



Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School

School Evaluation Report 2011-2012

Visit Date: October 13, 2011

Report Issued: January 19, 2012

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INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report includes three components. The first section, titled School Overview, provides descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. The second section provides background information on the conduct of the evaluation visit, including the date of the visit and information about the evaluation team, and puts the visit in the context of the school's current charter cycle. Finally, in a third section entitled School Evaluation Visit, the report presents overall benchmark conclusions (in italics) and an analysis of evidence collected for each of the respective benchmarks.

The Qualitative Educational Benchmarks (a component of the Renewal Benchmarks) address the academic success of the school, focusing on teaching and learning (i.e., curriculum, instruction, and assessment), and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization, including board oversight and organizational capacity. The Institute uses the established criteria on a regular and ongoing basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

The report below provides more detailed conclusions, and evidence to support these conclusions, for some benchmarks than others to highlight areas of concern and provide additional feedback. In contrast to the format of reports issued in previous years and in an effort to issue reports in a timelier manner, the Institute now approaches the presentation as an exception report and deliberately emphasizes areas of concern. As such, limited detail and evidence about positive aspects of the program are not an indication that the Institute does not fully recognize evidence of program effectiveness.

Because of the inherent complexity of an organization such as a school, this School Evaluation Report does not contain a single rating or comprehensive indicator that would specify at a glance the school's prospects for renewal. It does, however, summarize the various strengths of the school and note areas in need of improvement in terms of the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks. To the extent appropriate and useful, we encourage school boards to use this evaluation report for ongoing planning and school improvement efforts.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Opening Information

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees | January 25, 2000 |
| Date Initial Charter Approved by Operation of Law | April 4, 2000 |
| School Opening Date | September, 2000 |

Location

| School Year(s) | Location(s) | Grades | District |
|--------------------|---|------------|--------------------------------|
| 2000-02 to 2007-08 | 938 Clifford Avenue, Rochester, NY | All | Rochester City School District |
| 2008-09 to Present | 938 Clifford Avenue, Rochester, NY 1069 Joseph Avenue, Rochester, NY | 4-6 K-3 | Rochester City School District |

Renewal

| Type of Renewal | Date |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Full-Term Renewal | March 1, 2005 |
| Subsequent Full-Term Renewal | March 16, 2010 |

Current Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School to produce students who meet or exceed the New York Learning Standards in language arts, math, science and social studies. Our students will be able to communicate in both English and Spanish. Staff and students will view themselves as self reflective, continuous learners. Parents will view themselves as partners in the child's education.

Current Key Design Elements

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| • Dual language program; |
| • Extended day program; |
| • 20-25 students per classroom; |
| • Use of the America's Choice School design, focusing instruction on a workshop model; |
| • Student intervention plans that distribute responsibility between the student, parent and school; |
| • Use of assessment data to drive a school improvement plan; |
| • Support for professional development; |
| • Consistent student discipline efforts; and |
| • Strong parental involvement. |

School Characteristics

| School Year | Original Chartered Enrollment | Revised Chartered Enrollment | Actual Enrollment ¹ | Original Chartered Grades | Actual Grades | Days of Instruction |
|-------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| 2000-01 | 120 | 120 | 120 | K-2 | K-2 | 190 |
| 2001-02 | 160 | 160 | 160 | K-3 | K-3 | 190 |
| 2002-03 | 200 | 200 | 195 | K-4 | K-4 | 190 |
| 2003-04 | 240 | 240 | 240 | K-5 | K-5 | 190 |
| 2004-05 | 280 | 280 | 280 | K-6 | K-6 | 190 |
| 2005-06 | 280 | N/A | 291 | K-6 | K-6 | 190 |
| 2006-07 | 280 | N/A | 290 | K-6 | K-6 | 190 |
| 2007-08 | 280 | 320 | 320 | K-6 | K-6 | 190 |
| 2008-09 | 280 | 320 | 320 | K-6 | K-6 | 190 |
| 2009-10 | 280 | 320 | 324 | K-6 | K-6 | 190 |
| 2010-11 | 360 | N/A | 350 | K-7 | K-7 | 190 |
| 2011-12 | 400 | N/A | - | K-8 | K-8 | 190 |

Demographics²

| | 2007-08 | | 2008-09 | | 2009-10 | |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Percent of School Enrollment | Percent of Rochester CSD Enrollment | Percent of School Enrollment | Percent of Rochester CSD Enrollment | Percent of School Enrollment | Percent of Rochester CSD Enrollment |
| Race/Ethnicity | | | | | | |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or African American | 48 | 65 | 48 | 65 | 48 | 64 |
| Hispanic | 50 | 21 | 51 | 21 | 52 | 22 |
| Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| White | 1 | 11 | 1 | 11 | 0 | 10 |
| Multiracial | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Special Populations | | | | | | |
| Students with Disabilities ³ | 5 | N/A | 5 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Limited English Proficient | 3 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Free/Reduced Lunch | | | | | | |
| Eligible for Free Lunch | 58 | 48 | 48 | 59 | 53 | 50 |
| Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch | 13 | 9 | 14 | 10 | 13 | 8 |

¹ Source: SUNY Charter School Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

² Source: New York State Report Cards, New York State Education Department.

³ New York State Education Department does not report special education data.

Current Board of Trustees⁴

| Board Member Name | Position/Committees |
|--------------------------|---|
| Julio Vazquez | President/CEO, Building Committee |
| Dr. Margaret Quackenbush | Vice President, Nominating Committee |
| Hilda Escher | Secretary, Academic Committee |
| Brian Roulin | Trustee, Finance Committee Chair |
| Gaynelle Wethers | Trustee, Personnel Committee |
| George M. Romell | Trustee, Finance Committee |
| Raymond Ciccarelli | Trustee, Finance and Building Committees |
| Fernan Cepero | Trustee, Personnel Committee |
| Marcia DeJesus-Rueff | Trustee, Academic Committee |
| Dr. Nancy Ares | Trustee, Academic Committee Chair |
| Dr. Miriam Vazquez | Trustee, Building and Academic Committees |
| Minerva Bermudez | Parent Trustee |
| Athena Manon | Parent Trustee |
| Marisol Reyes | Parent Trustee |
| Eugenio Marlin | Trustee, Nominating and Building Committees |

School Leader(s)

| School Year | School Leader(s) Name and Title |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 2001-2009 | Miriam Vazquez, Principal |
| 2009-Present | Jeff Halsdorfer, Principal |

School Visit History

| School Year | Visit Type | Evaluator (Institute/External) | Date |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 2000-01 | First Year | Institute | May 31, 2001 |
| 2001-02 | Second Year | Institute | May 21, 2002 |
| 2002-03 | Third Year | External (SchoolWorks) | February 26-27, 2003 |
| 2004-05 | Initial Renewal | Institute | November 29- December 1, 2004 |
| 2006-07 | Subsequent Visit | Institute | May 9, 2007 |
| 2009-10 | Subsequent Renewal Visit | Institute | November 12, 2011 |
| 2011-12 | Subsequent Visit | Institute | October 13, 2011 |

⁴ Source: Institute board information.

CONDUCT OF VISIT

Specifications

| Date(s) of Visit | Evaluation Team Members | Title |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| October 13, 2011 ¹ | Sean Fitzsimons (Lead) | Program Analyst |
| | Dr. Paul Wright | Director of School Evaluation |
| | Lori Clement | Senior Analyst |

Context of the Visit

| Charter Cycle ⁵ | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Charter Period | 2 nd Year of 2 nd Charter Term |
| Accountability Period | 3 rd Year of Five-Year Accountability Period |
| Impending Renewal Visit | Fall 2014 |

⁵ Because a renewal decision is made in the last year of a Charter Period, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of the Charter Period. For initial renewals, the Accountability Period is the first four years of the Charter Period. For subsequent renewals, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous Charter Period through the next to last year of the current Charter Period.

SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT

Benchmark Conclusions and Evidence

1. B Use of Assessment: The school has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness.

Eugenio Maria de Hostos Charter School ("Eugenio") has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning. The school regularly administers commercial and teacher-created assessments aligned to the school's curriculum and state standards, as well as norm-referenced assessments such as the AIMSWeb. It uses results to meet students' needs by adjusting classroom instruction, grouping students and identifying students for interventions. The school devotes sufficient time and resources to, and has an effective process for, promoting the valid and reliable collection and scoring of assessment data. The school organization includes a full time data coordinator who collects and reports data and instructional coaches who provide significant direction and guidance on creating assessments and analyzing their results. The school has also prioritized the creation and use of rubrics to evaluate written work, which is evident in student work samples. School leaders use assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness and to develop professional development and coaching strategies.

1. C Curriculum: The school has a comprehensive and organized curriculum framework.

Eugenio has a comprehensive and organized curriculum. The school primarily uses commercial curriculum, which has been cross-walked within a framework that lays out student performance expectations aligned to state standards. With an 8th grade program introduced this year, parts of its curriculum and underlying framework are still under development. In general, teachers develop curriculum maps that provide sufficient structure to connect the framework to their daily lesson plans. The school has a process for selecting, developing and reviewing its curriculum documents and resources at weekly meetings with instructional coaches, although the process at the middle school is relatively more teacher-dependent, and not all teachers are aware of the performance expectations of the grades below and above them. Teachers know what to teach and when to teach it based on the commercial curriculum and curriculum maps and use them to plan purposeful and focused lessons.

1. D Pedagogy: Quality instruction is evident throughout the school.

Effective instruction is evident throughout Eugenio. Teachers implement purposeful lessons with clearly posted objectives that align to the school's curriculum and state standards. Teachers organize their classrooms to facilitate individualized and small group instruction to students in need of additional support; for example, teachers seat students together to allow for heterogeneous groups during reading class. Teachers establish centers to ensure that they have time to meet with small groups where they can check for depth of understanding while teaching assistants circulate throughout the room attending to other groups. Learning time is maximized with appropriate lesson pacing and efficient transitions between activities. Some teachers include opportunities to challenge students with questions that develop critical thinking and problem solving skills, for example by requiring students to explain and defend answers to questions in front of their peers.

1E. Instructional Leadership: The school has strong instructional leadership.

Overall, Eugenio has strong instructional leadership. The organizational structure of the school's instructional leadership team is generally adequate to support the development of the teaching staff. In addition to the principal, who informally observes classes and provides written feedback, the school has a math coach and two literacy coaches whose sole function is to support staff, as well as two education coordinators who help develop teachers' classroom management skills. Coaching and supervision are sustained and systematic. Instructional leaders provide teachers at least once per week with immediate feedback after informal observations. Instructional leaders regularly conduct evaluations with clear criteria that accurately assess the teaching staff's professionalism, quality of instruction and success in increasing student performance. School leaders put struggling teachers on improvement plans and the school's coaches provide them with extra support. Administrators remove those who do not improve from the school.

1. F At-Risk Students: The school helps all at-risk students meet state performance standards.

Eugenio effectively supports the needs of its at-risk students. The school has multiple methods to identify students who may need academic or behavioral support, such as through academic testing or teacher observation. Additionally, the school has effective programs and resources in place to identify and support the needs of special education students and English language learners. These programs include a structured response to intervention program, supported by a well-staffed student support team comprised of a cross section of teachers, staff and school administration that meets every six days. Resources include bilingual texts and other materials to support English language learners. Teachers, in conjunction with the student support team, actively monitor the academic or behavioral progress of at-risk students. The school's special education teachers work closely with classroom teachers to ensure that they appropriately serve students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and other at-risk students. The school regularly provides teachers with professional development opportunities regarding the needs of special education and at-risk students during grade level meetings; however, there is no staff training specifically regarding strategies to teach English language learners.

1G. Student Order and Discipline: The school promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.

Eugenio promotes a culture of learning and scholarship. The school has a clear and consistently applied student incentive system to promote positive behavior. Each teacher uses his or her own discipline system and receives ample support in developing classroom management techniques and disciplinary support from the two educational coordinators. The school has established a safe and orderly environment throughout both buildings.

1H. Professional Development: The school's professional development program assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals by addressing identified shortcomings in teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge.

Eugenio's professional development program generally assists teachers in meeting student academic needs. The professional development program is comprehensive and consists of a three-day summer institute and weekly meetings throughout the year that follow-up on priorities addressed during the summer. Professional development topics address school-wide needs; for

example, the school has prioritized strengthening its writing program through professional development in response to state English language arts assessment results. The school's coaching model addresses the needs of most teachers; nevertheless, the school is in the process of developing an approach to addressing the professional development needs of middle school staff.

2. C Organizational Capacity: The school organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program.

Eugenio's organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program. The school has established an administrative structure with staff, operational systems and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program. The principal has administrative and instructional leadership staff in place at each location to support and manage instruction and operations. The organizational structure establishes lines of accountability with defined roles and responsibilities. Eugenio retains quality staff and has allocated sufficient resources to achieving its goals. The school maintains adequate enrollment and regularly monitors and evaluates programs making changes when necessary as evidenced by recent curriculum adjustments and changes to the student support system.

2D. Board Oversight: The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.

Eugenio's board has worked effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total educational program. The board has adequate skills to monitor the school's academic program and has recruited membership that helps ensure continuity in the school's programs and mission. The board communicates its priorities to the school's leadership and provides effective oversight of the leadership through the regular review of student achievement data.

APPENDIX A: RENEWAL BENCHMARKS USED DURING THE VISIT

*An excerpt of the State University Charter Renewal Benchmarks follows.
Visit the Institute's website at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/renewalBenchmarks.doc> to see the complete listing of Benchmarks.*

Benchmarks 1B – 1H, and Benchmarks 2A – 2E were using in conducting this evaluation visit.

| | Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success? |
|---|---|
| <u>Evidence Category</u> | <u>State University Renewal Benchmarks</u> |
| State University Renewal Benchmark 1B Use of Assessment Data | <p>The school has a system to gather assessment and evaluation data and uses it to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school regularly uses standardized and other assessments that are aligned to the school's curriculum framework and state performance standards; the school systematically collects and analyzes data from diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments, and makes it accessible to teachers, school leaders and the school board; the school uses protocols, procedures and rubrics that ensure that the scoring of assessments and evaluation of student work is reliable and trustworthy; the school uses assessment data to predict whether the school's Accountability Plan goals are being achieved; the school's leaders use assessment data to monitor, change and improve the school's academic program, including curriculum and instruction, professional development, staffing and intervention services; the school's teachers use assessment data to adjust and improve instruction to meet the identified needs of students; a common understanding exists between and among teachers and administrators of the meaning and consequences of assessment results, e.g., changes to the instructional program, access to remediation, promotion to the next grade; the school regularly communicates each student's progress and growth to his or her parents/guardians; and the school regularly communicates to the school community overall academic performance as well as the school's progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals. |
| State University Renewal | The school has a clearly defined curriculum and uses it to prepare students to meet state performance standards. |

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| <p>Benchmark 1C</p> <p>Curriculum</p> | <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school has a well-defined curriculum framework for each grade and core academic subject, which includes the knowledge and skills that all students are expected to achieve as specified by New York State standards and performance indicators; the school has carefully analyzed all curriculum resources (including commercial materials) currently in use in relation to the school's curriculum framework, identified areas of deficiency and/or misalignment, and addressed them in the instructional program; the curriculum <i>as implemented</i> is organized, cohesive, and aligned from grade to grade; teachers are fully aware of the curricula that they are responsible to teach and have access to curricular documents such as scope and sequence documents, pacing charts, and/or curriculum maps that guide the development of their lesson plans; teachers develop and use lesson plans with objectives that are in alignment with the school's curriculum; the school has defined a procedure, allocated time and resources, and included teachers in ongoing review and revision of the curriculum; and the curriculum supports the school's stated mission. |
| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1D</p> <p>Pedagogy</p> | <p>High quality instruction is evident in all classes throughout the school.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> teachers demonstrate subject-matter and grade-level competency in the subjects and grades they teach; instruction is rigorous and focused on learning objectives that specify clear expectations for what students must know and be able to do in each lesson; lesson plans and instruction are aligned to the school's curriculum framework and New York State standards and performance indicators; instruction is differentiated to meet the range of learning needs represented in the school's student population, e.g. flexible student grouping, differentiated materials, pedagogical techniques, and/or assessments; all students are cognitively engaged in focused, purposeful learning activities during instructional time; learning time is maximized (e.g., appropriate pacing, high on-task student behavior, clear lesson focus and clear directions to students), transitions are efficient, and there is day-to-day instructional continuity; and teachers challenge students with questions and assignments that promote academic rigor, depth of understanding, and development of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills. |
| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1E</p> | <p>The school has strong instructional leadership.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> |

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| Instructional Leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school's leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for student achievement; • the school's leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge, pedagogical skills and student achievement); • the school's instructional leaders have in place a comprehensive and on-going system for evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness; • the school's instructional leaders, based on classroom visits and other available data, provide direct ongoing support, such as critical feedback, coaching and/or modeling, to teachers in their classrooms; • the school's leadership provides structured opportunities, resources and guidance for teachers to plan the delivery of the instructional program within and across grade levels as well as within disciplines or content areas; • the school's instructional leaders organize a coherent and sustained professional development program that meets the needs of both the school and individual teachers; • the school's leadership ensures that the school is responding to the needs of at-risk students and maximizing their achievement to the greatest extent possible in the regular education program using in-class resources and/or pull-out services and programs where necessary ; and • the school's leadership conducts regular reviews and evaluations of the school's academic program and makes necessary changes to ensure that the school is effectively working to achieve academic standards defined by the State University Renewal Benchmarks in the areas of assessment, curriculum, pedagogy, student order and discipline, and professional development. |
| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1F</p> <p>At-Risk Students</p> | <p>The school is demonstrably effective in helping students who are struggling academically.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school deploys sufficient resources to provide academic interventions that address the range of students' needs; • all regular education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the regular education program; • the school provides sufficient training, resources, and support to all teachers and specialists with regard to meeting the needs of at-risk students; • the school has clearly defined screening procedures for identifying at-risk students and providing them with the appropriate interventions, and a common understanding among all teachers of these procedures; • all regular education teachers demonstrate a working knowledge of students' Individualized Education Program goals and instructional strategies for meeting those goals; • the school provides sufficient time and support for on-going coordination between regular and special education teachers, as well as other program specialists and service providers; and • the school monitors the performance of student participation in support services using well-defined school-wide criteria, and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its intervention programs. |
| <p>State University Renewal</p> | <p>The school promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.</p> |

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| Benchmark 1G Student Order & Discipline | <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school has a documented discipline policy that is consistently applied; classroom management techniques and daily routines have established a culture in which learning is valued and clearly evident; low-level misbehavior is not being tolerated, e.g., students are not being allowed to disrupt or opt-out of learning during class time; and throughout the school, a safe and orderly environment has been established. |
| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1H</p> Professional Development | <p>The school's professional development program assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals by addressing identified shortcomings in teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school provides sufficient time, personnel, materials and funding to support a comprehensive and sustained professional development program; the content of the professional development program dovetails with the school's mission, curriculum, and instructional programs; annual professional development plans derive from a data-driven needs-assessment and staff interests; professional development places a high priority on achieving the State University Renewal Benchmarks and the school's Accountability Plan goals; teachers are involved in setting short-term and long-term goals for their own professional development activities; the school provides effective, ongoing support and training tailored to teachers' varying levels of expertise and instructional responsibilities; the school provides training to assist all teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities, English language learners and other students at-risk of academic failure; and the professional development program is systematically evaluated to determine its effectiveness at meeting stated goals. |

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| | <p align="center">Renewal Question 2</p> <p align="center">Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?</p> |
| <u>Evidence Category</u> | <u>State University Renewal Benchmarks</u> |

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| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2A</p> <p>Mission & Key Design Elements</p> | <p>The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stakeholders are aware of the mission; • the school has implemented its key design elements in pursuit of its mission; and • the school meets or comes close to meeting any non-academic goals contained in its Accountability Plan. |
| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2B</p> <p>Parents & Students</p> | <p>Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has a process and procedures for evaluation of parent satisfaction with the school; • the great majority of parents with students enrolled at the school have strong positive attitudes about it; • few parents pursue grievances at the school board level or outside the school; • a large number of parents seek entrance to the school; • parents with students enrolled keep their children enrolled year-to-year; and • the school maintains a high rate of daily student attendance. |
| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2C</p> <p>Organizational Capacity</p> | <p>The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school demonstrates effective management of day-to-day operations; • staff scheduling is internally consistent and supportive of the school's mission; • the school has established clear priorities, objectives and benchmarks for achieving its mission and Accountability Plan goals, and a process for their regular review and revision; • the school has allocated sufficient resources in support of achieving its goals; • the roles and responsibilities of the school's leadership and staff members are clearly defined; • the school has an organizational structure that provides clear lines for accountability; • the school's management has successfully recruited, hired and retained key personnel, and made appropriate decisions about removing ineffective staff members when warranted; • the school maintains an adequate student enrollment and has effective procedures for recruiting new students to the school; and • the school's management and board have demonstrated effective communication practices with the school community including school staff, parents/guardians and students. |

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| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2D</p> <p>Board Oversight</p> | <p>The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school board has adequate skills and expertise, as well as adequate meeting time to provide rigorous oversight of the school; the school board (or a committee thereof) understands the core business of the school—student achievement—in sufficient depth to permit the board to provide effective oversight; the school board has set clear long-term and short-term goals and expectations for meeting those goals, and communicates them to the school's management and leaders; the school board has received regular written reports from the school leadership on academic performance and progress, financial stability and organizational capacity; the school board has conducted regular evaluations of the school's management (including school leaders who report to the board, supervisors from management organization(s), and/or partner organizations that provide services to the school), and has acted on the results where such evaluations demonstrated shortcomings in performance; where there have been demonstrable deficiencies in the school's academic, organizational or fiscal performance, the school board has taken effective action to correct those deficiencies and put in place benchmarks for determining if the deficiencies are being corrected in a timely fashion; the school board has not made financial or organizational decisions that have materially impeded the school in fulfilling its mission; and the school board conducts on-going assessment and evaluation of its own effectiveness in providing adequate school oversight, and pursues opportunities for further governance training and development. |
| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2E</p> <p>Governance</p> | <p>The board has implemented and maintained appropriate policies, systems and processes, and has abided by them.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school board has established a set of priorities that are in line with the school's goals and mission and has effectively worked to design and implement a system to achieve those priorities; the school board has in place a process for recruiting and selecting new members in order to maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity; the school board has implemented a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with those set forth in the charter—and consistently abided by them through the term of the charter; the school board has generally avoided creating conflicts of interest where possible; where not possible, the school has managed those conflicts of interest in a clear and transparent manner; |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school board has instituted a process for dealing with complaints (and such policy is consistent with that set forth in the charter), has made that policy clear to all stakeholders, and has followed that policy including acting in a timely fashion on any such complaints; the school board has abided by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee elections, removals and filling of vacancies; the school board and its committees hold meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law, and minutes are recorded for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings; and the school board has in place a set of board and school policies that are reviewed regularly and updated as needed. |
| <p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2F</p> <p>Legal Requirements</p> | <p>The school has substantially complied with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> during its charter period, the school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations including, but not limited to, submitting items to the Institute in a timely manner, and meeting teacher certification (including NCLB highly qualified status) and background check requirements, FOIL, and Open Meetings Law; at the time of renewal, the school is in substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable laws, rules and regulations; over the charter period, the school has abided by the terms of its monitoring plan; the school has designed and put in place effective systems and controls to ensure that legal and charter requirements were and are met; and the school has an active and ongoing relationship with in-house or independent legal counsel that reviews relevant policies, documents, transactions and incidents and makes recommendations and handles other legal matters as needed. |