

# **NEW JERSEY CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION 2011**

**Revised July 2011**

NJ Department of Education  
Office of Charter Schools  
P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500  
Phone: (609) 292-5850  
Fax: (609) 633-9825

## I. INTRODUCTION

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The Commissioner of Education may grant or deny the renewal of a charter following the initial four-year charter. The decision to renew a charter for each subsequent five-year period will be based on a comprehensive review guided by three main criteria:

1. Fidelity to the school's charter,
2. Demonstration of academic success, and
3. Organizational viability of the school.

A successful application will provide a well-conceived plan for the next five years and a compelling rationale and clear evidence for renewing the school's charter. Successful applications will identify weaknesses and address discrepancies between current and anticipated outcomes. In addition, the renewal application will outline the school's strategies for addressing these weaknesses.

Each school should draw on the data it has presented in the annual reporting in order to demonstrate continuous progress. The application for renewal of the charter gives each school the opportunity to provide evidence that the school is fiscally solvent and its academic program is successful. It also gives a school the opportunity to examine its progress towards meeting its mission, goals and objectives, assess its strengths and needs, and plan its course for the future.

After the submission of the renewal application, the Department of Education may conduct a site visit and structured interview with the board and its administration. Additionally, the charter school's stakeholders will be interviewed including teachers, parents, and students. These findings will augment the evaluation of student performance on the Statewide Assessment Program, annual reports, monitoring visit results, and financial reports in making a decision about the renewal of the charter.

## II. RENEWAL PROCESS

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**Application Submission:** Two hard copies of the renewal application must be submitted to the Department of Education by each charter school in its fourth, ninth, or fourteenth year of operation by **October 15, 2011**. Each school must also submit an electronic version of the report in .pdf format to [njcharter@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:njcharter@doe.state.nj.us). Additionally, the renewal application must also be submitted to the respective executive county superintendent of schools and the district board(s) of education or State district superintendent(s) of the district of residence of the charter school by **October 15, 2011**.

**Written Comment Period:** The renewal application will be reviewed by the respective county superintendent of schools and the district board(s) of education or State district superintendent(s) of the district of residence of the charter school. Comments regarding the renewal of the school's charter must be forwarded to the Commissioner by **November 16, 2011**.

**Application Review:** The application for renewal will be reviewed and evaluated by the New Jersey Department of Education. All applications must be clear and fully complete in order to be evaluated.

**On-Site Renewal Visit:** The Department of Education review team may conduct an on-site review of the charter school and conduct a structured interview with members of the board of trustees, the lead person, teachers, students and parents, or other school representatives to review the accomplishments of the charter.

**Renewal Determination:** The Commissioner grants or denies the renewal of the charter based on the review of a school's student achievement data, application for renewal, the findings based on the annual reports, and the renewal site visit. The Commissioner will grant or deny the renewal of the charter by **February 28, 2012**.

### **III. APPLICATION SUBMISSION CONTENT AND FORMAT**

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The prescribed content and format for the renewal application are specified below.

**Document Length:** The document may not exceed 40 pages, not including the cover page, table of contents, and appendices.

**Format:** All pages should use standard one-inch margins, be paginated, with all text easily readable in font no smaller than type size 11 point.

**Cover Page:** Provide a cover page that includes the school's name and the date of the report. The bottom of the cover page should also note that the report was transmitted to the Commissioner of Education, respective executive county superintendent of schools, and the district board(s) of education or State district superintendent(s) of the district of residence of the charter school.

**Table of Contents:** Provide a clearly labeled Table of Contents naming all major sections and appendices.

**Tables and Figures:** All tables and figures should be numbered sequentially. Provide a title for each table or figure and be sure to identify the data in the table. All rows and columns in each table must be clearly labeled. Provide a clear explanation of the results and implications for all tables or figures used in the application.

**Appendices:** All supplementary documents should be labeled appropriately and attached to the correct appendix, as directed in the application. Additional information in the appendices should not exceed 25 pages. Appendix A is associated with documentation from Section 1, Fidelity to Charter. Appendix B is associated with documentation from Section 2, Demonstration of Academic Success. Appendix C is associated with documentation from Section 3, Organizational Viability. Appendix D is associated with documentation from Section 4, Five-Year Planning.

**Submission Requirements:** Two hard copies of the renewal application are due in the Office of Charter Schools no later than **4:15PM by October 15, 2011**. Please mail to the N.J. Department of Education, Office of Charter Schools, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500. Additionally, please submit an electronic version of the report in .pdf format to [njcharter@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:njcharter@doe.state.nj.us). A copy must also be submitted to the respective executive county superintendent of schools and the district board(s) of education or State district superintendent(s) of the district of residence of the charter school by **October 15, 2011**.

## **IV. CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

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Please provide clear, complete, and accurate information in response to each question.

### **1. Fidelity to Charter**

#### **1.1 Describe the charter school's mission and vision. How is the charter school achieving its mission?**

- a) Provide a brief description of the school including the year it was granted its initial charter, the year the school opened, the current location of the school, district(s) served, grade levels served, maximum enrollment, current enrollment, and current waiting list.
- b) State the mission of the school as it appears in its charter application.
- c) Present a coherent explanation of how the school is achieving its mission.
- d) Present evidence that the school's mission statement, vision, and theme have been consistently implemented throughout all aspects of the school.

#### **1.2 Is the school implementing its educational program as described in the original charter application? Describe the educational philosophy and provide detail on the unique and innovative features in the educational program.**

- a) Identify the school's philosophical approach to educating students and how the school has focused on improving student learning and outcomes.
- b) Present a persuasive explanation of how the school design has improved educational outcomes for the student population.
- c) Provide evidence of a fully developed curriculum for all content areas. If necessary, the evidence may be attached as a clearly labeled document in Appendix A. (**Note: Please ensure that curriculum documents are available for on-site review.**)
- d) Provide evidence of an approved professional development plan which provides detail of how the plan has been implemented. If necessary, the evidence may be attached as a clearly labeled document in Appendix A.

#### **1.3 Has the school made progress in meeting its established non-academic goals and objectives as identified in the charter application?**

- a) List each non-academic goal and objective stated in the approved charter application.

- b) For each goal/objective, identify whether the school has met the standard, is approaching the standard, or has not met the standard.
- c) Provide information as to how the school has met the non-academic goals and objectives by presenting detailed quantitative evidence showing the satisfactory progress in meeting the non-academic performance objectives in its charter application.

*Note: The data presented should provide the reviewers with a comprehensive picture of how all of the school's students have performed relative to the school's specific non-academic objectives.*

#### **1.4 How have the plans for parental and community involvement been realized?**

**Address the plans for parental and community involvement stated in the charter application and how these have been fulfilled.**

- a) Describe the involvement of parents, families, educational institutions, and/or community partners in the school.
- b) Describe how family and community involvement in the school's operation relates to the fulfillment of the school's mission and program. If available, include data from parent surveys.
- c) Provide evidence that any partnerships with educational institutions or community organizations have supported the school's mission and program.

## **2. Demonstration of Academic Success**

#### **2.1 What levels of progress have the students made on required statewide assessments?**

- a) Present and discuss the results of all statewide assessments in which the school has participated. For each test, present at least the number of students tested, percent of eligible students who did not take the test, mean scaled score, and percents partially proficient, proficient, and advanced proficient. Be sure to list the assessments and which grade levels were tested using each assessment. Present results by year and test subject for at least the last four years. Include these statistics for alternative proficiency assessments to the extent applicable.
- b) Provide meaningful comparisons to district-of-residence student performance over time. Where possible, present multi-year data for baseline purposes and use cohort data if available.
- c) Describe and discuss the school's current Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status in the context of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standards established by the Department.
- d) Provide evidence of continuous student progress with regards to statewide assessments. Ideally, evidence should disaggregate individual student progress over time. If such data are not available or are inconsistent, evidence regarding annual performance should be provided by grade level.
- e) Discuss the school's achievement status, progress, and needs. Achievement data should be presented in clearly labeled tables and figures. Evidence of a school's capacity to analyze, present, and discuss achievement data is expected in this section of the report. Gains are also expected in the achievement of student

cohorts over time and evidence that a school is meeting AYP. In the absence of expected achievement, the DOE expects to see problem areas identified and proposed changes in curriculum and/or instruction in order to address the issues.

- e) If necessary, some evidence may be attached as clearly labeled documents in Appendix B.

**2.2 Has the school successfully met its broad academic goals and objectives? Provide detail as to the progress the school has made in meeting each of these goals and objectives. Do not repeat information provided in question 2.1.**

- a) List each academic goal and objective stated in the approved charter application.
- b) For each goal/objective, identify whether the school has met the standard, is approaching the standard, or has not met the standard.
- c) Describe the school's progress in achieving its academic goals and objectives by presenting detailed quantitative evidence showing the satisfactory progress in meeting the student academic performance objectives in its charter application.
- d) Provide clear and concise information on any additional internal or external assessments that demonstrate high levels or significant improvement in student learning and achievement. Examples may include graduation rates, college readiness statistics, and AP scores.
- e) Describe how data regarding the achievement of the school's academic goals are used, including how assessment data is used to drive professional development.
- f) If necessary, some evidence may be attached as clearly labeled documents in Appendix B.

*Note: The data presented should provide the reviewers with a comprehensive picture of how all of the school's students have performed relative to the school's specific academic performance objectives and should illustrate the range of performance and the variations in performance among those students.*

**2.3 Does the school's framework for teaching and learning foster a culture of high student achievement?**

- a) Describe the school's instructional practices and how they are aligned with the school's mission, educational program, and curriculum. Explain how high expectations are communicated to both students and teachers.
- b) Describe the effectiveness of teacher instruction and how teacher effectiveness is assessed.
- c) Describe the implementation of the school's policies to foster a positive school culture that allows for the fulfillment of educational goals and the school's mission.

### **3. Organizational Viability**

**3.1 Is the school in compliance with federal and state statutes and regulations?**

- a) Please provide a full disclosure of how the school has complied with each of the following areas of federal and state statutes and regulations and any required corrective action regarding its compliance:

- i. Relevant data enrollment and services provided to students with educational disabilities and students who are English Language Learners
- ii. Implementation of special education requirements
- iii. Dates of and participation in Statewide Assessment Program (NJASK/HSPA)
- iv. Internal policies and procedures for student discipline (If necessary, this may be attached as a clearly labeled document in Appendix C.)
- v. School suspension and expulsion numbers
- vi. Health and Safety
- vii. Fiscal accountability
- viii. Master schedule for all grade levels (If necessary, this may be attached as a clearly labeled document in Appendix C.)

**3.2 Is the school's governance and administration stable and effective?**

- a) Provide evidence that governance and management have been responsible and effective.
- b) Describe how the board and administration have competently addressed organizational challenges and have responded effectively to all stakeholders' complaints.
- c) Provide a summary of grievances/complaints and their resolution and examples of major governance issues, and how they were addressed. Additionally, provide survey results, Board minutes documenting any complaints and the board's action on such issues, and leadership turnover. (If necessary, these may be attached as clearly labeled documents in Appendix C.)

**3.3 Is enrollment stable and at maximum? Provide information on student attendance, mobility rates, and the school's demographic data.**

- a) Provide a description of enrollment trends in the charter school that comprehensively documents demand and mobility rates by grade. Sources of data should include Web-based enrollment data, waiting list data, and where available, exit interviews or surveys. Ideally, the student mobility data should include the reasons for the mobility. (If necessary, evidence may be attached as clearly labeled documents in Appendix C.)
- b) Provide information on student attendance by grade.
- c) Provide information on the student body's demographic data, including percentage of ELL and special education students.

**3.4 Is the school fiscally solvent?**

- a) Provide clear and concise evidence that the school has competently and effectively managed its finances throughout its history. Include evidence of adequate funding to maintain operations and the academic program, consistent operation of the school within budget, and evidence of net assets, if applicable.
- b) Provide a summary of findings from independent audits and, where applicable, how the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings. (If necessary, evidence may be attached as clearly labeled documents in Appendix C.)

- c) Describe how the board and administration have developed an effective system to enable responsible fiscal oversight.
- d) Provide evidence that the school is fiscally solvent and that all debts are repaid within the current fiscal year.
- e) Provide evidence that any long-term debt is backed by the value of an asset.
- f) Provide evidence that the school is increasing ownership of its assets.
- g) Provide evidence of a fully operational GAAP accounting system.
- h) Possible sources of evidence include annual board-adopted budgets, monthly financial statements, monthly board minutes and reviews of the Comparative Spending Guide and Charter School Enrollment System. (If necessary, evidence may be attached as clearly labeled documents in Appendix C.)
- i) Provide a narrative describing the school's fiscal plan for the next five years.
- j) Provide a budget summary, narrative, and cash flow for one operational year, fiscal year 2012- 2013, in the prescribed format found here: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/archive/chartsch/app/>. Do not include any reliance on outside fundraising unless the school can document that funding has been secured. (If necessary, budget summary may be attached as a clearly labeled document in Appendix C.)

### **3.5 Does the school have a viable facility plan?**

- a) Provide a clear and detailed plan for maintaining or, if indicated, acquiring an adequate educational facility. Provide evidence that the school's plan is reasonable and based on projected enrollment with respect to size and needs.
- b) Provide a clear, detailed, and feasible timeline for financing the facility, including acquiring and obtaining all necessary approvals.
- c) Provide evidence that the plan includes detailed provisions for undertaking and financing renovations.

## **4. Five-Year Planning**

### **4.1 Projected Enrollment**

- a) Provide a five-year enrollment chart by grade level, in the prescribed format below. Ensure that the chart allows for the natural progression of students from year-to-year.
- b) Provide a narrative explanation of the rationale for the grade distribution and the year-by-year progression.

***NOTE: If planning to expand enrollment, please provide two enrollment charts. One chart should indicate the enrollment expansion and another charter should not include an expansion. Please note, that any expansion of enrollment will have to be approved by the Commissioner in the renewal process.***

### **4.2 What are the school's plans for the five years of the next charter?**

- a) Describe what changes and improvements the school will undertake in the next five years. Address what changes in the charter are proposed based on the school's examination of results and student performance outcomes.

- b) Develop and attach a school accountability plan that defines, in specific and measurable terms, the performance standards for the renewed charter and include how student learning and achievement will be assessed. (If necessary, the accountability plan may be attached as a clearly labeled document in Appendix D.)
- c) Provide detailed information on the school's plan for a facility for the five years of the next charter. The plan should include an adequate and detailed financial arrangement and timeline for the facility and demonstrate the school's compliance with the Uniform Construction Code.
- d) Provide detailed information on how the charter school will try to maintain and continue to improve parental and community involvement at the school.

**Projected Enrollment Chart**

<b>GRADE LEVEL</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
<b>PreK</b>					
<b>K</b>					
<b>1</b>					
<b>2</b>					
<b>3</b>					
<b>4</b>					
<b>5</b>					
<b>6</b>					
<b>7</b>					
<b>8</b>					
<b>9</b>					
<b>10</b>					
<b>11</b>					
<b>12</b>					
<b>TOTAL</b>					

# New Jersey Department of Education Office of Charter Schools Guidelines and Criteria for the Renewal Application

## Purpose

The purpose of the Guidelines and Criteria for the Renewal Application is to provide clarity and direction for the Renewal Application. More specifically, this document is designed to:

- Offer guidance when answering the renewal application questions,
- Communicate the Office of Charter School's approach to evaluating the renewal application; and
- Emphasize the Office of Charter School's priorities regarding high quality charter schools.

## Background

The New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:11-2.3 outlines numerous factors that will be comprehensively evaluated in order to grant or deny the renewal of a school's charter. Criteria and documents reviewed during the renewal process include the renewal application, the annual reports, student performance on the Statewide Assessment Program, school monitoring results, site visit protocols, and a structured interview with key stakeholders. The Commissioner of Education will notify a charter school regarding the granting or denial of the renewal on or before February 28 of the last school year of the current charter. The notification to a charter school that is not granted a renewal shall include reasons for the denial.

Central to the charter school concept is the trade-off between greater autonomy and increased accountability. Charter schools operate under fewer regulations than traditional public schools and are consequently held to higher accountability standards. Charter school leaders understand the greater emphasis placed on results-based accountability and the importance of producing positive outcomes. If a school is not producing marked results, it runs the risk of its charter being revoked.

## Guidelines

The renewal application report is meant to be retrospective, i.e., a detailed description of the current state of the charter school and the progress the school has made towards achieving its goals. The Office of Charter Schools is looking for responses that demonstrate that the school has made marked progress towards:

- achieving its mission,
- successfully implementing its educational program,
- meeting its academic and non-academic goals,
- community engagement and increased student achievement,
- demonstrating fiscal and operational soundness; and
- planning for the next charter term.

A well executed renewal application should be clear, concise and judicious. Analyze your responses and data and be informative about the past, present and future state of your charter school.

The decision to renew a charter for each subsequent five-year period will be based on a comprehensive review guided by **four essential criteria:**

1. Fidelity to the school's charter,
2. Demonstration of academic success,
3. Organizational viability; and
4. Five-year planning.

The charter renewal process gives charter school operators an opportunity to present clear and compelling testimony regarding how well they have progressed towards achieving their goals over the course of their charter. This report allows each school the opportunity to provide evidence that the school is fiscally and organizationally solvent and its academic program is successful. It also gives a school the occasion to examine its progress towards meeting its mission, goals and objectives, assess its strengths and needs, and plan its course for the future. Charter schools should have a well-conceived plan for the next five years and a compelling rationale and clear evidence for renewing the school's charter. Renewal should be seen as an occasion to highlight successes and growth, build upon and correct mistakes and set the course for the next charter term.

The Commissioner's granting of a renewal of a charter will be contingent upon the applicant signing a charter agreement, which will set forth the terms and conditions of operating a charter school in New Jersey. The Charter Agreement will also contain accountability criteria by which the charter school will be evaluated. The Accountability Plan will define school specific student achievement goals and the measures that will be used to evaluate achievement of stated goals. In addition, the Accountability Plan will contain a common set of goals and outcome measures which represent our, the Office of Charter Schools, expectations for student learning and achievement as a high quality New Jersey charter school.

## **Evaluation**

There are numerous elements that will be evaluated before a renewal decision is rendered. The vast amount of evidence collected allows the Department to implement a rigorous framework in order to make sound renewal decisions. The information we will be reviewing includes:

### **Accountability Documents**

- Initial Charter School Application
- Charter Agreement /Accountability Plan (forthcoming)
- Annual Reports
- Charter Amendments
- Site Visit Documentation
- Renewal Application including Comments from County and District(s)
- School Monitoring Documentation

### **Student Performance Data**

- HSPA Scores
- NJASK Scores
- AYP Status
- Statistical Analysis on Statewide Assessments including Student Growth Scores and Proficiency Levels
- Comparisons to District-of-Residence Student Performance
- Student Attendance and Retention Rates
- Enrollment and Mobility Data
- SAT and College Readiness Data (if applicable)
- Review of Non-Mandated Internal and External Assessments

### **Governance and Compliance**

- Annual Financial Audits
- Evaluation of Effective Systems for Financial Oversight
- GAAP Accounting System Review
- Budget and Cash Flow Summaries
- Evaluation of Board of Trustees and School Administration
- Parent/Family Surveys
- Policies for Student Discipline
- Summary of Grievances/Complaints and Resolutions
- Implementation of ELL and Special Education Requirements and Programs
- Facility Plans / Projected Enrollment Data

In responding to the Renewal Application, please do not simply address the question; but rather, respond in a way that is thorough, thoughtful, evidence-based, analytic and descriptive. You should demonstrate not only goal attainment, but what specific measures have been taken to address lack of progress towards achieving the school's goals.

### **Responses and supporting evidence should be:**

- **Coherent:** responds to what you are trying to demonstrate
- **Comprehensive:** gives a thorough image of what you are trying to demonstrate. That doesn't mean extensive, it means that it doesn't offer a partial view
- **Accurate:** concise and appropriate as it relates to the question
- **Relevant:** it is pertinent to the response
- **Quantitative or measurable when possible:** use **indicators** that reflect the progress and effectiveness of what is being demonstrated

CATEGORY	QUESTION SPECIFICS	A QUALITY AND THOROUGH RESPONSE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WHEN ANSWERING EACH QUESTION:
<b>1. FIDELITY TO CHARTER</b>		
<p><b>1.1. Mission and Vision</b> <i>The school lives its mission and vision and addresses them with determination and clarity using specific strategies and programs.</i></p>	<p>Describe the charter school’s mission and vision. How is the charter school achieving its mission?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide a brief description of the school including the year it was granted its initial charter, the year the school opened, the current location of the school, district(s) served, grade levels served, maximum enrollment, current enrollment, and current waiting list.</li> <li>b) State the mission of the school as it appears in its charter application.</li> <li>c) Present a coherent explanation of how the school is achieving its mission.</li> <li>d) Present evidence that the school’s mission statement, vision, and theme have been consistently implemented throughout all aspects of the school.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The unique components of the school’s mission and how they are used to drive high-performance and a strong school culture</li> <li>✓ The key strategies that are used to achieve the mission, how they are implemented and how they will continue to ensure mission success</li> <li>✓ Evidence that the strategies being used are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Effective in achieving the mission</li> <li>○ Steadily progressing on the path towards mission accomplishment</li> <li>○ Responsive to the areas in need of improvement or change.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>1.2 Educational Program</b> <i>The school is implementing a structured and coherent educational program which is appropriate and fosters high student performance.</i></p>	<p>Is the school implementing its educational program as described in the original charter application? Describe the educational philosophy and provide detail on the unique and innovative features in the educational program?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Identify the school’s philosophical approach to educating students and how the school has focused on improving student learning and outcomes.</li> <li>b) Present a persuasive explanation of how the school design has improved educational outcomes for the student population.</li> <li>c) Provide evidence of a fully developed curriculum for all content areas. If necessary, the evidence may be attached as a clearly labelled document in Appendix A. (See Note in application instructions)</li> <li>d) Provide evidence of an approved professional development plan which provides detail of how the plan has been implemented. If necessary, the evidence may be attached as a clearly labelled document in Appendix A.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The unique and innovative components of the educational program and how these components are generating academic success</li> <li>✓ Evidence that the components being used are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Effective in improving educational outcomes for the student population</li> <li>○ Steadily progressing towards positive outcomes</li> <li>○ Responsive to the areas in need of improvement or change.</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Evidence that the curriculum and professional development plan are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fully implemented and effective</li> <li>○ Directly impacting student achievement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

CATEGORY	QUESTION SPECIFICS	A QUALITY AND THOROUGH RESPONSE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WHEN ANSWERING EACH QUESTION:
<p><b>1.3</b> <b>Non-Academic Goals</b> <i>The school is effectively pursuing its non-academic goals with specific actions, programs and tools that have a measurable impact.</i></p>	<p>Has the school made progress in meeting its established non-academic goals and objectives as identified in the charter application?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) List each non-academic goal and objective stated in the approved charter application.</li> <li>b) For each goal/objective, identify whether the school has met the standard, is approaching the standard, or has not met the standard.</li> <li>c) Provide information as to how the school has met the non-academic goals and objectives by presenting detailed quantitative evidence showing the satisfactory progress in meeting the non-academic performance objectives in its charter application.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A description of the specific actions, programs and tools being implemented to attain each of the non-academic goals</li> <li>✓ Evidence that the non-academic goals are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Being effectively addressed and implemented</li> <li>○ Steadily progressing towards goal attainment</li> <li>○ Understood by key stakeholders</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>1.4</b> <b>Community Engagement</b> <i>The school has an effective community engagement plan that helps further the mission.</i></p>	<p>How have the plans for parental and community involvement been realized? Address the plans for parental and community involvement stated in the charter application and how these have been fulfilled?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Describe the involvement of parents, families, educational institutions, and/or community partners in the school.</li> <li>b) Describe how family and community involvement in the school's operation relates to the fulfilment of the school's mission and program. If available, include data from parent surveys.</li> <li>c) Provide evidence that any partnerships with educational institutions or community organizations have supported the school's mission and program.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A detailed description of a community engagement plan that furthers the school's mission and program.</li> <li>✓ Evidence that the community engagement strategies are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Effectively improving school culture</li> <li>○ Relating positively to mission achievement</li> <li>○ Understood and utilized by all key stakeholders</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

CATEGORY	QUESTION SPECIFICS	A QUALITY AND THOROUGH RESPONSE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WHEN ANSWERING EACH QUESTION:
<b>2. DEMONSTRATION OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS</b>		
<p><b>2.1. Statewide Assessments</b>  <i>The school shows academic achievement and progress and is capable of presenting, analyzing, and evaluating the results.</i></p>	<p>What levels of progress have the students made on required state assessments?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Present and discuss the results of all statewide assessments in which the school has participated. For each test, present at least the number of students tested, percent of eligible students who did not take the test, mean scaled score, and percents partially proficient, proficient, and advanced proficient. Be sure to list the assessments and which grade levels were tested using each assessment. Present results by year and test subject for <u>at least</u> the last four years. Include these statistics for alternative proficiency assessments to the extent applicable.</li> <li>b) Provide meaningful comparisons to district-of-residence student performance over time. Where possible, present multi-year data for baseline purposes and use cohort data if available.</li> <li>c) Describe and discuss the school’s Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status in the context of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) standards established by the Department.</li> <li>d) Provide evidence of continuous student progress with regards to state-wide assessments. Ideally, evidence should disaggregate individual student progress over time. If such data are not available or are inconsistent, evidence regarding annual performance should be provided by grade level.</li> <li>e) Discuss the school achievement status, progress and needs. Achievement data should be presented in clearly labelled tables and figures. Evidence of a school’s capacity to analyse, present and discuss data is expected in this section of the report. Gains are also expected in the achievement of student cohorts over time and evidence that a school is meeting AYP. In the absence of expected achievement, the DOE expects to see problem areas identified and proposed changes in curriculum and/or instruction in order to address the issues.</li> <li>f) If necessary, some evidence may be attached as clearly labelled documents in Appendix B.</li> </ol>	<p><i>Note: You may utilize the data template provided by the DOE. Review the figures and complete if necessary, e.g. AYP status. Please alert us if there are data discrepancies.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A clear presentation, by grade-span and school-wide, of all the information requested regarding the statewide assessments and alternative proficiency assessments.</li> <li>✓ An analysis and explanation of student achievement and student progress data, using graphs, quantitative analyses, and tables as needed.</li> <li>✓ In the absence of expected achievement, the response identifies and explains the areas for improvement, presenting the proposed changes in curriculum, instruction or in any other key component of its educational program and mission in order to address these issues.</li> </ul>

CATEGORY	QUESTION SPECIFICS	A QUALITY AND THOROUGH RESPONSE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WHEN ANSWERING EACH QUESTION:
<p><b>2.2 Academic Goals</b>  <i>The school is effectively pursuing its academic goals, and student achievement data is being used to drive the educational program and foster a culture of high achievement.</i></p>	<p>Has the school successfully met its broad academic goals and objectives? Provide detail as to the progress the school has made in meeting each of these goals and objectives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List each academic goal and objective stated in the approved charter application.</li> <li>For each goal/objective, identify whether the school has met the standards, is approaching the standard, or has not met the standard.</li> <li>Describe the school’s progress in achieving its academic goals and objectives by presenting detailed quantitative evidence showing the satisfactory progress in meeting the student academic performance objectives in its charter application.</li> <li>Provide clear and concise information on any additional internal or external assessments that demonstrate high levels or significant improvement in student learning and achievement. Examples may include graduation rates, college readiness statistics, and AP scores.</li> <li>Describe how data regarding the achievement of the school’s academic goals are used, including how assessment data is used to drive professional development.</li> <li>If necessary, some evidence may be attached as clearly labelled documents in Appendix B.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A clear presentation of all the goals that discusses and evaluates the degree of progress and/or attainment.</li> <li>✓ A detailed description of additional assessments (i.e. AP scores) and additional performance indicators (i.e. graduation rates, college-readiness, etc) that demonstrate significant improvement both in student achievement and student progress during the four-year period.</li> <li>✓ Evidence that the student achievement data is being used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Drive the educational program</li> <li>○ Drive the professional development program</li> <li>○ Set and determine strategies for achieving academic goals, exceeding targets and foster a culture of high achievement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>2.3 Culture of High Student Achievement</b>  <i>The school’s teachers follow an effective (and measurable) instructional approach to foster a culture of high expectations amongst all stakeholders.</i></p>	<p>Does the school’s framework for teaching and learning foster a culture of high student achievement?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the school’s instructional practices and how they are aligned with the school’s mission, educational program, and curriculum. Explain how high expectations are communicated to both students and teachers.</li> <li>Describe the effectiveness of teacher instruction and how teacher effectiveness is assessed.</li> <li>Describe the implementation of the school’s policies to foster a positive school culture that allows for the fulfilment of educational goals and the school’s mission.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The key components of the school’s instructional practices and a discussion of how the components are all aligned.</li> <li>✓ The message and methods used to convey a culture of high expectations to all stakeholders, including students and teachers.</li> <li>✓ A description of teacher evaluation techniques and evidence of instructional improvement strategies.</li> <li>✓ The key policies and strategies designed to foster a positive school culture, the implementation tools and evidence of the effectiveness of said strategies.</li> </ul>

CATEGORY	QUESTION SPECIFICS	A QUALITY AND THOROUGH RESPONSE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WHEN ANSWERING EACH QUESTION:
<b>3. ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY</b>		
<p><b>3.1 Compliance</b>  <i>The school is in compliance with all federal and state statutes and regulations.</i></p>	<p>Is the school in compliance with federal and state statutes and regulations?</p> <p>a) Please provide a full disclosure of how the school has complied with each of the following areas of federal and state statutes and regulations and any required corrective action regarding its compliance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Relevant data enrollment and services provided to students with educational disabilities and students who are English Language Learners</li> <li>(ii) Implementation of special education requirements</li> <li>(iii) Dates of and participation in Statewide Assessment Program (NJASK/HSPAP)</li> <li>(iv) Internal policies and procedures for student discipline</li> <li>(v) School suspension and expulsion numbers</li> <li>(vi) Health and Safety</li> <li>(vii) Fiscal accountability</li> <li>(viii) Master schedule for all grades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Full disclosure regarding each area of compliance.</li> <li>✓ An explanation, if necessary, regarding any discrepancies or areas of concern.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.2 Governance and Administration</b>  <i>The school has sound governance and administrative structures in place ensuring responsible and effective practices.</i></p>	<p>Is the school's governance and administration stable and effective?</p> <p>a) Provide evidence that governance and management have been responsible and effective.</p> <p>b) Describe how the board and administration have completely addressed organizational challenges and have responded effectively to all stakeholders' complaints.</p> <p>c) Provide a summary of grievances/complaints and their resolution and examples of major governance issues, and how they were addressed. Additionally, provide survey results, Board minutes documenting any complaints and the board's action on such issues, and leadership turnover.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A description of the key organizational challenges and governance issues encountered, along with an explanation of how they were addressed and effectively resolved.</li> <li>✓ Evidence that school-wide accountability measures are taking place; including board oversight, administration and staff.</li> <li>✓ A frank assessment of board strengths and weaknesses and leadership challenges.</li> <li>✓ Evidence that grievances/complaints have been effectively resolved, by providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Survey results.</li> <li>○ Board minutes documenting the complaints and the Board's actions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

CATEGORY	QUESTION SPECIFICS	A QUALITY AND THOROUGH RESPONSE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WHEN ANSWERING EACH QUESTION:
<p><b>3.3</b> <b>Enrollment and Demographics</b> <i>The school has an effective enrollment plan and systems to monitor enrollment, mobility and demographical information.</i></p>	<p>Is enrollment stable and at maximum? Provide information on student attendance, mobility rates, and the school’s demographical data.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide a description of enrollment trends in the charter school that comprehensively documents demand and mobility rates by grade. Sources of data should include Web-based enrollment data, waiting list data, and where available, exit interviews or surveys. Ideally, the student mobility data should include reasons for the mobility.</li> <li>b) Provide information on student attendance by grade.</li> <li>c) Provide information on the student body’s demographical data, including percentage of ELL and special education students.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A comprehensive explanation and analysis of enrollment and mobility trends.</li> <li>✓ Multi-sourced evidence of enrollment and wait-list information.</li> <li>✓ A comprehensive compilation of demographical data, including key sub-groups.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.4</b> <b>Fiscal Solvency</b> <i>The school demonstrates sound and viable financial management practices.</i></p>	<p>Is the school fiscally solvent?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide clear and concise evidence that the school has competently and effectively managed its finances throughout its history. Include evidence of adequate funding to maintain operations and the academic program, consistent management of the school within budget, and evidence of net assets, if applicable.</li> <li>b) Provide a summary of findings from independent audits and, where applicable, how the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings.</li> <li>c) Describe how the board and administration have developed an effective system to enable responsible fiscal oversight.</li> <li>d) Provide evidence that the school is fiscally solvent and that all debts are repaid within the current fiscal year.</li> <li>e) Provide evidence that any long-term debt is backed by the value of an asset.</li> <li>f) Provide evidence that the school is increasing ownership of its assets.</li> <li>g) Provide evidence of a fully operational GAAP accounting system.</li> <li>h) Possible sources of evidence include annual board-adopted budgets, monthly financial statements, monthly board minutes and reviews of the Comparative Spending Guide and Charter School Enrollment System.</li> <li>i) Provide a narrative describing the school’s fiscal plan for the next five years.</li> <li>j) Provide a budget summary, narrative, and cash flow for one operational year, fiscal year 2012-2013, (<a href="http://www.state.nj.us/education/archive/chartsch/app/">http://www.state.nj.us/education/archive/chartsch/app/</a>). Do not include any reliance on outside fundraising unless the school can document that funding has been secured.</li> </ol>	<p><i>Note: If planning expansion, provide an <b>additional</b> budget summary, budget narrative and cash flow reflecting expansion.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A presentation of fiscal policies and procedures that is consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and major parts of school operation.</li> <li>✓ A demonstrated commitment to maintaining the financial viability of the school, as evidenced by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A balanced budget that reflects at least 60% instructional expenditures.</li> <li>○ Consistent unqualified independent audit opinion with no finding, or, successfully implemented corrective plans.</li> <li>○ If applicable, debt repayment plans and schedules.</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ Budget(s) that reflect current and/or expansion plans, if any.</li> </ul>

CATEGORY	QUESTION SPECIFICS	A QUALITY AND THOROUGH RESPONSE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WHEN ANSWERING EACH QUESTION:
<p><b>3.5 Facilities</b>  <i>The school has feasible facility plans, including knowledge of financing options, implementation strategies, applicable requirements and a practical timeline.</i></p>	<p>Does the school have a viable facility plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide a clear and detailed plan for maintaining or, if indicated, acquiring an adequate educational facility. Provide evidence that the school’s plan is reasonable and based on projected enrollment with respect to size and needs.</li> <li>b) Provide a clear, detailed, and feasible timeline for financing the facility, including acquiring and obtaining all necessary approvals.</li> <li>c) Provide evidence that the plan includes detailed provisions for undertaking and financing renovations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Demonstrated understanding of facility needs.</li> <li>✓ Demonstrated knowledge of facility costs including, as applicable, cost of purchasing, leasing, building, or renovating an educational facility that conforms to applicable requirements.</li> <li>✓ Evidence that supports facilities-related budget assumptions; including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Documentation that the proposed, or existing current, facility is adequate and appropriate for the educational program, anticipated growth, and targeted population</li> <li>○ Fiscal viability plans for either financing or renovating.</li> <li>○ An appropriate timeline.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

CATEGORY	QUESTION SPECIFICS	A QUALITY AND THOROUGH RESPONSE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WHEN ANSWERING EACH QUESTION:
<b>4. FIVE-YEAR PLANNING</b>		
<p><b>4.1 Projected Enrollment</b>  <i>The school has carefully structured their five-year enrollment targets.</i></p>	<p>a) Provide a five-year enrollment chart by grade level, in the prescribed format. Ensure that the chart allows for the natural progression of students from year-to-year.</p> <p>b) Provide a narrative explanation of the rationale for the grade distribution and the year-by-year progression.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A clear demonstration that the enrollment projections are clearly thought out, viable and progress naturally.</li> <li>✓ A well-explained rationale describing the enrollment plan.</li> <li>✓ A second enrollment chart showing the projected enrollment, if the school plans to expand.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.2 Projected Plans</b>  <i>The school has carefully constructed their plans for the next charter term, documented essential areas for improvement, and planned for needed changes.</i></p>	<p>What are the school’s plans for the five years of the next charter?</p> <p>a) Describe what changes and improvements the school will undertake in the next five years. Address what changes in the charter are proposed based on the school’s examination of results and student performance outcomes.</p> <p>b) Develop and attach a school accountability plan that defines, in specific and measurable terms, the performance standards for the renewed charter and include how student learning and achievement will be assessed.</p> <p>c) Provide detailed information on the school’s plan for a facility for the five years of the next charter. The plan should include an adequate and detailed financial arrangement and timeline for the facility and demonstrate the school’s compliance with the Uniform Construction Code.</p> <p>d) Provide detailed information on how the charter school will try to maintain and continue to improve parental and community involvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ An explanation of the key changes and improvements planned for the next charter term, as projected, and as related to an internal examination of school-wide data.</li> <li>✓ A thoughtful and attainable Accountability plan detailing goals and outcome measures.</li> <li>✓ Demonstrated understanding of facility needs and plans (see section 3.5)</li> <li>✓ A detailed description of a community engagement plan that continues to further the school’s mission and program.</li> </ul>