



San Diego Unified School District

**Charter School Accountability System
for San Diego Charter Schools**

**Office of School Choice
February 13, 2008**

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System Overview

Mission Statement

San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) and the San Diego charter schools are mutually responsible to ensure that students achieve high standards in safe, well-run schools. The purpose of the Charter School Accountability System (CSAS) is to provide schools with a reflective process to drive improvement and to provide the San Diego Unified School District with useful information to meet its oversight responsibilities.

About this document

This document was developed by a collaborative design team. Team members came from the SDUSD and from the Principals Advisory Group for the San Diego charter schools. The design team met approximately monthly between November 2006 and December 2007. The work began with examining the practices of other charter accountability systems and then moved to developing a unique framework for measuring the success of San Diego charter schools. The details of the system were then determined by agreeing upon the methodologies for measuring success.

Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to make transparent all of the steps – from beginning to renewal – in the San Diego charter school accountability process. The document is a guide for those who are considering opening a charter school, existing charter school operators and the SDUSD. It contains both an explanation of each step in the accountability process and any necessary templates and tools to complete each step. The use of the document will foster a common, clear understanding of what is required in each year of the five-year charter to successfully renew the school for an additional charter term. Performance standards – for student achievement, charter-specific outcomes, financial reporting, financial stability, governance and operations – are clarified, as well as how these standards will be measured. The document also defines a system of site visits and annual reflective reporting practices for schools so that they have an opportunity to refine their practices over time and demonstrate continuous improvement.

Key characteristics of the system

San Diego's CSAS strives for clarity, efficiency, differentiation and continuous improvement:

Clarity: The CSAS clearly defines two key questions and eight subsidiary criteria that will be considered in making renewal recommendations to the SDUSD School Board, which ultimately votes on renewal. These key questions and criteria are addressed through the system from the original charter petition to the renewal of the charter.

Efficiency: All reporting in the system is subject to page limits and specific templates are provided for each report.

Differentiation: All San Diego charter schools will be thoroughly reviewed to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff. Not all schools, however, require the same level of review. While all annual reviews will address certain aspects of governance and operations, each review will be unique. The focus of each review will be driven by areas of need that are identified by the school in its annual report from the subsequent year.

Continuous Improvement: SDUSD Office of School Choice will provide formative feedback to schools. As part of each annual site visit, SDUSD and the school will determine a set of priorities for the school as the last step in the annual reporting process.

Renewal Criteria

What does it mean to be a successful San Diego charter school eligible for renewal?

Success for San Diego charter schools is defined by eight criteria, or areas of performance. Three of these criteria answer the question: Does the school demonstrate success? Five of the criteria answer the question: Does the school demonstrate operational viability?

In Table 1, the criteria are listed in the left column. In the right column, each criterion is explained, including how it will be measured and what effect it will have on renewal decisions.

Table 1: Defining Success for San Diego Charter Schools

Does the school demonstrate success?	
Criterion 1	Explanation
<p>Academic Performance Index (API) The school will attain at least one of the three following performance levels on the API.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attained its API growth target in the prior year, or in two of the last three years or in the aggregate for the prior three years • Ranked in deciles 4 to 10, inclusive, on the API in the prior year or in two of the last three years • Ranked in deciles 4 to 10, inclusive, on API for a demographically comparable school in the prior year or in two of the last three years 	<p>The California Department of Education website defines the API as follows: <i>“The Academic Performance Index (API) is the cornerstone of California's Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999 (PSAA). The purpose of the API is to measure the academic performance and growth of schools. It is a numeric index (or scale) that ranges from a low of 200 to a high of 1000. A school's score on the API is an indicator of a school's performance level. The statewide API performance target for all schools is 800. A school's growth is measured by how well it is moving toward or past that goal. A school's API Base is subtracted from its API Growth to determine how much the school improved in a year.”</i></p> <p>The three API performance measures for San Diego charter schools are exactly the same as those listed in the California charter school law.</p> <p>How does this criterion affect renewal? Criterion One interacts with Criteria Two to drive renewal recommendations. In two of the three years prior to renewal, the school must achieve these criteria to be eligible for renewal without conditions, pending review of the renewal charter document.</p>

Does the school demonstrate success?	
Criterion 2	Explanation
<p>Similar Schools</p> <p>The school will attain at least one of the following three similar schools' measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In mathematics and English language arts, the school will achieve an overall percentage of students at or above proficiency at least equal to that achieved in at least one SDUSD schools where students would have otherwise attended. • In mathematics and English language arts, the school will achieve an overall percentage of students at or above proficiency at least equal to that achieved in at least one SDUSD school that is on the California Department of Education's Similar School List for the charter in question. • In mathematics and English language arts, the school will achieve an overall percentage of students at or above proficiency at least equal to that achieved in at least one of the SDUSD schools that falls within a 10% band on at least five of six student population characteristics: % White, Latino, African-American, socio-economically disadvantaged, English language learners or students with disabilities. 	<p>The California charter school law states that a school might be eligible for renewal if the entity granting the charter determines that its performance is similar to that of district schools that students would have attended if not for the charter or to that of other district schools with similar student populations.</p> <p>How does this criterion affect renewal?</p> <p>Criterion Two interacts with Criteria One and Three to drive renewal recommendations. In two of the three years prior to renewal, the school must achieve all three of the criteria to be eligible for renewal without conditions, pending review of the renewal charter document.</p>

Does the school demonstrate success?	
Criterion 3	Explanation
<p>Charter-Specific Outcomes:</p> <p>California charter school law states that one required element of the charter is, <i>“The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. ‘Pupil outcomes,’ for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program.”</i> Within the San Diego Charter School Accountability System, these outcomes are called Charter-Specific Goals. These goals are unique to the school and are developed by the school in its application to become a charter. See Appendix A of this document for the template that future schools will use in order to develop charter-specific outcomes. This same template will be used by existing schools when they resubmit their revised charter document for renewal.</p>	<p>During the charter application process, schools will measure Charter-Specific Outcomes in one of two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDUSD provides a list of approved outcomes that may be used in measuring a Charter-Specific Goal. These include valid and reliable measures, such as norm-referenced tests and validated surveys. • Schools may propose a measure for review and approval by SDUSD. <p>How does this criterion affect renewal?</p> <p>Criterion Three drives renewal recommendations in two ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most concretely, during one of the two years before renewal, a school must accomplish its Charter-Specific Goals in order to be eligible for renewal without conditions. 2. For schools that achieve either Criterion 1 or 2 but not both, achieving Criterion 3 will be a considered a positive step toward renewal with conditions, pending review of the renewal charter document.

Does the school demonstrate operational viability?	
Criteria 4 and 5	Explanation
<p>4. Financial Reporting</p> <p>The school submits all financial reporting in a timely and accurate manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary annual budget, due on or before July 1 • First interim financial report for July through October, due December 15 • Second interim financial report for July through January 31, due March 15 • Unaudited actuals financial report for July through June 30, due September 15 • Audited report for prior fiscal year, due December 15 	<p>California charter school law calls for regular financial reporting by a school to its authorizer. The reports requested by SDUSD comply with the law and provide the basis for determining financial stability and sustainability. The standard for this criterion is simply to submit all reporting in an accurate and timely manner.</p> <p>How does this criterion affect renewal?</p> <p>For a school to be eligible for renewal without conditions, this criterion should be met in the year prior to renewal and during the renewal year through the Board vote on renewal.</p>
<p>5. Financial Stability</p> <p>The school demonstrates financial stability and sustainability:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive Cash Flow: Cash received exceeds cash expended. 2. Net Operating Surplus: Operating revenues are greater than operating expenses in the current fiscal year. 3. Positive Ending Fund Balance: Assets are greater than liabilities. 4. Adequate Reserve for Economic Uncertainty: Ending fund balance is at least 3% of the current year's expense budget or \$50,000, whichever is greater. 5. Audit Results: Any audit findings are appropriately addressed in a timely manner. 6. Solvency: Available cash is sufficient to satisfy current liabilities. 7. Enrollment and ADA: Student enrollment is stable and the Average Daily Attendance factor is maximized to increase apportionment funding. 	<p>The financial stability of the school is critical for its ongoing operations. Schools are expected to achieve 7 indicators of stability: positive cash flow, solvency, net operating surplus, positive ending fund balance, adequate reserve for economic uncertainty, stable enrollment and ADA, and audit results.</p> <p>Using information from the required financial reporting, financial stability will be assessed by SDUSD. Results of the analysis of each indicator will be reported on a three-point rubric:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meets Standard –School meets the standard. 2. Approaching Standard – School shows some progress toward standard and has a reasonable plan in place to meet the standard. Overall performance is not currently a threat to viability. 3. Not Meeting Standard – School is not meeting standard to such an extent that future viability is questionable. <p>The rubric score will accompany the school's annual report. (Note that annual audits must be performed to standards set by SDUSD.)</p> <p>How does this criterion affect renewal?</p> <p>In the year before renewal and through the Board vote on renewal, schools must Meet Standard on the first 5 indicators and be Approaching Standard in other areas to be eligible for renewal without conditions, pending review of renewal charter document.</p>

Does the school demonstrate operational viability?	
Criterion 6	Explanation
<p>6. Financial Management</p> <p>The school demonstrates effective financial management:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restricted Funding: Revenues from restricted resources are accounted for separately and appropriate expenses are being charged according to funding restrictions from the granting agency. 2. Accounting Software: Accounting system adequately reports financial information by function and source to charter school management, Board of Directors and reporting agencies in required formats. 3. Safeguarding of Assets: Internal control procedures are implemented to protect assets of the charter school and comply with accounting procedures adequate to prevent misuse of charter school funds. 4. Attendance Accounting: Student attendance is accurately tracked and reported in conformity with state laws and reporting requirements. 5. Required Funding Documentation: Supplemental funding applications, plans, claims and required documentation are filed with the appropriate funding agency by the specified deadline. 6. Liabilities: Loans, debts and outstanding obligations are properly accounted for and paid in a timely manner, as required by legal agreements. 7. Enrollment and ADA: Projections are based on the average or adjusted actual enrollment and ADA. Any growth projections are based on historical experience or planned operational changes. 	<p>Charter schools must have the capacity to function as an organization and to meet legal obligations. The management and operations standards will be measured through the annual site visit process. On site, the school will provide evidence that it is meeting the performance standards for management and operations. At the site visit, or shortly thereafter, SDUSD will provide the school with a rubric score for each of the indicators. Results of the analysis of each indicator will be reported on a three-point rubric:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meets Standard – School meets the standard. 2. Approaching Standard – School shows some progress toward standard and has a reasonable plan in place to meet the standard. Overall performance is not currently a threat to viability. 3. Not Meeting Standard – School is not meeting standard to such an extent that future viability is questionable. <p>The rubric score will accompany the school’s annual report.</p> <p>How does this criterion affect renewal?</p> <p>In the most recent year before renewal, schools must meet standard on the first six indicators and be Approaching Standard in other areas to be eligible for renewal without conditions, pending review of the renewal charter document.</p>

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">8. Budget Development: The staff, management and Board of Directors are involved in the budget development.9. Board Oversight: The management and Board of Directors regularly review the budget in comparison to actual revenue and expenditures and, as new information becomes available, make necessary adjustments to the budget.10. Adjusted Budgets: Current fiscal year's operating budget is updated for new revenue received and new expenses incurred. | |
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Does the school demonstrate operational viability?	
Criterion 7	Explanation
<p>Governance</p> <p>The school demonstrates effective governance and organizational leadership:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The governance board bylaws reflect governance processes described in the charter. They have reasonable terms regarding financial management, personnel decisions and oversight of educational program and school safety. 2. Board meetings occur on a regular basis, comply with all aspects of the Brown Act, provide an opportunity for public comment and are recorded in written minutes. 3. The Board adheres to reasonable written conflict of interest policies and makes decisions free from conflict of interest by disqualifying any Board member from voting on a particular matter that would materially affect him or her. 4. The Board adopts reasonable written policies to resolve internal and external conflicts and complaints. 5. The Board maintains clearly written minutes that indicate attendance and a general description of all matters proposed, discussed and/or decided. Minutes indicate that the Board regularly achieves a quorum and is able to progress through issues from one meeting to the next. 6. The Board implements an accountability process for the school leader. <p>OPTIONAL to meet CCSA Quality Review Statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. The Board establishes regular opportunities for stakeholders to address administration and board (measured by parent meetings, surveys, etc). 8. Board or school administration provides regular public reports on school's progress towards achieving its goals to school community and SDUSD. 9. Board and school administration foster a school culture conducive to student learning and staff professional growth (as measured by perception data). 	<p>The Governing Board is the body responsible for all aspects of the charter.</p> <p>The quality of school governance may have a critical effect on the education and safety of children served.</p> <p>The governance standards will be evaluated through the annual site visit process. In advance of the site visit, the school will send a copy or updated copy of bylaws, policies and minutes so that they may be reviewed off site by SDUSD. Based on the review, SDUSD may request an on-site interview with representatives of the school's Board. School administration will be interviewed on site during the site visit. At the site visit, or shortly thereafter, SDUSD will provide the school with a rubric score for each of the six indicators.</p> <p>Results of the analysis of each indicator will be reported on a three-point rubric:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meets Standard – School meets the standard. 2. Approaching Standard – School shows some progress toward the standard and has a reasonable plan in place to meet the standard. Overall performance is not currently a threat to viability. 3. Not Meeting Standard – School is not meeting standard to such an extent that future viability is questionable. <p>The rubric score will accompany the school's annual report.</p> <p>How does this criterion affect renewal?</p> <p>In the most recent year before renewal, schools must meet standard on 4 of the 6 indicators and be Approaching Standard in other areas to be eligible for renewal without conditions, pending review of the renewal charter document.</p>

Does the school demonstrate operational viability?	
Criterion 8	Explanation
<p>Operations</p> <p>The school demonstrates effective management of operations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Operational Management <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Employment Policies: Employee policies are written and consistent with the charter and applicable law. b. Employee Records: Employee records are complete and kept in a manner consistent with the law and employee policies. c. Risk Management: Adequate insurance is obtained to provide appropriate levels of risk management. 2. Health and Safety <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Safety Plan: The school has an up-to-date school safety plan. b. Certificate of Occupancy: The school has a current Certificate of Occupancy, if it is located on non-district facilities. 3. Admissions Policy and Practices <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Policy: The school has a written admissions policy consistent with the law and its charter. b. Practices: The admissions policy is implemented with fidelity to charter petition. 4. Student Discipline <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The school adheres to written discipline policy that is consistent with the law and the charter. b. Records: the school will maintain appropriate student discipline records. 5. Parent Access <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adopted policies that address parent access in a manner that is consistent with the law and the charter. 	<p>Charter schools must have the capacity to function as an organization and to meet legal obligations. The operations standards will be measured through the annual site visit process. On site, the school will provide evidence that it is meeting the performance standards for management and operations. At the site visit, or shortly thereafter, SDUSD will provide the school with a rubric score for each of the indicators. Results of the analysis of each indicator will be reported on a three-point rubric:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Meets Standard –School meets the standard. 5. Approaching Standard – School shows some progress toward standard and has a reasonable plan in place to meet the standard. Overall performance is not currently a threat to viability. 6. Not Meeting Standard – School is not meeting standard to such an extent that future viability is questionable. <p>The rubric score will accompany the school’s annual report.</p> <p>How does this criterion affect renewal?</p> <p>In the most recent year before renewal, schools must meet standard on the first four indicators and be Approaching Standard in other areas to be eligible for renewal without conditions, pending review of the renewal charter document.</p>

Guidelines for Renewal Recommendations

How will school performance against the renewal criteria affect the school's opportunity to renew its charter after five years?

The following tables describe scenarios in which a school would: (a) be eligible for renewal without conditions; (b) be eligible for renewal with condition; or, (c) be subject to non-renewal. Each scenario describes performance across all eight criteria. Different combinations of performance yield different renewal outcomes, pending review of renewal charter document. The purpose of the tables is to make it clear to schools and SDUSD how renewal recommendations to the SDUSD Board will be made. All of these scenarios assume that the school is in good legal standing. Any school found to be acting illegally may be subject to revocation or non-renewal, regardless of other performance indicators. Assuming that a school is in good legal standing, SDUSD would use these guidelines to make its recommendation to the Board.

It is important to understand the actual decision-making process for renewal. Ultimately, renewal decisions are made by the elected SDUSD Board. The district itself – and, specifically, the Office of School Choice – has the authority and responsibility to inform the Board through a renewal recommendation. Membership on the Board will change over time; it is not possible to predict future votes. The purpose of the following tables is to define how SDUSD will formulate its recommendations.

Eligible Without Conditions	
Criteria	Status
Does the school demonstrate success?	
1. API	School met all three criteria.
2. Similar Schools	
3. Charter-Specific Outcomes	
Does the school demonstrate operational viability?	
4. Financial Reports	School met all criteria.
5. Financial Stability	
6. Financial Management	
7. Governance	
8. Operations	

Since the school has satisfied all of the criteria, SDUSD would recommend to its Board that the school be renewed without conditions, pending review of the renewal charter document.

Eligible With Conditions	
Criteria	Status
Does the school demonstrate success?	
1. API	School met Criterion 1 or 2. If the school has also met Criterion 3, this will be considered as a positive sign of performance and at the discretion of the Office of School Choice may still lead to renewal without conditions, but not necessarily. If the school met Criterion 1 or 2 but not 3, it is still eligible for renewal with conditions
2. Similar Schools	
3. Charter-Specific Outcomes	
Does the school demonstrate operational viability?	
4. Financial Reports	School has met three of the four criteria, including Criterion 5.
5. Financial Stability	
6. Financial Management	
7. Governance	
8. Operations	

In the scenario above, the school will be recommended for renewal with conditions if, at a minimum, it achieves Criterion 1 or 2 and Criterion 5, plus two of the following criteria – Criterion 4, 6, 7, 8. Pending review of the renewal charter document.

“Conditions” means that the school is renewed with an improvement plan to address whatever criteria have not been met. The plan would be submitted to SDUSD before the renewal vote and would be part of the renewal report provided to the Board. Progress in implementing the plan would be addressed in an additional section of the annual report.

Non-renewal Possible	
Criteria	Status
Does the school demonstrate success?	
1. API	School did not meet Criterion 1 or Criterion 2.
2. Similar Schools	
3. Charter-Specific Outcomes	
Does the school demonstrate operational viability?	
4. Financial Reports	School met two or less criteria and did not meet Criterion 5
5. Financial Stability	
6. Financial Management	
7. Governance	
8. Operations	

If the school did not meet Criterion 1 or 2 and/or met two or less of Criteria 4-8, SDUSD may recommend non-renewal but is under no obligation to do so; also pending review of the renewal charter document.

Step-by-Step Guide to the Accountability System

Application through End of Year One

- 1. Petition:** Those wanting to form a charter school must submit a written petition. The written petition must contain an explanation of all the charter elements required by law. Appendix A of this document contains the checklist of elements. In terms of the accountability process, the most important aspect of the charter application is the statement of Charter-Specific Targets as called for under Element B of the California charter school law. Charter-Specific Targets must be stated according to the template provided under Appendix B of this document.
- 2. Pre-opening checklist:** Before a school opens in its first year, it must demonstrate that it has established the necessary systems and processes to operate within the law and the terms of its charter. A checklist of the requirements is provided in Appendix C of this document.
- 3. First year review:** In the winter of a school's first year of operation, SDUSD will conduct a one-day collaborative review. The purpose of the review is to assess start-up progress. The team will consist of volunteer representatives from another charter school and SDUSD staff. The team will use the charter petition as a guide for assessing progress. During the one-day visit, the school's representatives will present evidence of what has been accomplished to date and will identify key challenges or concerns. The team will make commendations and identify areas for improvement. These will be recorded in a brief bulleted report.

Years Two and Three of the Charter

- 4. Annual Charter Review:** By law, SDUSD is required to review each charter school, including an on-site visit to the school, on an annual basis. The Annual Charter Review Process has three steps:
 - a. Regulatory Update:** On July 31st, SDUSD will send a notice to all charters, alerting them of any changes in the charter law or other applicable laws that require a change to the charter document.
 - b. Charter Update:** By October 1st of each school year, each charter will submit a brief report on the status of the charter. The update will contain two sections: first, a brief self-study that focuses on the school's performance against the seven renewal criteria; and, second, any required changes to the charter document, based on the annual Regulatory Update described above. (If there are no required updates, this section is not required.) See Appendix D for a copy of the Charter Update form.
 - c. Annual Site Visit:** Each winter or spring, a team will visit the school for one day. The review process will focus on basic compliance checklists covering Governance and Operations renewal criteria and those areas for improvement noted in the schools' Charter Update document. In this way, the annual review will be individualized to meet the needs of each school. The last event in the annual site visits is a collaborative meeting between the school leadership and the site visit team. The purpose of the meeting is to identify a few priorities that should be addressed before the next Charter Update and Annual Site Visit. These priorities are noted in writing so that they may be revisited the following year (or sooner, if necessary).

Examples of how the Annual Charter Review would work may be helpful to demonstrate how the system will allow for individualized accountability and continuous improvement. Consider two schools.

School A is a high-performing organization that is meeting all of the charter renewal criteria. School B is struggling to meet several renewal criteria.

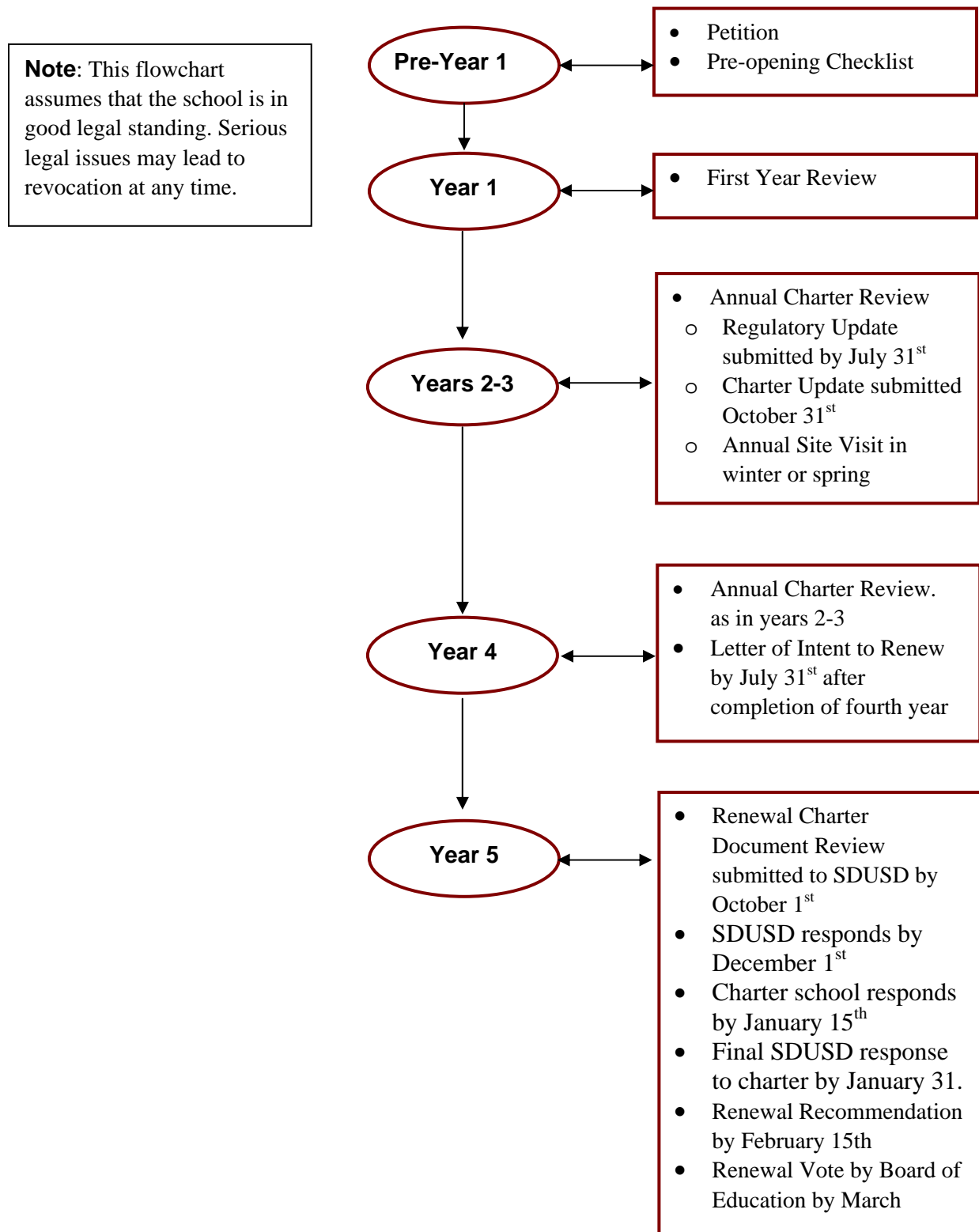
For School A, the Charter Update document would be very brief. (See Appendix D for the report template.) Since the school is meeting all the charter renewal criteria, their answers to the Self Study questions may be just a few sentences per question. At School A, the annual site visit would be limited to compliance checklists.

For School B, the process would be somewhat different. Let's assume that School B is not meeting the API or Similar Schools renewal criterion. Furthermore, the school has not completed its financial reporting and cannot show financial stability as described in renewal Criterion 4 and Criterion 5. Although not required to do so, the school should take time in its Charter Update document to explain why it is not meeting these criteria and what steps it is taking to address these areas for improvement. The annual site visit schedule would be crafted to address these specific areas for improvement – for example, given the school's low academic performance, classrooms might be visited and curriculum documents reviewed. In addition, sufficient time would be scheduled with the school's business office and board representatives in order to explore the school's financial issues.

Years Four and Five of the Charter: Renewal

- 5. Annual Charter Review:** The annual charter review in year four will be the same as the reviews in years two and three. The annual site visit will be schedule for late spring so that it falls as close to possible to the upcoming renewal decision.
- 6. Letter of Intent to Renew:** In the spring of its fourth year of operation, the school will send SDUSD a brief one-page letter stating its intent to seek renewal by July 31st after the completion of its fourth academic year. The purpose of the letter is to officially begin the renewal process.
- 7. Charter Document Review:** The charter school will submit its revised charter no sooner than on October 1st in year five of operation. The document will be reviewed by SDUSD. If updates have been made each year as part of the Annual Charter Review, this process should be simple. For schools that were chartered before 2008, there will be a one-time process to restate their Charter-Specific Goals in Element B of the charter. Goals must be stated in accordance with the form provided in Appendix D to ensure that they are measurable.
- 8. Renewal Recommendation:** Based on the Guidelines for Renewal Recommendations described above, the SDUSD Office of School Choice will make a recommendation to the SDUSD Board by February 15th.
- 9. Renewal Vote:** The SDUSD Board will be asked to vote on renewal by March in the spring of the charter's 5th year.

Figure 1. Time Line of the San Diego Charter Accountability System



Appendix A: Charter Petition Checklist

Element	Petition meets (or does not meet) requirements of comprehensive and complete description of elements
Element 1. Education and Philosophy of Program	
A description of the educational program of the school	
Identify who the school is attempting to educate	
Describe what it means to be an educated person in the 21 st century	
Identify how learning best occurs and identify how that program will enable pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and life-long learners	
A school serving high school students will inform parents on the transferability of courses to other high schools and the eligibility of courses to meet college entrance requirements (UC/CSU A-G requirements)	
A description of effective and appropriate instructional strategies for English language learners	
A description of effective and appropriate instructional strategies for special education students	
Identification of core courses in the education program	
Element 2. Measurable Student Outcomes	
Identified measurable Charter-Specific Outcomes to be used by the school (e.g., how the school will demonstrate that students have attained the skills, knowledge and attitudes specified in the educational program). Outcomes must be stated in the form described in Appendix B.	
Provides an example of student outcomes and ensures these are compatible with state content and performance standards in math, language arts, science and history/social science	
Element 3. Method Used to Measure Student Outcomes	
Describe the method used to measure student outcomes	

Element	Petition meets (or does not meet) requirements of comprehensive and complete description of elements
Explain the necessary participation in the state's mandated testing program	
Element 4. School Governance Structure	
Explain the structure of the school's governing board	
Explain how they will ensure parental involvement	
Identification as a nonprofit corporation	
Explanation of conflict of interest policy	
Element 5. Employee Qualifications	
Explain guidelines for ensuring that all teachers will meet state and federal requirements for teachers	
Explain the qualifications that the school director must meet	
Explain guidelines for ensuring that all on-site personnel will meet state and federal requirements to be employed in a school (e.g. background checks, and NCLB HQT)	
A plan to ensure all core teachers are NCLB highly qualified	
Element 6. Health and Safety	
The procedures used by the school to ensure the health and safety of the staff, including mandated child abuse reporting, school access rules, medication policy and California OSHA compliance	
Describe the procedure that requires each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary	
Evidence that all staff will be fingerprinted before beginning employment	
Evidence that all staff will be TB tested before beginning employment	
Element 7. School's Racial and Ethnic Policy	
Description of the school's policy to achieve racial/ethnic balance, similar to the student population in the school	

Element	Petition meets (or does not meet) requirements of comprehensive and complete description of elements
district	
Explain that the charter school will be open to all students and will reflect the diversity of the district	
Explain the outreach activities in which the school will engage to achieve diversity	
Element 8. Admissions Policy	
Explain the school's admission policy	
Explain the lottery process to be used if student demand exceeds student space	
Explain any preferences to be used in the lottery	
Element 9. Financial Audits	
Explain how the school will comply with yearly financial audits	
Describe when and how the school will provide financial information to oversight agency	
Element 10. Schools Expulsion/Suspension Policy	
Explain the school's suspension policy	
Explain the school's expulsion policy	
Ensure that the petition provides due process to families	
A description of discipline procedures for special education students	
Element 11. Staff Retirement and Benefits	
Describe the manner in which staff members will be covered in STRS, PERS or social security	
Element 12. Public School Attendance Alternatives	
Explanation that no student is obligated to attend a charter school and describe how they will notify parents of options	

Element	Petition meets (or does not meet) requirements of comprehensive and complete description of elements
Element 13. District Employee Rights	
A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in the charter school and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school (must be district-approved)	
Element 14. Dispute Resolution Policy	
Explain the policy and procedure to be used when the charter school and the authorizer have a dispute relating to provision of the charter	
Element 15. Collective Bargaining	
A declaration whether the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act	
Element 16. School Closure	
A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes (ensure a final audit, a plan for disposing assets, and for the maintenance and transfer of student records)	
Others	
A description of the facilities to be used by the charter school (shall specify where the school intends to locate and provides Financial statements, first-year operating budget, start up costs, and cash-flow and financial projections for three years [E.C. 47605(g)])	
Provide a working budget (in Excel) for the charter school finance unit review	
Does charter indicate how it will meet all statewide standards and conduct pupil assessments required under Ed. Code 60605 and 60851?	

Appendix B: How to Formulate Charter-Specific Outcomes

SDUSD charters are required to submit charter-specific outcomes, as part of Element B (2) of their charter. These may be submitted first with their charter petition. The goals should be targeted and carefully considered. They should address student achievement, student well-being, any basic measure of school quality or a unique aspect of the charter. They may be academic or non-academic. Finally, they must be measurable in a valid and reliable manner. The following lists provide some example acceptable measures.

1. Example student achievement measures that might be used in unique goals

- a. Progress on norm-referenced tests
- b. Achievement on Advanced Placement exams
- c. Achievement of International Baccalaureate exams
- d. Achievement of industry licensing, such as Novell certification for networking
- e. Graduation rates
- f. Completion of community service
- g. Completion of internships
- h. Learning to swim, as measured by an objective performance assessment
- i. Learning to play an instrument, as measured by an objective performance assessment
- j. Learning to speak another language, as measured by an objective performance assessment

2. Example school quality measures that might be used in unique goals

- a. Attainment of International Baccalaureate World School status
- b. Percentage of teaching staff with National Board Certified teachers
- c. Parent satisfaction, as measured by recognized surveys
- d. Accreditation by a school association or organizations, such as Baldrige National Quality Program
- e. Attendance rates
- f. Dropout rates

Measures that may be used for charter-specific outcomes will come from two sources: first, SDUSD will provide a list of pre-approved measures; and, second, schools may submit possible measures for approval. If approved, any school measure will be added to the pool of pre-approved measures.

Developing a Charter-Specific Outcome

Step one is to identify a limited number of measures that will complement the required renewal criteria and more fully assess the mission and vision of the school.

Once the goals are identified in a general way, they need to be stated under Element B of the charter petition. All goals need to be stated in the following way:

Structure of Charter-Specific Outcome (CSO)

1. **Vision:** The CSO vision should explain why the goal is important to the school's mission and state the school's long-term objectives beyond what will be accomplished in the five-year charter.
2. **CSO Long-Term Target:** This target identifies the long-term outcomes that the school intends to produce. These targets should have a lifespan of no less than two years and no greater than the five-year charter term.
3. **CSO Annual Benchmarks:** The annual benchmarks break down the multi-year target into increments so that, each year, the school can determine whether it is making sufficient progress.
4. **CSO Method and Reporting Plan:** The method and reporting plan explains how data will be collected and analyzed to provide valid evidence of progress toward annual benchmarks and multi-year targets.

What does a CSO look like? The following is an example CSO for a fictitious school:

Vision

The *Example Charter School's* mission is to have all of our students enter and succeed in competitive colleges. To reach this goal, one of several things that our students must do is demonstrate good reading skills. Our long-term goal is to have our average student reading scores in the top 20% of the national norm group on our selected standardized assessment – the TerraNova.

Multi-year Target

Over the five years in the charter, each grade level cohort of *Example Charter School* students will improve its reading skills by an average of 15 Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) points.

CSO Annual Benchmarks

- Year 1: Each grade level cohort will increase its average NCE score on the TerraNova reading battery by 2 points between a fall baseline and spring administration.
- Year 2: Each grade level cohort will increase its average NCE score on the TerraNova reading battery from the spring of year 1 by 2 points.
- Year 3: Each grade level cohort will increase its average NCE score on the TerraNova reading battery from the spring of year 2 by 3 points.
- Year 4: Each grade level cohort will increase its average NCE score on the TerraNova reading battery from the spring of year 3 by 4 points.
- Year 5: Each grade level cohort will increase its average NCE score on the TerraNova reading battery from the spring of year 4 by 4 points.

CSO Method

Describe the instrument to be used and why it is a valid and reliable measure.

This CSO will be measured by the TerraNova standardized test. TerraNova is a widely-recognized standardized test used to measure performance in all of its schools.

Describe the data source for this CSO and when the data will be collected.

The data source for this measure will be all students in grades 2 through 12 who have been enrolled during two or more consecutive administrations of the TerraNova. In the spring of each academic year, the TerraNova will be administered to all students in grades 2 through 12. (In order to establish a baseline for comparison, the TerraNova will also be administered in the fall of our first year to all students in grades 2 through 4. As our school grows by one grade level each year, we will add a grade level for testing.)

Explain why the data source, timing of data collection and analysis will provide a valid and reliable picture of school performance.

Our plan to test in grades 2 through 12 will include the majority of students in our school after our second year of operation. (We will be a K-4 school in year one.) This majority will increase as a percentage of the total student population as we add a grade level each year. Since we anticipate having approximately 50 students at each grade level, we believe this will also yield a reasonable sample size for each cohort. We have chosen to follow matched cohorts of students from one year to the next because it limits the study to those students who spend at least one year in the school. Since the goal is to measure school performance and not other factors influencing student performance, we believe this limitation is reasonable. We have also determined to use NCE scores, since they provide a simple way to measure growth from one year to the next. NCE scores may also be translated in the percentile rankings for comparison with the national norm-reference group.

Explain the steps of data collection and analysis

1. Administer the TerraNova reading battery to all enrolled students in grades 2 -12 in the fall and spring of the first year of operation and in each subsequent spring.
2. Determine each grade level cohort by identifying those students in each grade level who took the TerraNova in the last two administrations.
3. Average the individual student NCE scores from the previous year to determine an average cohort score for that year.
4. Average the individual student NCE scores from the most recent year to determine an average cohort score for that year.
5. Compare the average NCE score over the two years to determine whether the annual benchmark has been met.

Explain where and how the data for this measure will be secured. How will this data be accessible to the SDUSD?

All of the TerraNova data will be stored in the school office. The data will be available in paper reports and on CD. All analyses performed on the data will also be stored in the same filing system. All data will be available to the District for on-site review during the annual site visit.

Show how results from this measure will be reported annually.

We plan to report in a table like the following example:

Grade Level in 2003	N	Average NCE Score from 2007	Average NCE Score from 2008	Was the 2-point increase reached?
4	43	60	58	No
5	38	60	64	Yes
6	35	54	57	Yes
7	45	55	55	No

The table will be followed by a discussion of our performance.

End example CSO

Appendix C: Pre-opening Checklist

All documentation and notification described below should be delivered to:

San Diego Unified School District
Office of School Choice, Annex 15
4100 Normal Street
San Diego, CA 92103

Additional documentation may be required prior to the opening of the school year. The District will provide written notice and a reasonable time for response to any additional requirements and/or changes to the following list:

CATEGORY	TASK	DUE DATE	STATUS/NOTES
ENROLLMENT / ADMISSIONS / ATTENDANCE	Family Volunteer Requirements (if applicable).	90 days after school opens	
	Enrollment: Majority of students must be enrolled in Zangle.	10 days prior to opening	
	Information regarding attendance record-keeping software (if using something other than Zangle).	10 days prior to opening	
GOVERNANCE	Roster of Board of Director officer appointments (Chair/President, Treasurer, etc).	60 days after school opens.	
	Schedule of Board Meetings (including date, time, and location) for the 20__-20__ school year.	60 days after school opens.	
	Proof of Non-Profit Status and Federal Tax-Exemption Status.	10 days prior to opening	
	Plan for Board Training(s) (including background and expertise of organization providing training, scheduled dates, and topics).	60 days after school opening	

CATEGORY	TASK	DUE DATE	STATUS/NOTES
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	Submit Board-approved Code of Conduct for approval.	90 days after school opening	The Code of Conduct shall include, but not be limited to, student discipline policies, suspension and expulsion policies and dress code.
	Submit school calendar.	60 days prior to opening	
	Submit résumé, emergency contact information for the Charter School Principal.	No later than 5 days after hire date	
ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF	Submit staff roster that details teaching qualifications, including certification and federal NCLB “highly qualified teacher” status for teachers of core academic subject.	10 days prior to school opening.	
ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF (cont.)	Submit written documentation that the Charter School has completed criminal background checks on all school staff and volunteers that come into direct contact with the school’s students (This may be met through a certification from the principal).	10 days prior to school opening.	
	Submit written documentation that the Charter School has completed Tuberculosis (TB) checks on all school staff and volunteers that come into direct contact with the school’s students (This may be met through a certification from the principal).	10 days prior to school opening.	

CATEGORY	TASK	DUE DATE	STATUS/NOTES
	<p>Submit a copy of the Employee Handbook, including at a minimum, expectations for employee performance and behavior, due process rights of employees related to disciplinary actions (including termination), compensation and benefit information, emergency response information, pay rates and/or salary scale(s), annual calendar, hours and length of employment, supervisory obligations, and a description of both informal and formal complaint procedures that employees may pursue in the event of disagreements.</p> <p>Submission should include an assurance that the School will make the handbook readily available to prospective employees and will provide a copy to each employee at the time of hiring.</p>	90 days prior after school opening	
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	Submit a copy of internal control policies and procedures with evidence of approval by the Charter School's governing board. This should include information regarding the individual authorized to expend Charter School funds and issue checks; and individual responsible for review and monitoring of monthly budget reports.	90 days after school opens	
SCHOOL FACILITY AND BUILDING SAFETY	<p>Submit the following Facility, building safety, and zoning documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Location address ○ Signed lease agreement ○ Zoning, land and building use permits. This may include a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and Certificate of Occupancy, Applicable health and fire inspections. 	15 days prior to school opening	

CATEGORY	TASK	DUE DATE	STATUS/NOTES
SCHOOL FACILITY AND BUILDING SAFETY (cont.)	Submit Safety and Emergency Plan	15 days prior to school opening	
NUTRITION/FOOD SERVICES	Submit documentation of Food Service and Nutrition Program.	10 days prior to school opening	
INSURANCE	Submit evidence of insurance coverage.	10 days prior to school opening	
DISTRICT SERVICES	Submit request for District-provided services for services such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SARC PREP - Testing Services - GATE Testing - Nursing - Police Services - Assessment Materials - BTSA - Plant Operations - Mail Delivery 	20 days prior to school opening	

Appendix D Charter Update Report

Each charter school submits a brief Charter Update Report by October 1st of each year, with the exception of charters in their first year of operation. The Charter Update Report accomplishes several goals. First, it creates a longitudinal record of school performance against the seven required charter renewal criteria. By answering a set of reflective questions each year, the school records its progress toward renewal and reflects on its practices.

Second, in its Charter Update Report, the school may submit any necessary changes to its charter document, based on changes in the law or changes the school wishes to make, based on its continuous review of performance against the seven renewal criteria.

The following page provides a template for the Charter Update Report. The report should be as comprehensive as the charter school deems appropriate. This report presents the school with an opportunity to update the charter and submit material and non-material amendments for consideration to the District. Rubric scores for Financial Stability, Governance and Operations will be attached to report.

Charter Update Report Template

Name of the School _____

Contact person for this report _____

Section I: Does the school demonstrate success?

Criterion 1: The school will attain at least one of the three following performance levels on the API.

- **Attained its API growth target in the prior year, or in two of the last three years or in the aggregate for the prior three years**
- **Ranked in deciles 4 to 10, inclusive, on the API in the prior year or in two of the last three years**
- **Ranked in deciles 4 to 10, inclusive, on API for a demographically comparable school in the prior year or in two of the last three years**

Question 1: Did the school achieve one or more of the three API performance targets?

Response: “Yes” or “No”

Question 2: If the API performance was not reached, what progress did the school make toward it?

Response: The school should state actual progress toward the performance standard.

Question 3: What is the school’s analysis of root causes leading to its performance on this goal?

Response: The school should present a concise explanation of what it believes to be the main causal factors contributing to the results.

Question 4: Based on its analysis of root causes, what changes, if any, will the school make to its practices?

Response: The school should present a concise rationale for any actions to be taken. These changes should be supported by the school’s data analysis.

Criterion 2: Similar Schools: The school will attain at least one of the following three similar schools' measures:

- **In mathematics and English language arts, the school will achieve an overall percentage of students at or above proficiency at least equal to that achieved in at least one SDUSD schools where students would have otherwise attended.**
- **In mathematics and English language arts, the school will achieve an overall percentage of students at or above proficiency at least equal to that achieved in at least one SDUSD school that is on the California Department of Education's Similar School List for the charter in question.**
- **In mathematics and English language arts, the school will achieve an overall percentage of students at or above proficiency at least equal to that achieved in at least one of the SDUSD schools that fall within a 10% band on at least five of six student population characteristics: % White, Latino, African-American, socio-economically disadvantaged, English language learners or students with disabilities.**

Question 1: Did the school achieve one or more of the three similar performance targets?

Response: "Yes" or "No"

Question 2: If the Similar Schools performance was not reached, what progress did the school make toward it?

Response: The school should state actual progress toward the performance standard.

Question 3: What is the school's analysis of root causes leading to its performance on this goal?

Response: The school should present a concise explanation of what it believes to be the main causal factors contributing to the results.

Question 4: Based on its analysis of root causes, what changes, if any, will the school make to its practices?

Response: The school should present a concise rationale for any actions to be taken. These changes should be supported by the school's data analysis.

Criterion 3: Charter-Specific Outcome: For each Charter-Specific Outcome in the school's charter document, please answer the following set of questions:

Question 1: Did the school achieve the long-term outcome?

Response: "Yes" or "No"

Question 2: Did the school achieve the outcome's annual benchmark?

Response: "Yes" or "No"

Question 3: If neither the annual benchmark nor the long term outcome were reached, what progress did the school make toward it?

Response: The school should state actual progress toward the performance standard.

Question 4: What is the school's analysis of root causes leading to its performance on this goal?

Response: The school should present a concise explanation of what it believes to be the main causal factors contributing to the results.

Question 5: Based on its analysis of root causes, what changes, if any, will the school make to its practices?

Response: The school should present a concise rationale for any actions to be taken. These changes should be supported by the school's data analysis.

Section II: Does the school demonstrate operational viability?

The following checklists will be used by the annual site visit team to assess the school strengths and areas for improvement in the areas of financial reporting, financial stability, governance and operations. Please provide your own assessment of the school’s performance by completing the checklists below:

Renewal Criterion 4: Financial Reporting: The school submits all financial reporting in a timely and accurate manner.

Please check “yes” or “no,” based on your reporting practices.

Criteria 4: Financial Reporting	Yes	No
Our preliminary annual budget, was submitted on or before July1		
Our first interim financial report for July through October was submitted by December 15		
Audited report for prior fiscal year was submitted on December 15		
Our second interim financial report for July through January 31 was submitted by March 15		
Our unaudited actuals financial report for July through June 30 was submitted by September 15		

Renewal Criterion 5: Financial Stability: The school demonstrates financial stability and sustainability.

Please check “yes” or “no,” based on your analysis of the last complete fiscal year and current financial status

Criteria 5: Financial Stability	Yes	No
<u>Positive Cash Flow</u> : Cash received exceeded cash expended in the last fiscal year.		
<u>Net Operating surplus</u> : Operating revenues were greater than operating expenses in the last fiscal year.		
<u>Positive Ending Fund Balance</u> : Assets were greater than liabilities at the end of the last fiscal year.		
<u>Adequate Reserve for Economic Uncertainty</u> : Ending fund balance for last fiscal year was at least 3% of current year’s expense budget or \$50,000, whichever is greater.		
<u>Audit Results</u> : Any audit findings have been appropriately addressed in a timely manner.		
<u>Solvency</u> : Available cash is sufficient to satisfy current liabilities.		
<u>Enrollment and ADA</u> : Student enrollment is stable and the Average Daily Attendance factor is maximized to increase apportionment funding.		

Renewal Criterion 6: Financial Management

Key	
Meets Standard	School meets standard
Approaching Standard	School shows some progress towards meeting the standard and has a reasonable plan in place to meet the standard. Overall performance is not a threat to viability
Not Meeting Standard	School is not meeting the standard to such an extent that future viability of the school is in question

Criteria 6	Rating		
Financial Management			
Restricted Funding: Revenues from restricted resources are accounted for separately and appropriate expenses are being charged according to funding restrictions from the granting agency.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Accounting Software: Accounting system adequately reports financial information by function and source to charter school management, Board of Directors and reporting agencies in required formats.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Safeguarding of Assets: Internal control procedures are implemented to protect assets of the charter school and comply with accounting procedures adequate to prevent misuse of charter school funds.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Attendance Accounting: Student attendance is accurately tracked and reported in conformity with state laws and reporting requirements.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Required Funding Documentation: Supplemental funding applications, plans, claims and required documentation are filed with the appropriate funding agency by the specified deadline.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Liabilities: Loans, debts and outstanding obligations are properly accounted for and paid in a timely manner, as required by legal agreements	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Enrollment and ADA: Projections are based on the average or adjusted actual enrollment and ADA. Any growth projections are based on historical experience or planned operational changes.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Budget Development: The staff, management and Board of Directors are involved in the budget development.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Board Oversight: The management and Board of Directors regularly review the budget in comparison to actual revenue and expenditures and make necessary adjustments to the budget as new information is available.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard

Criteria 6	Rating		
Adjusted Budgets: Current fiscal year's operating budget is updated for new revenue received and new expenses incurred.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard

Renewal Criterion 7: Governance: The school demonstrates Effective governance and organizational leadership.

Key	
Meets Standard	School meets standard
Approaching Standard	School shows some progress towards meeting the standard and has a reasonable plan in place to meet the standard. Overall performance is not a threat to viability
Not Meeting Standard	School is not meeting the standard to such an extent that future viability of the school is in question

Criteria 7 Governance	Rating		
The bylaws reflect governance processes described in the charter. They have reasonable terms regarding financial management, personnel decisions and oversight of educational program and school safety.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Board meetings occur on a regular basis, comply with all aspects of the Brown Act, provide an opportunity for public comment and are recorded in written minutes. Minutes indicate that the Board regularly achieves a quorum and is able to progress through issues from one meeting to the next.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
The Board adheres to reasonable written conflict of interest policies and makes decisions free from conflict of interest by disqualifying any Board member from voting on a particular matter that would materially affect him or her.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
The Board adheres to reasonable written policies to resolve internal and external conflicts and complaints.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
The Board maintains clearly-written minutes that indicate attendance and a general description of all matters proposed, discussed and/or decided.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
The Board implements an accountability process for the school leader and academic program.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard

Renewal Criterion 8: The School demonstrates effective management of operations.

Key	
Meets Standard	School meets standard
Approaching Standard	School shows some progress towards meeting the standard and has a reasonable plan in place to meet the standard. Overall performance is not a threat to viability
Not Meeting Standard	School is not meeting the standard to such an extent that future viability of the school is in question

Criterion 8: Management of Operations			
Employment Policies: Employee polices are written and consistent with the charter and applicable law.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Employee Records: Employee records are complete and kept in a manner consistent with the law and employee policies.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Risk Management: Adequate insurance is obtained to provide appropriate levels of risk management.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Admissions Policy: The school has a written admissions policy consistent with the law and its charter.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Admissions Practices: The admissions policy is implemented with fidelity.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Discipline: The school adheres to a written discipline policy that is consistent with the law and charter.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Safety Plan: The school has an up-to-date school safety plan.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard

Criterion 8: Management of Operations			
Certificate of Occupancy: The school has a current certificate of occupancy.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
Reporting: The school completes all mandatory reporting for local and state agencies in a timely manner.	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard

Parent Access: The school has adopted policies that address parent access in a manner consistent with law and its charter	Meets Standard	Approaching Standard	Not Meeting Standard
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Section III: Necessary and Requested Updates to the Charter

Please submit any requested changes to your charter document. Provide a rationale for these requested changes, based on how such changes will better prepare the school to meet all eight renewal criteria. Please submit any changes to the charter required by law. Any such changes are listed in the July Regulatory Update provided by SDUSD.

Appendix E Annual Site Visit

Year One Review

In the winter of a school’s first year of operation, SDUSD will conduct a one-day collaborative review. The purpose of the review is to assess start-up progress. The team will consist of volunteer representatives from another charter school, one or two school leaders and Board members from the school being visited and SDUSD staff (optional for schools: school may select the volunteer representative from another charter school from a pre-identified list compiled by SDUSD). The team will use the charter application as a guide for assessing progress. During the one-day visit, the school’s representatives on the team will present evidence of what has been accomplished to date and will identify key challenges or concerns. The team will make commendations and identify areas for improvement. These will be recorded in a brief bulleted report.

Annual Site Visit

Starting in year two of the charter, each school receives an annual one-day site visit, as required by California charter school law. In addition to basic compliance review, the site visit will be driven by the school’s October Charter Update Report. The team will ask questions regarding the school’s self-assessment of performance in the Charter Update. The review will consist of interviews and document review. The review ends with a De-brief Session between the school and team to prioritize next steps for the school.

Annual Site Visit Activities

Activity	Preparation
<p>School Leadership Interview: This interview (approximately one hour in the morning and one hour in the afternoon) will touch upon both governance and operations. Questions would be asked about each of the numbered indicators listed in the tables above for Governance and Operations.</p>	<p>Documents that should be accessible to the team:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copy of last audit 2. Any written policies regarding financial controls, such as check-signing procedures 3. Certificates of Insurance 4. Employee handbook/policy 5. Access to employee files 6. Copy of admissions policy and example recruitment documents 7. School safety plan 8. Student discipline policy 9. If the school is not meeting one or more of the renewal criteria at the time of the visit, additional documentation may be requested on a case-by-case basis.
<p>School Board Interview with Board President and at least one other member (because board members are volunteers/could be either by phone or in person): This interview of approximately one hour will focus on the seven indicators listed in the table above for Governance.</p>	<p>Schedule interview with Board members.</p>

Activity	Preparation
<p>Business Manager Interview: This interview of approximately 2 hours will focus on the indicators for Financial Management under the Operations Criteria. See the Operations table above. Ensure that person conducting interview is expert in charter finance/charter finance office</p>	<p>The business manager should be prepared to answer questions about the indicators for Financial Management. Copies of all financial reports submitted that year should be accessible. The business manager should be prepared to show the interviewer the actual accounting system and files.</p>
<p>Teacher Focus Groups: These focus groups (2 to 5 teachers), special time adjustments as needed. of approximately 40 minutes will focus on the Governance and Operations indicators that directly impact teachers; namely, employee policy, attendance, admissions and health and safety.</p>	<p>Schedule teacher focus groups. Before or after school, to minimize interruption to instruction</p>
<p>Interviews with other administrative staff: Based on how the school administration is structured, the school leader may request that other individuals be interviewed to discuss one or more of the indicators for Governance and Operations.</p>	<p>Schedule additional interviews.</p>
<p>De-brief Session: The team and school leadership meet to discuss key priorities for the coming school year</p>	

Annual Site Visit Report: The report produced by the annual site visit will be a duplicate of the school’s Charter Update Report, with the addition of a rating by the site visit team based upon its day in the school.