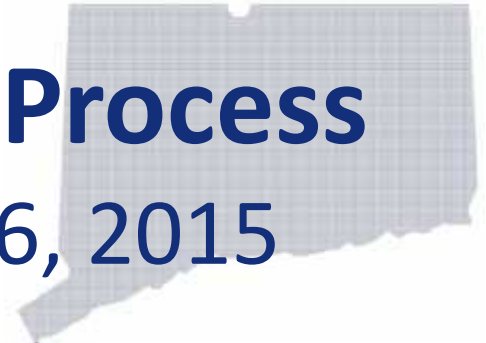




Charter Renewal Process

SBE Overview | April 6, 2015



Connecticut's Charter Schools




- **22 charter schools** in 12 host districts provide educational options for Connecticut's families.
- **8,000+ students** are enrolled in charter schools, accounting for 1.5% of Connecticut's school children; 3,000+ additional students sought enrollment and were waitlisted in 2014-15.
- Of the 14 charter schools that administered the spring 2013 Connecticut Mastery Test, 12 schools (or **86%**) outperformed their host district with their overall SPI.
- Of the 6 charter schools that administered the spring 2013 Connecticut Academic Performance Test, 5 schools (or **83%**) outperformed their host district with their overall SPI.



Student Population	Charter Schools	Alliance Districts	State
Total Enrollment:	8,036	213,407	542,236
% Minority:	90.8	70.4	42.7
% Free/Reduced Lunch	71.5	64.4	37.7
% with Disabilities	9.1	14.0	12.7
% English Learners	5.3	12.5	6.4

Charters Eligible for 2015 Renewal

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10-66bb(g), charters may be renewed for up to five years by the State Board of Education (SBE).

<p>Common Ground High School New Haven, CT Grades 9-12 Opening 1997</p>	
<p>Explorations Winsted, CT Grades 9-12 Opened 1997</p>	
<p>Integrated School for Arts and Communication New London, CT Grades 6-8 Opened 1997</p>	

<p>New Beginnings Family Academy Bridgeport, CT Grades PK-8 Opened 2002</p>	
<p>Odyssey Community School Manchester, CT Grades K-8 Opened 1997</p>	
<p>Stamford Academy Stamford, CT Grades 9-12 Opened 2007</p>	

Efforts to Strengthen the Charter Renewal Process

- **Performance Standards:** Establishing clear and objective performance standards for all charter schools, creating a foundation of strong accountability for the charter school application process, annual reporting process, and renewal decision-making.
- **Achievement:** Focusing on achievement and school performance over compliance, and providing feedback to schools through renewal reports to promote continuous improvement.
- **Transparency:** Balancing schools' operational autonomy with the need for public transparency and accountability.
- **Rubric:** Creating a rubric to assess charter school performance, management, and enrollment efforts using consistent and nationally vetted performance standards aligned to best practices.
- **Format/Data:** Using a variety of data - renewal applications and site visits, annual reports, documentation, and performance data - to inform renewal decisions. Providing a template for application responses, specifically identifying the types of and formats for required data.
- **Statement of Assurances:** Requiring charter schools to attest to legal compliance standards, including background checks, anti-nepotism and conflict of interest policies, and board training requirements.

New Charter Renewal Toolkit

- Charter Renewal Timeline
- Charter School Performance Standards
- Charter Performance Rubric
- Renewal Application
- Artifact and Document Checklist
- Site Visit Protocol
- Statement of Assurances
- CSDE Renewal Report Template

Please Reference the
Charter Renewal Toolkit



CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL TIMELINE

I. 2015 CHARTER RENEWAL PROCESS:

Step	Description
1. Issuance of Application October 10, 2014	The CSDE issues the charter renewal application for charter schools eligible to participate in the renewal process.
2. Renewal Application Deadline: November 21, 2014	By 4:00 p.m., the charter school submits an application to the CSDE for the renewal of its charter.
3. Application Review December 2014 – February 2015	A review team reviews the application and prepares a written summation of the merits of the application.
4. Invitation for written comment December 10, 2014	The CSDE sends letters to superintendents in school districts where a charter school is located and in contiguous districts asking for written comments on the renewal.
5. Charter School Site Visit December 2014 – February 2015	A site visit is conducted by a team of CSDE staff and/or impartial external reviewers. The team provides a written report to the Commissioner of Education, including the summation of the merits of the application.
6. Public Hearing January 2015 – March 2015	A public hearing on the renewal is held in the school district in which the school is located.
7. Commissioner's Recommendation and SDE Vote April 1, 2015	The commissioner of education makes a recommendation to the SDE regarding the renewal of the charter, and the SDE votes on the charter renewal.

II. CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK:

In accordance with C.S.S. § 10-261a(g), the CSDE and SDE evaluate charter school performance and operations relative to four core performance standards outlined in the chart below.

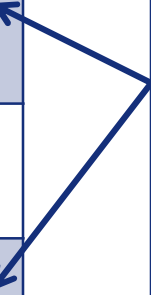
Charter Renewal Process Overview



Renewal Process	Timeframe
Issuance of Application	October 2014
Renewal Application Deadline	November 2014
Application Review	December 2014 - February 2015
Invitation for Superintendent Written Comment	Winter 2015
Charter School Site Visit	December 2014 - February 2015
Public Hearing	February 2015 - March 2015
Commissioner's Recommendation and SBE Vote	May 6, 2015

Renewal Review Team

- Charter School Office Representatives (2)
- Instructional Expert
- Finance and Operations Expert
- Special Education Expert



Performance Framework



School Performance: Is the school a successful model resulting in strong student outcomes and a positive school climate?



Stewardship, Governance, and Management: Is the school financially and organizationally healthy and viable?



Student Population: Is the school promoting equity by effectively attracting, enrolling, and retaining students, particularly among targeted populations?



Legal Compliance: Is the school acting in compliance with applicable laws and regulations?

Charter Approval

C.G.S. § 10-66bb(a)-(f)

Annual Reporting

C.G.S. § 10-66cc

Renewal

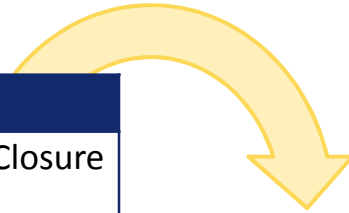
C.G.S. § 10-66bb(g)



Performance Standards and Indicators



Standards:	Indicators:
School Performance	1.1 Student Achievement, Growth, and Gap Closure 1.2. Mission-Specific Goals 1.3. School Culture and Climate 1.4. Instruction 1.5. Academic Program 1.6. Supports for Special Populations
Stewardship, Governance, and Management	2.1. Fiscal Viability 2.2. Financial Management 2.3. Governance and Management 2.4. Organizational Capacity 2.5. Accountability Measures 2.6. School Facility
Student Population	3.1. Recruitment and Enrollment Process 3.2. Waitlist and Enrollment Data 3.3. Demographic Representation 3.4. Transfer/Retention Rates 3.5. Parental and Community Support
Legal Compliance	4.1. Signed Statement of Assurances 4.2. Open Public Meetings



Rating:
<p>Meets/Exceeds: The school meets or exceeds performance expectations with minor, if any, concerns noted; the school can remedy any concerns.</p>
<p>Approaches: The school approaches performance expectations; the school review generates moderate concerns with actions required by the school.</p>
<p>Falls Below: The schools falls below performance expectations with significant concerns noted, which require immediate attention and intervention.</p>

Charter Performance Rubric



The rubric is heavily informed by standards and performance criteria established by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA).

APPENDIX A: PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK RUBRIC

Performance Indicator	Falls Below (0 Points)	Approaches (2 Point)	Meets/Exceeds (4 Points)	Possible Evidence/Sources of Data
PERFORMANCE STANDARD 1: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE				
1.1 Student Achievement, Growth, and Gap Closure	Classification as a Review, Turnaround, or Focus school, resulting from overall poor performance or achievement gaps for a specific subgroup(s). Weak and/or minimal evidence of student growth and/or gap closure.	Classification as a Transitioning school or school outperforms its host district (or majority sending district) by between 0 and 10 points. Moderate evidence of student growth and gap closure.	Classification as a Progressing or Excelling school, or School of Distinction, or school outperforms host district (or majority sending district) by > 10 points. Strong evidence of and multiple data points indicating student growth and gap closure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School classification and SPI Achievement data Renewal application questions #7, 8, and 9
1.2 Mission-Specific Goals	Absence of school-specific goals and/or weak evidence to validate progress toward and achievement of such goals.	Established school goals, some sense of stakeholder awareness of goals, and some evidence of progress toward and achievement of school goals.	Established and acknowledged school goals; compelling and quantitative data substantiating progress toward and achievement of all school goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual report and goals Interviews and focus groups Data (depending on goals) Renewal application questions #2 and 10
1.3 School Culture and Climate	Concerns about school climate and the learning environment. Low expectations for students and staff. Average daily attendance < 90% and chronic absenteeism > 30%. Weak	Somewhat welcoming learning environment. Moderate expectations for students and staff. Average daily attendance < 95% and ≥ 90, and chronic absenteeism > 15% and ≤ 30%	Positive and welcoming learning environment. Consistently high expectations for students and staff. Average daily attendance ≥ 95%, and chronic absenteeism rate ≤ 15%. Clear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews and focus groups School tour and classroom observations Attendance, chronic absenteeism, behavior data Climate survey data

Indicators and Reviewers

Rubric Definitions

Possible Evidence



Renewal Report



APPENDIX D: RENEWAL REPORT TEMPLATE

Charter School Information:

Charter School Name: _____
 School Director: _____
 School Board Chair Person: _____
 Location (City/Town): _____

Rating Key:
Meets/Exceeds (M/E): The school meets or exceeds performance expectations with minor, if any, concerns noted; the school can remedy any concerns.
Approaches (A): The school approaches performance expectations; the school review generates moderate concerns with actions required by the school.
Falls Below (F-B): The school falls below performance expectations with significant concerns noted, which require immediate attention and intervention.

1 School Performance Indicators	Rating	Points
1.1. Student Achievement, Growth, and Gap Closure	FB A M/E	___/4
1.2. Mission-Specific Goals	FB A M/E	___/4
1.3. School Culture and Climate	FB A M/E	___/4
1.4. Instruction	FB A M/E	___/4
1.5. Academic Program	FB A M/E	___/4
1.6. Support for Special Populations	FB A M/E	___/4

Notes and Evidence:

2 Management Indicators:

Management Indicators	Rating	Points
2.1. Governance and Management	FB A M/E	___/7
2.2. Financial Management	FB A M/E	___/7
2.3. Organizational Capacity	FB A M/E	___/4
2.5. Accountability Measures	FB A M/E	___/2
2.6. School Facility	FB A M/E	___/2

Notes and Evidence:

Ratings

Notes/
Evidence

3 Student Population Indicators	Rating	Points
3.1. Recruitment and Enrollment Process	FB A M/E	___/2
3.2. Waitlist and Enrollment Date	FB A M/E	___/2
3.3. Demographic Representation	FB A M/E	___/2
3.4. Transfer/Retention Rates	FB A M/E	___/2
3.5. Parental and Community Support	FB A M/E	___/2

Notes and Evidence:

4 Legal Compliance Indicators	Assurances
4.1. Signed Statement of Assurances	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4.2. Open Public Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

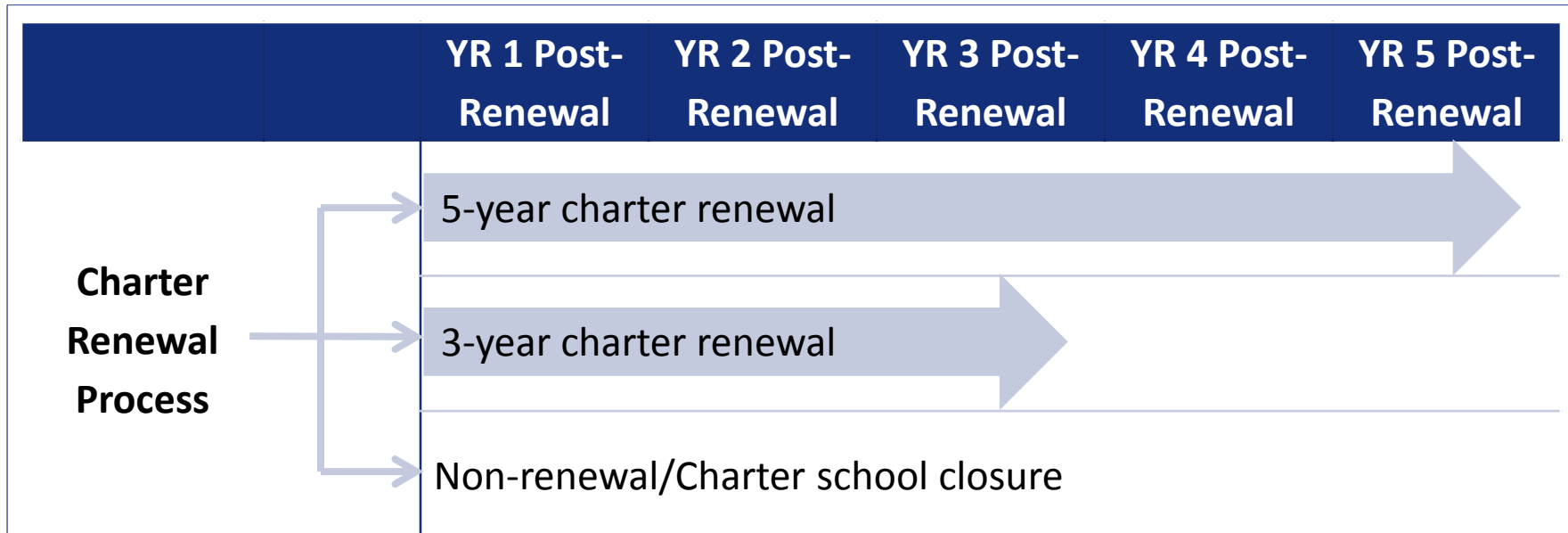
Recommendation:

Final Points: _____/46

Rationale:

Prepared by: _____ Approved by: _____

Renewal Recommendations



Key Factors:

- School data
- Renewal application
- Documentation/Artifacts
- Renewal site visit
- Significant citations (e.g., behavior)

Additional Accountability Measures:

- Charter/Renewal conditions and reporting requirements
- Probationary status with a corrective action plan

Renewal Application and Site Visit



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Application and Documentation

APPENDIX B: RENEWAL APPLICATION

PART 1: APPLICANT INFORMATION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Complete Table 1.1, providing the school's general information.

Name of Charter School:	Year school opened:
Street Address:	City/Zip Code:
Name of Board President:	Email/Phone for Board President:
Signature of Board President:	Date:
Name of Charter School Director:	Email/Phone for Charter School Director:
Signature of Charter School Director:	Date:

2. Provide a concise summary of the school's unique model, student population, performance, and future goals. Provide evidence to substantiate the school's impact and explain why the State Board of Education (SBE) should renew the school's charter.

3. Request any material revisions to the school's charter, if applicable. Material charter revisions are defined as those changes that fundamentally affect a school's mission, organizational structure, or educational program, including, but not limited to:

- Fundamental change affecting the school's mission (e.g., shifting the educational model to serve exclusively over-age, under-credited students);
- Relocation of the school to a different city;
- Contracting with or subcontracting a relationship with a related management organization (RMO).

Site Visit Components

- School tour
- Classroom observations
- Meeting with the Finance/Operations Manager
- Special education review
- Faculty focus groups
- Meeting with the Director
- Meeting with the Board of Directors
- Parent and community focus group
- Final debriefing

Planned Accountability System Improvements

- **Alternative Programs:** Differentiating accountability systems and tools to effectively evaluate alternative programs.
- **Remediation Plans:** Requiring remediation plans when prompted by data (e.g., behavior, chronic absenteeism).
- **Performance Standards/Rubric:** Updating the performance rubric relative to the Smarter Balanced Assessment, average state data, and new accountability measures outlined in the ESEA waiver.
- **Site Visit Protocol:** Creating a clear site visit protocol for all charter schools between approval and renewal, including a pre-renewal protocol during the year prior to renewal.
- **Annual Reporting:** Piloting the new and aligned annual reporting process in summer 2015.