



New York State Education Department Charter School Office
2011 Site Visit Report Template for
Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Regents

Name of Charter School:			
Date of Site-Visit:		Members of Site-Visit Team:	

Note: Observational findings from the site visit will be presented in alignment with the indicators listed below, though not all indicators will necessarily be assessed on every site visit.

1. IS THE SCHOOL FAITHFUL TO THE TERMS OF ITS CHARTER?

MISSION OF THE SCHOOL	
Mission	The school is faithful to the mission, vision, and educational philosophy defined in the current charter.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE	
Leadership/governance	The board of trustees implements the governance and leadership structure as defined in the current charter.
Contractual relationships (if applicable)	The board of trustees and school leadership establish effective working relationships with their management company. Changes in the school's relationship with its management company comply with required charter revision procedures.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	
Academic program	The school implements an academic program, including pedagogical approach, curriculum, assessment, and other unique elements of the educational philosophy defined in the current charter.
Student services	The school provides services for all students, including but not limited to those with special education, English Language Learner needs and those eligible for the federal free- and reduced-price lunch program, as defined in the current charter.
Enrollment	The school's student recruitment and enrollment process is faithful to that intended in the charter and as defined by statute and regulation.

DISSEMINATION	
Dissemination of best practices (If applicable)	The school has provided models for replication and best practices.

2. IS THE SCHOOL EDUCATIONALLY SOUND?

STATE MANDATED ASSESSMENT	
NYS testing program	Students at the school demonstrate Proficiency, ¹ or progress toward meeting proficiency targets on state standards, as measured by the NYS Testing Program assessments in all subject areas and at all grade levels tested for accountability purposes. ²
Accountability goals	The school meets, or shows progress toward meeting, NYS Testing Program goals.
AYP	The school makes Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups. The school is not identified for accountability purposes (not designated as in Needs Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring).

OTHER ACHIEVEMENT, IMPROVEMENT, AND ASSESSMENT MEASURES	
Accountability goals	The school meets, or shows progress toward meeting external assessment goals.
Internal measures of student achievement	Students demonstrate progress on internal measurements linked with the school's promotion or exit standards.
Accountability goals	The school meets, or shows progress toward meeting internal assessment goals

CURRICULUM	
Implementation of the curriculum	The school's curriculum, as implemented in the classroom, consistently addresses the skills and concepts that all students must know and be able to do to meet NYS Learning Standards, and supports opportunities for all students to master these skills and concepts.
Program evaluation	The school has systems and structures in place to regularly and systematically review the quality and effectiveness of the academic program.

¹ 'Proficiency' includes attaining either Proficient or Advanced classification

² Accountability purposes" is any test at any grade level that "counts" toward AYP determination

TEACHING AND LEARNING	
Instruction	School-wide instructional practice is aligned with the school design and student learning objectives, is consistently and effectively delivered, and conveys clear expectations to students.
Effective Teaching	There is evidence of rigor, relevance, pacing, alignment of curriculum to state standards, and student engagement.
Assessment and instructional decision-making	Teachers and school leaders use qualitative and quantitative evidence to inform and guide instructional planning and practice.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	
Effective Leadership	The school leader has the experience and skills needed to successfully implement the school's charter.
Leadership Development	School leaders receive appropriate and timely professional development. Mentoring or coaching programs are in place and effective.
School Leadership Team	The school is utilizing its School Leadership Team to implement school improvement.
Instructional leadership	School leaders provide teachers with feedback and guidance that leads to improved instructional practice and student achievement.

SCHOOL CLIMATE	
Environment is conducive to learning	The classroom and school environment is orderly and supports the goal of student understanding and mastery of skills and is consistent with the school's mission. Supervision is sufficient, respectful, and consistent.
Collaboration	Administrators, teachers and staff communicate openly, positively and effectively. Professional learning communities are in place and affect improvement efforts.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	
Parent involvement	Strategies are being implemented to increase the involvement and contributions of parents.
External/community partners	Strategies are being implemented to increase the involvement and contributions of community partners.

PROGRAM PLANNING AND EVALUATION	
Organizational needs	The school has realistic plans for program improvement, possible future expansion, and adequate facilities based on evaluation and analysis of data, if applicable.
Academic program needs	The school evaluates the impact of its academic programs on student achievement and modifies its programs to ensure improvement.
Teacher evaluations	Teacher evaluations linked to student performance have been put into place. The system and data used must be consistent with State APPR system.)

3. IS THE SCHOOL FISCALLY SOUND AND ORGANIZATIONALLY VIABLE?

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	
Solvency and stability	<p>The school develops budgets that are realistic and in support of student academic achievement.</p> <p>The school demonstrates a history of positive net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations and support the academic program, and consistently operates within budget.</p> <p>The school develops a budget that can be sustained by its enrollment.</p>
Fiscal oversight	<p>The Board of Trustees and school leadership implement effective structures and systems to enable responsible fiscal oversight of the school.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees has an external company complete a yearly audit.</p> <p>The Board of Trustees demonstrates long-term fiscal oversight through appropriate planning processes.</p>
Internal controls	<p>The school implements an effective system of internal controls over revenues, expenses, and fixed assets, and exercises good business practices.</p>

PARENT AND STUDENT SATISFACTION	
Family satisfaction	<p>Through the use of parent and student (where appropriate) surveys, the school demonstrates that families are satisfied with the school's program</p>
Student retention	<p>The school can document the numbers and reasons for student attrition.</p>

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	
Board accountability	The Board of Trustee is responsible to the school community it serves.
Decision making and communication	The school has a clear understanding of decision-making and communication that result in a common sense of purpose for all school constituencies.
Roles and responsibilities	The school defines and delineates clear roles and responsibilities among board and staff.
Board oversight	<p>The Board of Trustees regularly and systematically assesses the performance of school administrators against school-wide goals and makes effective and timely use of the evaluations.</p> <p>The Board of Trustee operates with a clear set of goals for the school and has developed a set of tools for understanding progress toward meeting those goals.</p>
Board development	Board members receive appropriate and timely professional development.
Personnel	<p>The Board of Trustees employs leaders who demonstrate effective leadership of the school's programs.</p> <p>The school's leadership establishes an appropriate professional climate, resulting in a purposeful learning environment, reasonable rates of retention for effective school leadership, staff, and teachers, and manageable levels of overall staff turnover.</p>

COMPLIANCE	
Safety	<p>The school establishes and maintains a physically safe environment for students and staff.</p> <p>The school establishes a healthy environment ensuring civil rights for all.</p>
Facilities	The school provides facilities that meet applicable state and federal requirements, are suited to its programs, and are sufficient to serve diverse student needs.
Staff qualifications	Staff employed by the school meet all applicable state and federal qualifications and standards.
Implementation of Strategies to recruit, place, and retain qualified staff	Activities are funded to recruit, place, and/or retain highly qualified staff.