-functioning.</p>   |  | <p>Bylaws and board policies define roles of officers, members, and committees, and all are both established and functioning.</p>   |  |
| <p><b>Rationale:</b></p>  |  |   | <p><b>Score:</b></p>   |
| <p>5.6 MEETINGS: The Board of Trustees adheres to an established annual board calendar, provides public transparency, and follows an agenda that focuses on fulfilling the board's role and fiduciary responsibilities.</p>   |  |   |  |
| <p>Meetings are held at irregular intervals and do not follow an established agenda, nor comply with the open meeting laws, or abide by conflict of interest policies.</p>  | <p>Most meetings are scheduled in advance, follow an established agenda, and minutes are produced to document proceedings. In compliance with open meeting laws, meeting notices are posted in advance, and members understand how to recuse themselves if a conflict of interest arises. The public may be given limited opportunities for input.</p>   | <p>All meetings, which adhere to an established annual calendar and comply with open meeting laws, follow a standard agenda that focuses attention on decision-making. Meeting minutes, which comply with open meeting laws, document reports by all committees, the record of actions taken, and clearly notes member recusals when a conflict of interest exists. Opportunities for public input are provided at each meeting.</p>  | <p>All meetings, which conform to an established annual calendar and open meeting laws, follow a standard agenda informed by committee chairs and the school leader and focus attention on decision-making. Meeting minutes, which comply with open meeting laws, represent a concise record of actions taken by selected committees and clearly notes member recusals when a conflict of interest exists. Clear and consistent opportunities for public input are provided and welcomed at each meeting.</p>  |
| <p><b>Rationale:</b></p>  |  |   | <p><b>Score:</b></p>   |

5.7 GOALS AND ACCOUNTABILITY: The Board of Trustees advocates for and sustains the school's mission and vision, and in conjunction with the CEO/School Leaders sets and measures progress towards mission-driven goals, and conducts self-evaluations.

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| <p>The Board does not advocate on the school's behalf and does not set goals or have systems and processes in place to hold itself accountable for its collective performance or the performance of individual members.</p> | <p>To hold itself accountable as it advocates for and sustains the school, the Board sets collective annual goals and measures its performance against established goals; however, individual member expectations are not established, and individual expectations and commitments vary greatly.</p> | <p>To hold itself and individual members accountable as it advocates for and sustains the school, the Board sets mission- driven, annual goals for the full Board and individual members, measuring performance against established goals for all. Individual members understand personal expectations and dedicate the time and expertise required to be an effective member.</p> | <p>To hold itself and individual members accountable as it advocates for and sustains the school, the Board sets mission- driven, annual goals for the full Board, committees, and individual members, measuring performance against established goals for all.</p> <p>Individual members respond to personal expectations, dedicating the expertise, time, leadership, and financial support required to be an effective member, advocate, and spokesperson for the school. A formal orientation process for new members is established with veteran members mentoring new members to ensure effective performance.</p> |
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| <p><b>Rationale:</b></p> | <p><b>Score:</b></p> |
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For each indicator, review the performance level descriptions. Based on your analysis, determine the school's performance level for each indicator by selecting Absent, Emerging, Effective, or Exemplary. Below each indicator there is space to provide a brief rationale for why you have identified the school as performing at the selected level and to enter the corresponding point value for the performance level.

**Standard 6: FINANCE: A quality school demonstrates sound financial practices through responsible use of public funds, maintaining publicly accessible fiscal records, conducting annual audits, and developing a comprehensive fiscal plan that demonstrates alignment with the school's mission and vision.**

| ABSENT = 0 point   | EMERGING = 1 point  | EFFECTIVE = 2 points   | EXEMPLARY= 3 points   |
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| 6.1 FINANCIAL PLAN: The school effectively plans for long and short-term financial health and ensures that expenditures of school funds are closely aligned with the mission and the academic goals of the school.   |   |  |   |
| Management is unable to articulate how the school's budget and personnel decisions align with its mission and how allocations work within the budget. The Board has not set priorities for the budget and has little involvement in the budget development or approval process.        | Management can explain how personnel decisions are made and how resources are allocated throughout the budget but cannot articulate how the budget supports the priorities of the school in relation to its academic goals. The Board has set priorities for the budget but has little involvement in the budget development or approval process. The budget covers only the current year. Or has poor or unsubstantiated projections for future years. | <p>The Board is actively involved in the budget process, approves annual budgets and significant revisions thereto, and establishes at least 3-year financial projections.</p> <p>Management can articulate how its personnel decisions and the budget's allocation of school resources aligns with the school's academic priorities and realistic enrollment projections.</p> <p>The Board ensures that the budget is realistic and supports its priorities prior to approval. The budgeting process includes projections of cash flows and resulting reserve balances.</p> | <p>The Board is actively involved in the budget process, approves annual budgets and significant revisions thereto, and establishes at least 5-year financial projections.</p> <p>Management can articulate how its personnel decisions and the budget's allocation of school resources align with the school's academic and operational priorities. The Board ensures that the budget is realistic and supports its priorities prior to approval. Management and the Board regularly compare actual revenue and expenditures to the approved budget and investigate significant variances. The Board or its finance committee also benchmark expenditures against similar schools.</p> |
| <b>Rationale:</b>  |   |  | <b>Score:</b>   |
| 6.2 LAWS AND REGULATIONS: The school aligns financial practices with state and federal laws, charter agreement, applicable regulations and standard accounting principles.   |   |  |   |
| The school has not codified its business and financial policies and procedures and does not actively monitor its compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, and generally accepted accounting principles.   | The school has established formal business, financial and personnel policies and procedures but does not actively monitor its compliance with state and federal laws and regulations and generally accepted accounting principles.  | The school has reviewed and actively monitors its business, financial and personnel policies and procedures and has determined, with the assistance of legal counsel that they are in alignment with state and federal laws and regulations as well as the charter contract. In addition, the Board receives regular training from supervising and regulatory agencies. The school, its legal counsel, and independent auditor conduct an annual review of compliance matters and conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.                                  | The school's strategic plan and by- laws address compliance with federal and state laws and regulations. The school as well as its legal counsel, a certified public accountant, and other experts proactively review the business, financial and personnel policies and procedures and have determined that they are in alignment with laws and regulations, and that financial records are maintained in accordance with generally acceptable accounting principles. In addition, the Board seeks out training from supervising and regulatory agencies and actively monitors compliance.   |
| <b>Rationale:</b>  |   |  | <b>Score:</b>   |
| 6.3 INTERNAL CONTROLS: The school establishes strong internal financial controls to ensure operational integrity and safeguarding of school assets and financial resources, maximizes accuracy and reliability of financial records, and develops procurement policies and procedures. |   |  |   |
| The school has not developed formal internal financial controls and is not adequately safeguarding the school's assets.  | The school has developed formal internal financial controls over revenues and expenditures as well as financial record keeping; however, management and the Board do not regularly review the school's financial policies and procedures for adequacy or implementation.  | The school has developed and documented formal internal financial controls over revenues, expenditures, and assets as well as financial record keeping. Management and the Board annually or more frequently review and revise, if necessary, the school's financial policies and procedures. The school has proper staffing levels and separation of responsibilities to ensure appropriate handling of cash and spending authorization.  | The school has developed formal internal financial controls over revenues and expenditures as well as financial record keeping. Management and the Board annually or more frequently review the school's financial policies and procedures and proactively make changes to properly safeguard the school's assets. The school builds on its internal controls by leveraging external resources, such as controls offered through financial institutions. The school has proper staffing levels and separation of responsibilities to ensure appropriate handling of cash and spending authorization.  |
| <b>Rationale:</b>  |   |  | <b>Score:</b>   |

**6.4 ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES:** The school ensures ongoing financial viability and sustainability by engaging in accurate reporting to optimize enrollment and special programs support, monitoring financial performance and trends and actual results vs. budget projections, and seeking out additional funds, if needed.

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| <p>The school does not monitor its enrollment or financial results, has not budgeted for an appropriate operating margin, and has not identified key financial ratios for measuring financial performance and sustainability.</p> | <p>The school regularly monitors its enrollment and has developed its budget based upon realistic enrollment expectations and appropriate operating margins; however, it has not identified key financial ratios for measuring financial performance and sustainability.</p> | <p>The school monitors its enrollment at least monthly and develops and revises its budget based upon actual enrollment while retaining plans for an appropriate operating margin. Also, the school has identified key financial ratios, such as net profit percent, current ratio, days cash on hand, and expenses per student or employee in order to assist in measuring financial performance and sustainability. The budget takes into account future investments needed such as facilities or technology. As needed, the school seeks additional revenue sources beyond basic state funding.</p> | <p>The school monitors long-term enrollment and demographic trends. Further, it monitors its enrollment at least monthly and develops and revises its budget based upon actual enrollment while retaining plans for an appropriate operating margin. Also, the Board's finance committee has developed a long-term strategic plan that identifies key financial ratios such as net profit percent, current ratio, days cash on hand, and expenses per student or employee in order to assist the Board with measuring financial performance and sustainability. The school management, in collaboration with the Board, actively seeks additional revenue.</p> |
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| <b>Rationale:</b> | <b>Score:</b> |
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**6.5 FINANCIAL REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT:** The school regularly and accurately records and reports financial activity, results and status, uses and reports restricted funds appropriately, and undergoes a thorough annual independent financial audit.

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| <p>The school does not complete a monthly closing process nor routinely prepare and present financial statements to management and the Board. The school does not engage a qualified auditor and/or file its annual financial and compliance audits in a timely manner.</p> | <p>The school management closes its books monthly and prepares and presents its balance sheet and income statement to the Board at least quarterly. The school engages a qualified auditor but has not developed policies to help ensure timely filing of its annual financial and compliance audits. In addition, it does not follow up on or fully address independent auditor material findings and/or implement auditor recommendations.</p> | <p>The school management closes its books monthly and prepares and presents its balance sheet, income statement, budget to actual comparison, and bank reconciliations to the Board at least monthly.</p> <p>Also, Management and the Board monitor and ensure that restricted funds are used for the intended purposes. The school engages a qualified independent auditor and ensures the timely filing of annual financial and compliance audits and Form 990 submissions to the IRS. In addition, the school follows up on and addresses material audit findings and recommendations.</p> | <p>The school management closes its books monthly and prepares and presents a balance sheet, income statement, budget to actual comparison, and bank reconciliations to the Board at least monthly. The Board independently reviews these documents and ensures that restricted funds are used for intended purposes. The school engages a qualified auditor and timely files annual audits and other financial compliance reports. The Board discusses any questions that may arise with appropriate members of management and reviews and approves annual audit reports and Form 990 submissions to the IRS. Also, Management and the Board seek training on how to read financial statements, if needed. In addition, the Board follows up on material audit findings and implements appropriate recommendations.</p> |
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| <b>Rationale:</b> | <b>Score:</b> |
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**6.6 QUALIFIED EXPERTISE:** The school has appropriate financial planning and management expertise.

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| <p>The school's finance leader or department is not staffed or contracted with qualified knowledgeable personnel, and as a result school leadership and the Governing Authority do not receive timely and accurate financial information from which to make management and governance decisions.</p> | <p>The school's finance leader or department is staffed or contracted with personnel with an accounting degree or some financial management experience; however, financial reports are not completed monthly for use by school leadership and review by the Governing Authority and segregation of duties within the finance department is limited. School conducts background checks for finance positions.</p> | <p>The school's finance leader or department is adequately staffed or contracted with qualified personnel, including a CFO (<i>or Business Manager</i>) with a degree in accountancy or financial management experience. Duties within the department are adequately segregated and accurate financial reports are completed monthly for school leadership use and Governing Authority review.</p> | <p>The school's finance leader or department is adequately staffed or contracted with qualified personnel, including a CFO (<i>or Business Manager</i>) with a degree in accountancy, CPA certification, or demonstrated financial planning and management experience in the charter school sector. Duties within the department are adequately segregated and accurate financial reports are completed monthly for school leadership use and Governing Authority review. Ongoing professional development is provided to keep staff's knowledge updated.</p> |
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