

Colorado Charter School Renewal Package

Supporting District Authorizers to Promote
Quality and Access

August 2021

This document has been prepared by WestEd in partnership with CACSA

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Introduction

WestEd collaborated with the Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers (CACSA) to develop the Charter School Renewal Package. CACSA promotes best practices in charter school authorizing and supports Colorado charter school authorizers to develop, adopt, and implement practices that improve results for all students. This package is intended to support authorizer staff to successfully execute charter school renewals by providing guidance, best practices, and other resources from authorizers in the state grounded in Colorado’s *Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers*.

The themes highlighted in the package include

- practicing equitable renewal practices that prioritize schools’ performance, their progress meeting charter goals, and ability to meet student needs;
- empowering authorizers to collaborate with schools on changes that address schools’ shortcomings — during renewals in general and in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- supporting high-stakes decision-making that is evidence-based and in the best interests of students and communities.

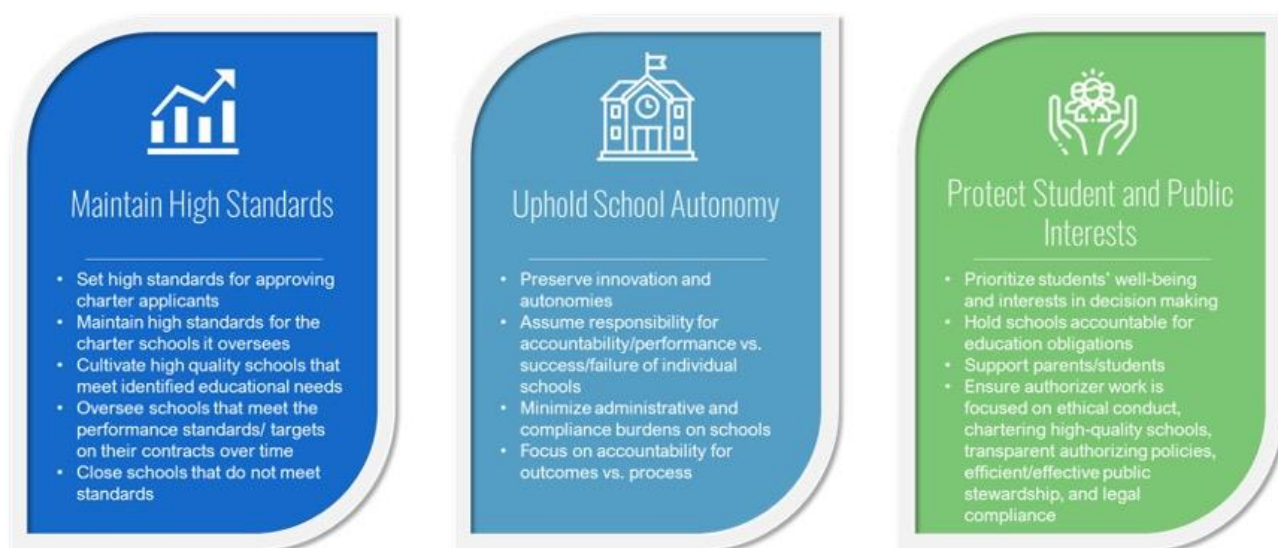
The package begins with the Colorado Department of Education’s (CDE) *Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers* which, along with Colorado’s Charter School Act, are the guiding foundations for this resource and are revisited throughout. Next, the package articulates each stage of the renewal process, providing templates and guidance for each step. The descriptions of these steps incorporate statutory requirements and are based on a review of Colorado authorizers’ guidance documents. Best and promising practices examples are also noted throughout the package, including examples from authorizers within the state and best practice examples from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA).

The purposes of the renewal process are to ensure the school is complying with its charter and meeting statutory requirements, performing in the key areas of academics and governance, and is effectively serving all students. Another key purpose is to support schools in a process of continuous improvement. While the state’s law establishes minimum thresholds for the renewal process, authorizers are encouraged to use best practices to promote equitable decision-making and support continuous improvement. Authorizers are also encouraged to consult their district’s charter policy.

Colorado Standards for Charter School Authorizers

The CDE’s *Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers* (“Colorado Standards for Charter Authorizers”) — promulgated by the State Board of Education (SBE) — align with the NACSA’s *Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing*.¹ Figure 1 illustrates and summarizes the Colorado Standards by each main theme: (1) maintaining high standards for schools, (2) upholding school autonomy, and (3) protecting student and public interests. (See Appendix, Exhibit 2 for more information.)

Figure 1. Colorado’s Standards for Charter Authorizers



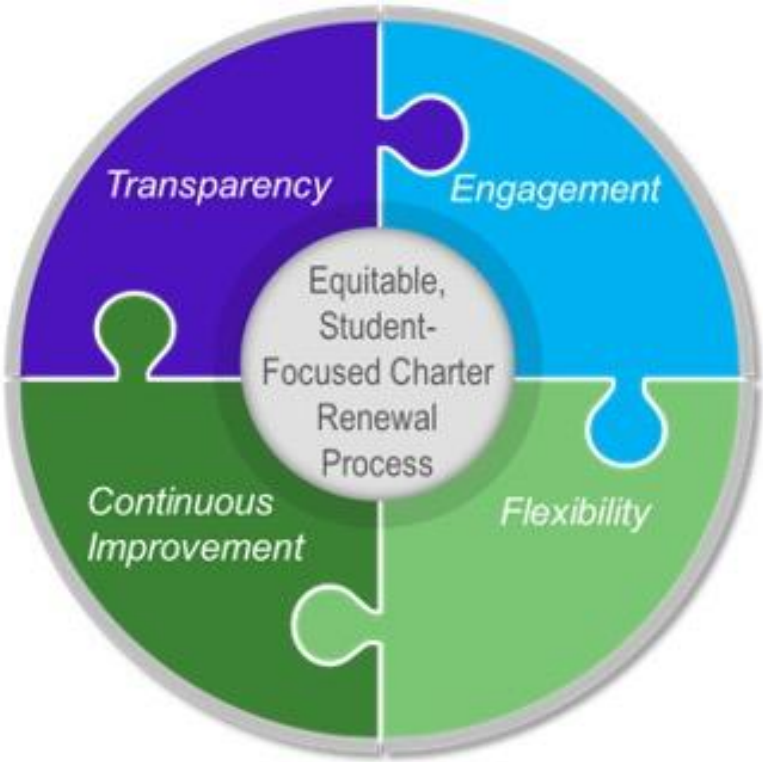
Principles for Equitable Charter School Renewals

Four key principles emerge from Colorado’s standards that promote equitable, student-focused renewal processes — *transparency*, *engagement*, *flexibility*, and *continuous improvement* (Figure 2). *Transparency* ensures that at the outset, the renewal process and evaluation standards are clear to all participants (i.e., school, authorizing staff, and district board). *Engagement* between all relevant participants supports open and ongoing communication and a shared understanding of expectations. *Flexibility* is important at all times given the challenging yet critical work that schools do every day. This principle is acutely relevant in the current environment as everyone continues to grapple with the impact of the pandemic on

¹ The Colorado Department of Education, Colorado State Board of Education, Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers, 1 CCR § 301-88, <https://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/DisplayRule.do?action=ruleinfo&ruleId=3126&deptID=4&agencyID=109&deptName=Department%20of%20Education&agencyName=Colorado%20State%20Board%20of%20Education&seriesNum=1%20CCR%20301-88>.

education, including addressing students’ physical and emotional health needs and evaluating student performance with limited, valid assessment data. Ideally, while all schools engage in their own reflection and *continuous improvement processes*, including those required by the state, authorizers should support and require specific improvements² for schools that are not meeting performance expectations as part of the renewal process. For these schools, authorizers and schools should work to identify areas of concern and strategize about how to increase school quality and student performance on an ongoing basis. Authorizer direction for improvement can also address specific issues in noncompliance or problematic operations that are not severe enough to warrant the nonrenewal of the school yet remain as high-priority problems that the authorizer needs to see effectively addressed by the school, for example, special education operations, governance, an Office of Civil Rights complaint, an outstanding safety issue, etc.

Figure 2. Principles for Equitable Charter School Renewals



² Some authorizers may use the Unified Improvement Planning (UIP) process as a way to integrate the state’s model for continuous improvement with the authorizer’s improvement processes.

Overview of Renewal Process

The next sections of the renewal package describe the required procedures and timelines for the renewal process, the key players and their roles in the process, and the stages of the renewal process. Sample templates are included in the Appendix, and Figure 3 illustrates each stage of the renewal process.

Procedures and Timelines

The Charter Schools Act (CSA) requires that authorizers adopt and maintain charter renewal process procedures and timelines and communicate any updates to the charter schools they authorize.³ These procedures must ensure that

- when feasible and in the “best interests” of the students enrolled at the school, that charter schools operate until the end of the school year before closing; and,
- in the event it is necessary to close a charter school before the end of the year, the authorizer must collaborate with the school to (1) determine the appropriate closure date and (2) ensure the school meets its financial, legal, and reporting responsibilities before the school concludes operations.⁴

Renewal applications are due by December 1st of the year before the school’s charter expires and district boards must vote on renewal applications by February 1st of the year in which the school’s contract expires (the parties can mutually agree to extend the latter deadline). State law also affords flexibility for authorizers to establish additional timelines within the legal timeline, and for authorizers and schools to mutually agree to extend the timelines for the following activities: (1) when the district board makes its renewal decision and (2) negotiating the renewal contract. Figure 4 — which correlates with the Renewal Process Overview above — illustrates proposed renewal timelines for the renewal process.

³ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(1.3).

⁴ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(5).

Figure 3. Suggested Process Timeline



Kick off and Communication	Throughout May and June
Applications	By December 1* – Complete application due <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By September 1 – Part 1 of application is due • By October 1 – Part 2 of application is due
Site Visits	Throughout October and November
Evaluations and Recommendations	Throughout December and January
Decision Making	February 1 – Present renewal materials to the board
Contract Negotiations	90 days after renewal decision

*Dates provided by law.

Setting the Stage for a Successful Renewal Process

Key Players: Roles and Responsibilities

Understanding the roles and responsibilities for each party engaged in renewals is critical to ensuring decision-making is equitable, transparent, and student-focused. The table below articulates the roles and responsibilities of the key players in the renewal process.

Key Players: Roles and Responsibilities in the Renewal Process

Authorizer Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and communicate the renewal process to schools and other stakeholders • Create evaluation components, standards, and templates for the renewal process • Communicate with the school about the renewal process, including a kick-off call and ongoing check-ins with school leadership • Review and evaluate the body of evidence, including the renewal application • Provide the district board or district superintendent with the recommendation and renewal report • Negotiate the renewal contract with the governing board of the school
DACs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some districts, the District Accountability Committee (DAC) reviews and evaluates the body of evidence, including the renewal application
District Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adherence to district policy • Review authorizing staff findings and recommendation • Present findings and recommendation to district board (as applicable)
Charter School Leader(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in the kick-off call and renewal check-ins • Schedule the site visit with authorizer staff and oversee the visit itself • Complete the renewal application and collect the body of evidence document submissions • Keep the governing board apprised at each stage of the renewal • Negotiate the renewal contract with the governing board and authorizer staff
Charter School Governing Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the renewal application and body of evidence with leadership before submitting it to authorizer staff • Provide guidance throughout the renewal process • Conduct board meeting during the site visit for authorizer staff to observe
District Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review authorizer staff recommendation and renewal package materials • Make a renewal decision at a scheduled hearing • Vote to adopt the renewal contract

NACSA Best Practice

A quality authorizer “defines and communicates to schools the process, methods, and timing of gathering and reporting school performance and compliance data.”⁵

Training and Development

It is helpful for authorizing staff to provide training to critical stakeholders on the renewal process so they are clear about what to expect and when to expect it and understand their role in the renewal process. Authorizing staff should provide training to charter schools (school leaders and governing board members) that will undergo renewal in the next year; DACs if they play a role in the renewal process; district boards; and any district offices that will be involved in the renewal process. Training for all stakeholders should provide an overview of the renewal process and then should focus specifically on the responsibilities of that stakeholder.

Stakeholder Groups	Training Topics
School	Renewal process, renewal application, required data and documents for the body of evidence, renewal decision-making, renewal contract and conditions
DAC	Renewal process, renewal application, required data and documents for the body of evidence, renewal decision-making, renewal contract and conditions
District Board	Renewal process, overview of body of evidence, renewal decision-making, renewal contract and conditions
District Offices	Renewal process, relevant areas of the renewal application and body of evidence

Annual Review and Ongoing Oversight Processes

Authorizers are required by law to annually review a school’s performance throughout the charter term, and these reviews are one component of the body of evidence used to assess a school during renewal.⁶ Therefore, it is critical to have a process for formal, annual reviews, which are typically guided by an annual report template. CACSA’s annual report template is

⁵ NACSA, Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, 2018 Edition. Available at <https://www.qualitycharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/NACSA-Principles-and-Standards-2018-Edition.pdf>, p. 17

⁶ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(1)(b).

included in the Appendix, Exhibit 5, as one example of how to approach the annual review process. In addition, authorizing staff should have a system for ongoing monitoring, oversight, and documenting these findings on a regular basis. Charter governing boards should also track the annual report throughout the charter term and determine or advise the school's course of action before renewal. The body of evidence and renewal application sections provide examples of the types of data authorizing staff should monitor and collect during annual reviews and ongoing monitoring processes.



Kickoff and
Communication

Renewal Communications

Ongoing, two-way communication between the authorizer and the school throughout the school year is essential to the continuity of the initial charter contract and the effective continuous improvement cycles during a charter's term. Authorizing staff should try to build an open relationship with the school leader, creating a comfortable environment for the leader to discuss challenges and share feedback with the authorizer.

The renewal process should begin with a kickoff meeting between the authorizing staff, the governing board chair, and the school leader. We recommend the kickoff meeting take place at least nine months before the renewal resolution is due. At the kickoff meeting, the authorizing staff should explain the renewal process and the expectations for the school, articulate the timeline, and explain what documents and data the school will need to provide. At this meeting, the team should also schedule the renewal site visit and provide a brief overview of what will occur on the day of the site visit. This meeting should provide an opportunity for the school leadership to ask questions about the renewal process and to ensure that all three parties are clear about expectations and timelines.

At the kickoff meeting, the authorizing staff should also schedule regular check-ins with the school leadership throughout the renewal process. The check-ins provide an opportunity for both parties to discuss due dates, document submissions, and questions that may arise throughout the renewal process. These conversations should also focus on communicating the authorizer's expectations and the school's performance to date and then identifying areas of concern that may become conditions in the renewal contract, collaborative problem-solving, and prioritizing students' needs.

NACSA Best Practice

Quality authorizers require schools seeking renewal to apply through a renewal application, “which provides the school a meaningful opportunity and reasonable time to respond to the cumulative report; to correct the record, if needed; and to present additional evidence regarding its performance.”⁷

Body of Evidence

The body of evidence is the information that an authorizer uses to assess school performance during the course of a contract to inform the renewal decision. State law and SBE rules require authorizers to “define clear, measurable, and attainable academic, financial, and operational performance standards and targets”⁸ for schools to be renewed. They must also “define the sources of data that will form the evidence base for ongoing and renewal evaluation.”⁹ Authorizers typically define these standards in a policy document that they post on their website. The standards may be organized into evaluation components or categories, creating a framework for organizing the body of evidence.

The body of evidence typically includes annual reports, notices of concern or breach over the course of a contract, monitoring data and document submission, financial audits, and site visit data. Other data that may be included in the body of evidence are the school’s Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) and accreditation status.

CACSA’s annual report template and evaluation components provide examples of a way to organize a body of evidence and are the foundation for the renewal templates included in this package (Appendix, Exhibit 5). CACSA’s annual report includes four evaluation components: (1) academic performance, (2) board governance, (3) legal and contractual compliance, and (4), financial performance. The figure below illustrates sample evaluation components as well as sources of data for the body of evidence.

⁷ NACSA, Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, 2018 Edition. Available at <https://www.qualitycharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/NACSA-Principles-and-Standards-2018-Edition.pdf>, p. 21

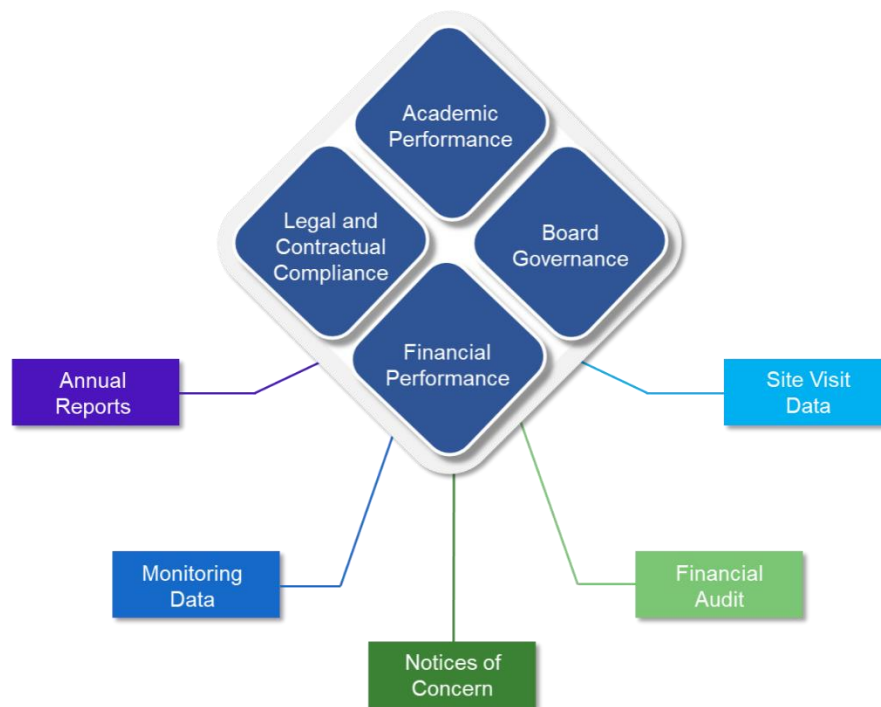
⁸ The Colorado Department of Education, Colorado State Board of Education, Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers, 1 CCR 301-88, 3.04(C)(2).

⁹ The Colorado Department of Education, Colorado State Board of Education, Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers, 1 CCR 301-88, 3.04(C)(3).

In Practice: Body of Evidence

Charter School Institute’s Annual Review of Schools (CARS) System guides their renewal process. The CARS system — based on CSI’s academic, financial, and organizational frameworks — is a tool used to annually evaluate and accredit schools. These reviews contribute to the body of evidence for renewals.

Figure 4. Body of Evidence



Body of Evidence: Students with Disabilities and English Learners

Authorizers are responsible for ensuring that charter schools serve all students effectively, including students with disabilities and English learners. During the renewal process, authorizing staff should review how students with disabilities and English learners are being served by reviewing their subgroup performance as part of the overall review of academic performance and ensuring that schools are complying with state and federal laws and regulations for these student groups. Failure to comply with state and federal laws with respect to students with disabilities and English learners should inform both the renewal decision and contract conditions. See the renewal resource bank (Appendix, Exhibit 10) for resources on serving students with disabilities and English learners.

However, the renewal process is also a time to engage in a deeper discussion about how and whether a charter school is effectively serving all students, regardless of the renewal decision. Authorizers might engage in this conversation by using a tool or protocol for collecting and analyzing data and engaging in conversations with schools about how they are serving all student groups. CSI provides one example of how this can be done using their [Student Services Screener](#).¹⁰ The student screener tool measures “the quality of school access, instructional support, and outcomes for special populations” by collecting data on key indicators such as the following:

- Is the school enrolling special populations at rates proportional to nearby schools/districts?
- Are special populations remaining enrolled at rates proportional to their peers?
- Are special populations progressing academically from year to year on the state standards?

Body of Evidence: Annual Reviews, Accreditation Status, and Unified Improvement Plans

Authorizers are required to annually review a school’s performance throughout the charter term.¹¹ These reviews are one component of the body of evidence used to assess a school’s renewal.¹² At a minimum, these annual reviews must include an assessment of the school’s progress in meeting the objectives identified in its plan and the “results of the charter school’s most recent annual financial audit.”¹³ Once the review is complete, authorizers are required to provide written feedback that (1) includes the body of evidence the district board will consider in determining whether to renew, revoke, or nonrenew the school’s charter and (2) supports the negotiation of the renewal contract.¹⁴

Some authorizers use the school’s priority improvement or turnaround plans and accreditation status to inform the renewal decision. For example, if a charter school seeking renewal is in its second consecutive year implementing a turnaround plan, the school must provide

- its priority improvement or turnaround plan;
- a summary of the changes designed to improve the school’s performance;
- a description of the school’s progress executing these changes; and

¹⁰ Colorado Charter School Institute, Student Services Screener, <https://resources.csi.state.co.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Student-Services-Screener-2020.pdf>

¹¹ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(1)(b).

¹² Id.

¹³ Id.

¹⁴ Id.

- evidence that the school is “making sufficient improvement to attain a higher accreditation category within two school years or sooner.”¹⁵

Under the law, accreditation status is most significant when a school is executing a turnaround improvement plan.

“If the local board of education finds that the charter school’s evidence of improvement is not sufficient or if the charter school is required to implement a turnaround plan for a third consecutive school year, the local board of education may revoke the school’s charter.”¹⁶

Several authorizers also incorporate schools’ recent UIP into the renewal process as well. Reviewing the UIP plan allows authorizers to review the schools’ identified root causes and planned improvement strategies and incorporate them into the school’s body of evidence.

Renewal Application

Applications

The renewal application is part of the body of evidence. It provides the school with an opportunity to reflect on their progress and submit relevant documents and data that authorizer staff will use to inform their renewal recommendation. According to state statute, renewal applications must include

- a report on the school’s progress in achieving the goals, objectives, pupil performance standards, content standards, targets for the measures used to determine the levels of attainment of the performance indicators, and other terms of the charter contract as well as the results achieved by the school’s students on the statewide assessments;
- a financial statement that discloses the school’s costs of administration, instruction, and other spending categories for the school in the format required by the SBE; and
- information related to the school’s annual reviews.¹⁷

This package includes a sample renewal template that is divided into two parts: Part 1 Renewal Reflection and Part 2 Required Body of Evidence Submissions (Appendix, Exhibit 7). The

¹⁵ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(3.5).

¹⁶ Id.

¹⁷ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(2).

application contents are aligned to CACSA’s annual report template. Part 1 is designed as an opportunity for school leadership and governing boards to reflect on the school’s progress by answering targeted questions for each evaluation component. Part 2 is a checklist of the documents that should be submitted for each evaluation component. Authorizer staff should modify both parts of the renewal application to support their particular context while ensuring compliance with required elements in law. Below is an excerpt of Part 1.

In Practice: Renewal Application

The Aurora Public Schools’ renewal application has guidance on waivers and contract modifications, including tables that include the types of waivers and contract modifications a charter school may have and the corresponding legal citations.¹⁸

Application: Part 1. Renewal Reflection

Charter Renewal Application — Excerpt of Part 1. Renewal Reflection Template

CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION Part 1. Renewal Reflection	
School Name:	
Principal Name:	
Chair, Governing Board:	

Section 1: Academic Performance
Question 1: Describe and reflect on the school’s mission and vision.
Provide School’s Mission:
Reflection on Achieving Mission:

¹⁸ See Aurora Public Schools Renewal Charter School Application [here](https://innovation.aurorak12.org/charters/charter-school-processes/); The Office of Autonomous Schools, Charter School Processes, <https://innovation.aurorak12.org/charters/charter-school-processes/>

Provide School's Vision:

Reflection on Achieving Vision:

Application: Part 2: Required Body of Evidence Submissions

Excerpt of Part 2: Required Body of Evidence Submissions Checklist Template

CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION	
Part 2. Required Body of Evidence Submissions Checklist	
Academic Performance	
<input type="checkbox"/>	School Performance Framework and/or District Performance Framework
<input type="checkbox"/>	School Calendar
<input type="checkbox"/>	Master Staff Schedule (including class times, teachers, content, and location)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Roster (including roles/responsibilities/grades taught, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Curriculum Overview
<input type="checkbox"/>	English Learner Self-Reflection
<input type="checkbox"/>	SPED Self-Reflection
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Professional Development Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher/Leader Evaluation Template (including criteria, rubrics, schedules, and confirmation of completion)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Handbook
<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom Observation Protocol and Schedule
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assessment Plan (including Interim Assessments)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Graduation Requirements
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIP Plan

NACSA Best Practice

“A quality authorizer visits each school as appropriate and necessary for collecting data that cannot be obtained otherwise and in accordance with the contract while ensuring that the frequency, purposes, and methods of such visits respect school autonomy and avoid operational interference.”¹⁹

Site Visits

Site Visits

Site visits are designed as a tool for authorizers to observe charter school performance and may include classroom and governing board meeting observations, staff interviews, document review, and requests for additional data. Though not required, the information collected during site visits informs schools’ ongoing cycles of continuous improvement and assists authorizer staff in assessing performance and progress in meeting the goals stated in a school’s charter. Ideally, authorizers conduct site visits on an annual basis, though some review topics and criteria may not apply in a given year.

Authorizer staff should discuss the site visit process with school leadership as part of the renewal kick-off process. The table below articulates suggested steps for authorizers before, during, and after a site visit.

CACSA Site Visit Steps

TIME	STEPS
Prior to Site Visit	<p>Prior to the site visit, the authorizer notifies the school of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the date on which the site visit will occur;• the time of both the board interview as well as the school leader interview;• the documents that the school is required to consolidate into one binder for document review (or folder or other location submitted online); and• the criteria according to which the authorizer will evaluate the school during the site visit.

¹⁹ NACSA, Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, 2018 Edition. Available at <https://www.qualitycharters.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/NACSA-Principles-and-Standards-2018-Edition.pdf>, p. 17

TIME	STEPS
During Site Visit	<p>The site visit itself is made up of the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Walk-Through: The authorizer walks through the school to observe cultural and disciplinary practices as well as to evaluate safety criteria. • Classroom Observation: The authorizer spends 20–40 minutes, as needed, in the classroom to evaluate instruction, the educational program, and school culture/discipline practices. • Document Review: The authorizer will review all documentation relevant to the school’s educational program, board governance, board legal compliance, and school safety. • Board Interview: The authorizer will interview a member of the board to gather additional information needed on board governance and board legal obligations. • School Leader Interview: The authorizer will interview the school leader to ask any questions that arose during the document review and on the school’s educational program.
Following Site Visit	<p>Following the site visit, the authorizer will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the outcome of the site visit, namely the score the school received on each review topic as well as any next steps related to noncompliance/low scores, as needed, that the authorizer will take.

CACSA has developed a site visit protocol to guide authorizing staff in conducting effective site visits. The protocol provides more detail about the review topics and data collection methods (Appendix, Exhibit 9).



Renewal Evaluation

This section provides guidance for authorizer staff on the evaluation process that informs the district board’s renewal decision. State regulations require that renewal decisions are based on “thorough analyses of a comprehensive body of objective evidence defined by the performance framework in the charter contract.”²⁰ The regulations also require that improved academic

²⁰ The Colorado Department of Education, Colorado State Board of Education, Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers, 1 CCR § 301-88, 3.06, <https://www.sos.state.co.us/CCR/DisplayRule.do?action=ruleinfo&ruleId=3126&deptID=4&agencyID=109&deptName=Department%20of%20Education&agencyName=Colorado%20State%20Board%20of%20Education&seriesNum=1%20CCR%20301-88>.

achievement “is the most important factor to consider when determining whether to revoke or not renew a charter.”²¹

In addition to the regulations and statutory requirements, each authorizer should determine the evaluation components and the measures within each component that will inform their renewal recommendation. For example, the evaluation components from CACSA’s annual report template include: academic performance, board governance, legal and contractual compliance, and financial performance. These annual reviews, in addition to the body of evidence collected throughout the course of the charter contract, will inform the renewal evaluation.

Authorizers should use the body of evidence to assess the following key questions:

- Academic Performance: Is the school’s education program success?
- Board Governance: Is the school operating and governed effectively?
- Legal and Contractual Compliance: How has the school ensured compliance with federal law, state law, and the school’s charter contract?
- Financial Performance: Is the school financially solvent/viable?

In Practice: Public Comment Period

While not required, some Colorado authorizers hold a public comment period for renewal decisions. This public comment period may strengthen the community and the school’s relationship with the district.

After reviewing the body of evidence, authorizers may want to consider other factors, including those that influence the quality of school choice options within the larger community. Other factors that authorizers may want to consider include the following:²²

- level of community support;
- performance of other school options in the geographic area;
- progress towards closing the achievement gap;
- availability of other schools of choice or similar models;

²¹ Id.

²² Colorado Charter School Institute, Guide to Renewal Actions by School Performance. Available at <https://documentcloud.adobe.com/boxintegration/index.html?state=%7B%22fileIds%22%3A%5B%22805435857274%22%5D%7D>; Chait, R., Evan, A., & Canavero, S. (2019). Considering turnaround for low-performing charter schools [Policy Brief]. San Francisco, CA: WestEd. Available at <https://www.wested.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/resource-considering-turnaround-for-low-performing-charter-schools.pdf>

- unique programmatic offerings;
- proximity to next performance rating;
- network capacity; and
- enrollment relative to program capacity.

When reviewing these evaluation components and other factors, authorizing staff should also consider the statutory reasons for nonrenewal. These are as follows:

- “Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter contract;
- Failed to meet or make adequate progress toward achievement of the goals, objectives, content standards, pupil performance standards, targets for the measures used to determine the levels of attainment of the performance indicators, applicable federal requirements, or other terms identified in the charter contract;
- Failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or
- Violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.”²³

Summative Report

A best practice is for authorizers to provide a report that summarizes the school’s performance over the charter term and the likelihood the school will be renewed in advance of the board’s renewal decision. This practice also includes providing an opportunity for the school to both respond to the report, “correct the record,” and submit new information on its performance, if necessary. This practice is aligned with NACSA’s standards and principles. Some authorizers in the state currently provide this opportunity, while others provide the schools with an opportunity to address questions or issues raised in the report. The Appendix, Exhibit 3 includes two sample templates for authorizer staff to summarize their evaluation of schools’ renewal applications and the body of evidence. The first is a summative report template for staff recommendations and areas of concern, the second is a template to capture the summative domain ratings based on CACSA’s annual report template.

Developing a Board Recommendation/Report

Authorizing staff must submit a written report summarizing their renewal evaluation, and some authorizing staff may include a recommendation to renew or nonrenew the school as well. Authorizers vary in terms of what type of report and accompanying data they provide to the

²³ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110 (3)(a)-(d).

district board. Authorizers should consider providing a summary document as well as a more detailed summary analysis of each of the evaluation components, particularly any issues with serving specific student populations. The evaluation may include consideration of a school's turnaround plan and accreditation status if relevant. The report is due to the district board and charter school at least 15 days before the board is scheduled to make its decision.²⁴ A sample recommendation memo is included in the Appendix, Exhibit 8.

In Practice: DACs and Charter Renewals

State law does not require DAC involvement in charter renewals. Some authorizers, however, include DAC recommendations in the renewal materials submitted to district boards in advance of renewal decisions.

COVID-19 Impact

As a result of COVID-19, schools have modified their instructional models in real-time to provide students with technology for remote learning and to support students and families with emotional and physical health challenges during this time. Students have also had inconsistent learning experiences and access to technology during remote instruction, even within the same school. Given these ongoing challenges, CACSA recommends that authorizers consider these unique circumstances as well as expand the body of evidence to assess charter schools' progress in meeting goals and performance expectations when evaluating schools' performance during the 2019–20 and 2020–21 school years and possibly beyond.

Authorizers will lack state assessment data for the 2019–20 school year, and there are some challenges in considering assessment data for the 2020–21 school year. Authorizers may want to review and consider which students participated in state tests during the 2020–21 school year to understand how representative they are of the total population of students. In addition, assessment conditions may not have been standardized for all students. Finally, as mentioned previously, students may have had inconsistent access to instruction.

To address these gaps and challenges with state standardized assessments, authorizers may want to use additional academic data to assess performance during the renewal process. One approach authorizers could take is to provide a list of the types of data schools can use to provide evidence of academic performance in the 2019–20 and 2020–21 school years and include specific examples. These data could be used to support the school's performance trajectory and would complement the state assessment data. Authorizers' lists may include formative and summative assessments, grades, and course completion for high school students.

²⁴ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(4.5)(a).

Another approach is to provide guidance about the characteristics of assessments that should be used. For example, assessments should assess grade-level standards and represent the learning of a significant portion of students. An example from Denver Public Schools (DPS) below provides language the authorizing office has used to provide additional guidance to schools on what assessment data may be considered. Authorizers may also want to consider requiring schools to only use assessments used in prior years to demonstrate performance trends. Lastly, authorizers are encouraged to work with each school to agree on the academic measures for assessing performance in the 2019–20 and 2020–21 school years based on the authorizer’s guidance.

In addition, site visits provide an important source of qualitative data for renewal decision-making. Authorizers that conducted virtual site visits during the 2019–20 and 2020–21 school years should use these findings to confirm previous trends and inform the renewal process. Authorizers that didn’t conduct annual site visits, may want to conduct annual visits during the years after the COVID closures to provide additional data to inform renewal decisions. Because this document is being produced during a transitional time, it is likely that guidance about how to handle these gaps in data will evolve.

Finally, NACSA’s 2021 Supplemental Renewal Guidance provides guidance for examining four core areas of a school’s effectiveness during the pandemic years—(1) student impact, (2) family partnerships and community engagement, (3) quality of school redesign during COVID, and (4) evaluating and using internal assessments. Using qualitative and quantitative data in these key areas can complement existing data sources and provide a more holistic view of a school’s performance.²⁵

In Practice: Assessment Guidance from DPS

“Please note that we will put more emphasis on data that:

provides evidence of a connection to grade-level standards or expectations (i.e., nationally normed or used in 2019 District SPF);

provides clarity on what was assessed through vendor documentation or other summaries/samples of assessed content (See Appendix A);

allows for comparisons across schools;

represents the learning of a significant portion of students at a school and is disaggregated to understand how specific groups of students performed;

²⁵ NACSA, 2021 Supplemental Renewal Guidance, <https://www.qualitycharters.org/2021/08/public-charter-school-renewal-guidance-resource/>

displays data in a manner that shows how all students performed, using status and growth calculations as appropriate; and

utilizes vendor created reports (preferred), when possible.”

— *Denver Public Schools, Charter Renewal Application: Part B*

There may also be impacts from COVID on financial performance as well as legal and contractual compliance. A couple of factors may affect financial performance. Schools may have fallen short of enrollment targets during the pandemic, affecting revenue targets. Authorizing staff should provide some flexibility and consider trends before and after those years. There may also be additional dollars from federal stimulus funds that can improve schools' financial situations. In terms of legal and contractual compliance, there may have been emergency situations that prevented schools from submitting reports on time during the COVID years. Again, flexibility with those due dates is warranted.

Options Short of Nonrenewal

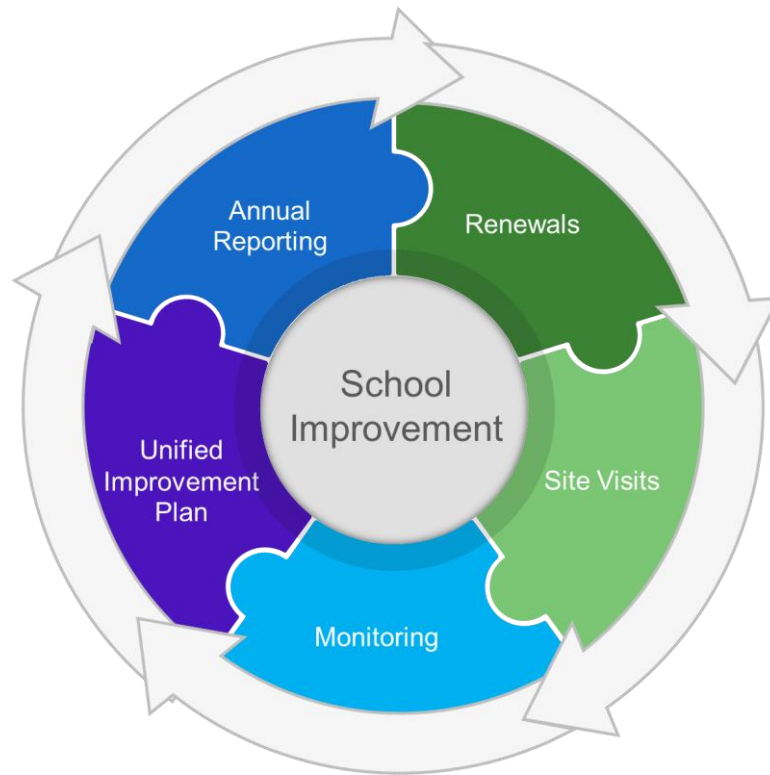
This section discusses options short of nonrenewal decisions that, when appropriate, support continuous improvement. These options give authorizers tools to build the capacity of schools that need improvement but are unlikely to be closed or do not warrant closure. They are particularly important during and after the COVID pandemic since it is likely that fewer schools will be nonrenewed during this time. The section also discusses how authorizers may (1) engage with schools about performance concerns, inform continuous improvement efforts, and identify areas where authorizers can support schools; (2) implement mutually agreed-upon conditions that support school improvement; and (3) differentiate charter renewal contract lengths based on the school's performance.

Continuous Improvement and Conditions

One of the primary purposes of the annual review and renewal process is to support schools in continuous reflection and improvement; therefore, the data collected as part of the body of evidence can be used to support schools and authorizers in this process. In addition, authorizers can use the UIP process to support school improvement. All schools are required to develop an annual improvement plan using the UIP template developed by the CDE. This document can be the foundation for an ongoing conversation about the school's strengths and areas for

improvement and the strategies the school intends to implement to address the areas for improvement. Using the UIP for this function may reduce the burden on schools that otherwise would have created a second improvement plan based on the renewal alone. For more information about the unified improvement planning process, see [here](#).

Figure 5. Body of Evidence Informs Continuous Reflection and Improvement



One way to codify improvement strategies that are critical to improving school performance is to incorporate them into the renewal contract as conditions. Colorado law supports renewing charter contracts with mutually agreed-upon renewal contract conditions.²⁶ These conditions allow an authorizer to renew a school that demonstrates potential to improve but isn't meeting standards at the time of renewal. For example, a renewal contract may specify that a school must improve its accreditation status. Conditions may also address specific weaknesses the authorizer identifies, such as increasing reading proficiency or replacing the board chair of a governing board that has been ineffective.

Differential Charter Renewal Contract Lengths

Colorado statute does not specify the length of the renewal contract, thereby permitting differential contract lengths. The benefit of differential contract lengths is that the length of a

²⁶ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(5).

contract can vary based on the performance of a school. Therefore, in cases where a school’s performance doesn’t merit a full-length renewal, but the school has potential for improvement, the authorizing staff may recommend a two- or three-year renewal contract. A two- or three-year contract provides for another in-depth evaluation on a shorter timeline and may also incorporate conditions, as discussed in the prior section. Authorizers can develop guidance to inform their recommendations to the board about differential renewal contracts. The following rubric offers one option for guiding decision-making about contract lengths and conditions. To review the measures that are included in each of the domains, see the CACSA Annual Report in the Appendix, Exhibit 5.

Bringing it All Together: Conditions and Contract Length

While this rubric provides one example of how authorizing staff might think about contract terms and conditions, professional judgement is a critical ingredient for making these decisions, which is why the rubric offers different contract options for schools with the same ratings. Authorizing staff should have an in-depth understanding of the challenges facing each school by reviewing the body of evidence and using these data to inform the contract terms and conditions. For example, in the rubric below, there may be a school that was not in good standing based on a review of all domains for three years in a row, but the noncompliance was related to poor board performance and there has been a new board in place for two years. In this case an authorizer may decide that conditions are no longer necessary and a three-year contract with no conditions is warranted.

Another circumstance to consider is for schools that have long contract terms. First, schools that have 15-year terms should still receive a high stakes review every five years. Second, at renewal, another long-term contract is not recommended. Five-year terms provide for better accountability and reflect national best practices. Authorizing staff should consider a five-year renewal term, even if the school initially had a 15-year contract. In general, CACSA does not recommend contract terms longer than five years to ensure sufficient accountability and oversight for all schools.

Renewal Contract Guidance

Authorizer Name								
School Name								
Management Company								
Board President	Grades Served	Enrollment	FRL/ED %	IEP %	EL %			

Overall Performance							Length of Contract	Conditions
Overall Assessment of Performance and Compliance	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23			
Domain Rating for Academic Performance								
Domain Rating for Board Governance								
Domain Rating for Legal and Contractual Compliance								
Domain Rating for Financial Performance								
Is the school in good standing based on a review of all domains?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-year contract	No	
	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	5-year contract	Yes	
	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	3-year contract	No	
	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	3-year contract	No	
	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	3-year contract	Yes	
	Yes	No	No	No	No	Nonrenew	N/A	



Decision-Making

Board Consideration of Report/Recommendation

The renewal report and/or recommendation will be transmitted to the board by the authorizing staff or superintendent. The board’s renewal determinations must be (1) grounded in the body of evidence supplied during the renewal and (2) made by resolution by February first of the year in which the school’s contract expires.²⁷ The board will consider the report/and or recommendation and deliberate on the renewal decision in a public meeting. This forum may include a presentation by the authorizing staff or superintendent, a presentation by the school, or other information to inform the board. At the end of the deliberation, the board will make a

²⁷ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(1)(b) and (1.5).

determination and notably may have particular concerns that they wish to be the subject of negotiation for the renewal contract, for instance by including conditions. If the board decides not to renew the charter, it must state its reasons for the nonrenewal.²⁸



Contract Negotiations
and Execution

Renewal Contracts

Once a district board approves a school’s renewal application, the authorizer staff and the school’s governing board are charged with negotiating the conditions of the renewal contract. This step affords the time and opportunity for the parties to discuss the renewal contract terms, conditions, and any necessary improvement supports. Many authorizers have a standard contract, so the areas for negotiation are limited. CACSA is also developing a model contract that will be available as a resource. While there is not a statutorily required timeline for finalizing a renewal contract, it is prudent to complete it within 60-90 days. This timeline may be specified in the district’s charter policy.

Negotiating renewal contracts can become contentious when unilateral conditions are imposed, and this is frequently the subject of appeals to SBE. Authorizers are encouraged to negotiate with schools in good faith on renewal terms and conditions that target necessary change and are agreeable to both parties prior to the renewal resolution. Doing so fosters collaborative decision-making that identifies the effective conditions that will support the school’s performance moving forward and is a way to mitigate renewal appeals. Boards considering conditions should consult their legal counsel prior to passing a renewal resolution.

Appeals

Under state law, charter schools can appeal decisions made by local boards of education to the SBE that either (1) revoke or nonrenew its charter or (2) impose unilateral conditions.²⁹ A school must first submit a notice of appeal that describes the issues to the district and the SBE within 30 days of the initial decision.³⁰ Within 60 days after receiving the notice of appeal, the SBE must render its decision at a public hearing. If the SBE decides that the district board’s decision is not in the best interests of students, the school district, or the community, it must remand (or return) the initial decision back to the district board with recommendations for reconsideration, which can lead to two outcomes. If the district board upholds its initial decision — either to revoke, nonrenew, or impose unilateral conditions — the school can submit a second appeal to the SBE within 30 days after the district board’s decision. Also, if the

²⁸ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(4.5)(b).

²⁹ C.R.S. §§ 22-30.5-110(5) and 22-30.5-108(2).

³⁰ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-108(2).

district board decides not to include unilateral conditions, the school and authorizer staff can proceed with finalizing the renewal contract within 90 days of SBE's remand.³¹

Nonstandard Renewal Situations

There are a variety of nonstandard renewal situations that warrant special considerations. These situations include school mergers, schools transitioning authorizers or Charter Management Organizations (CMOs), and/or schools dividing into two separate schools at the time of renewal. Authorizers should incorporate these scenarios into their renewal process by developing specific questions and review criteria related to these circumstances. For example, for a school that is joining a new CMO, the authorizer should add questions about the new CMO's capacity. Ultimately, these scenarios add one additional variable for the authorizer to consider as part of the body of evidence.

³¹ Id.

Appendix

Exhibit 1: Glossary of Terms

- **Charter Schools Act (CSA)** — Colorado’s charter school law passed in 1993.
- **Charter school authorizer (authorizer)** — local school districts and Charter School Institute are permitted to authorize charter schools in the state.
- **Charter school authorizer staff (authorizer staff)** — individuals employed by the authorizer and are charged with
 - monitoring charter schools’ performance,
 - working with school staff and governing boards in executing the renewal process,
 - preparing renewal findings and recommendations for local school boards of education as they review renewal applications, and
 - negotiating with a school’s governing boards on charter renewal contracts.
- **Charter school governing board (governing board)** — the board members that oversee charter schools’ day-to-day activities, including the education program, operations, and financial activities.
- **Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI)** — a state entity that authorizes charter schools.
- **Colorado Department of Education (CDE)** — the state education agency.
- **Charter school leadership (school leadership)** — a charter school principal and/or other leadership staff who work with the school’s governing board and authorizer staff to facilitate the renewal process (i.e., initial renewal discussions and scheduling, providing the requisite body of evidence submissions, preparing for site visits, and scheduling staff interviews).
- **District Accountability Committees (DACs)** — statutorily created stakeholder groups with responsibilities that include reviewing initial charter school applications at least 15 days before local boards’ vote on the application.³² For the purposes of reviewing initial applications, DACs must consist of
 - one person with a demonstrated knowledge of charter schools, regardless of whether that person resides within the school district; and
 - one parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled in a charter school in the school district with the exception that if there are no charter schools in the school district, the local board of education shall appoint a parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled in the school district.”³³

DACs’ participation is not required during the renewal process though some districts encourage their involvement.

³² C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(1.5).

³³ C.R.S. § 22-11-301(1).

- **English language learners (English Learners or ELs)** — a student who is linguistically diverse and who is identified as having a level of English language proficiency that requires language support to achieve standards in grade-level content in English.³⁴
- **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** — the federal law passed in December 2015 that governs the country’s K–12 public education policy and replaced its predecessor, the No Child Left Behind Act.
- **Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)** — the special education and related services needed to meet a students’ needs as identified by the individualized education program team.³⁵
- **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** — the “written statement for each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised.” A student’s IEP must include their annual goals — including academic and functional goals; special education and related services; and supplementary aids students need to access the general education curriculum; and accommodations and modifications as needed.³⁶
- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** — a federal law that makes available a “free appropriate public education” to all eligible children with disabilities and ensures the provision of special education and related services to those students.³⁷
- **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** — a federal mandate requiring that — to the maximum extent possible — students with disabilities are educated with their nondisabled peers.³⁸
- **Local boards of education (district board)** — district boards review charter schools’ renewal materials and the recommendations provided by authorizer staff when determining whether to renew, revoke, or nonrenew a school’s charter contract.
- **School Performance Framework (SPF)** — Colorado’s framework that is used to assess and rate schools’ performance based on various metrics including students’ academic achievement and growth on state assessments, parent and student satisfaction, and postsecondary and workforce measures including graduation rates, drop-out rates, college entrance exams, and college matriculation rates. School ratings fall into four categories: performance, improvement, priority improvement, or turnaround, and are used by the CDE and SBE to determine how to support struggling schools.³⁹

³⁴ C.R.S. § 22-24-103(5).

³⁵ 34 CFR § 300.17.

³⁶ 20 U.S.C. Code § 1401(14); 34 CFR §§ 300.22, 300.320 to 300.324.

³⁷ Congress reauthorized the IDEA in 2004 and most recently amended the IDEA through Public Law 114-95, the Every Student Succeeds Act, in December 2015.

³⁸ 34 CFR § 300.114.

³⁹ <https://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/performanceframeworks>

- **State Board of Education (State Board or SBE)** — the governing body of the CDE that provides educational leadership for the state. The SBE reviews renewal decisions if submitted by the school.⁴⁰
- **Unified Improvement Plan or Planning (UIP)** — introduced by the CDE in 2009 to streamline the improvement planning components of state and federal accountability requirements into a single plan.⁴¹ Pursuant to the Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (READ Act),⁴² UIPs must also include information about districts’ reading assessments, curriculum and instructional programs, and reading intervention services.⁴³

⁴⁰ C.R.S. § 22-30.5-108.

⁴¹ Aurora Public Schools, Unified Improvement Plan, <https://aps2020.aurorak12.org/unified-improvement-plan>

⁴² The READ Act was passed in 2012 and “focuses on early literacy development for all students and especially for students at risk to not read at grade level by the end of the third grade. [Under the Act] students are tested for reading skills, and those who are not reading at grade level are given individual READ plans.”
<https://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/readact-overviewfactsheet>

⁴³ READ Act Update, Senate Bill 19-199, <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readactupdatesb19199>

Exhibit 2: Excerpt of Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers

Below are the introductory sections of the Colorado Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers. To access the full standards, see [here](#).

“The Charter Authorizer maintains high standards by doing the following:

- Setting high standards for approving charter applicants;
- Maintaining high standards for the schools it oversees;
- Effectively cultivating quality charter schools that meet identified educational needs;
- Overseeing charter schools that, over time, meet the performance standards and targets set forth in their charter contracts on a range of measures and metrics; and
- Closing schools that fail to meet standards and targets set forth in law and by contract.

The Charter School Authorizer upholds school autonomy by doing the following:

- Honoring and preserving innovations and core autonomies crucial to school success, including governing board independence from the authorizer, personnel, school vision and culture, instructional programming, design, and use of time, and budgeting;
- Assuming responsibility not for the success or failure of individual schools but for holding schools accountable for their performance;
- Minimizing administrative and compliance burdens on schools; and
- Focusing on holding schools accountable for outcomes rather than processes.

The Charter School Authorizer protects student and public interests by doing the following:

- Making the well-being and interests of students the fundamental value informing all the authorizer’s actions and decisions;
- Holding schools accountable for fulfilling fundamental public education obligations to all students, including providing nonselective, nondiscriminatory access to all eligible students; fair treatment for all students in admissions and disciplinary actions; and appropriate services for all students in accordance with law. Specifically, the Charter School Authorizer does not engage in or adopt discriminatory recruiting or marketing policies or practices, adopts enrollment practices that ensure that enrollment decisions are nondiscriminatory and consistent with the best interests of the student applicant, and develops systems to ensure that services are delivered to students with disabilities as required by federal and state law;

- Holding schools accountable for fulfilling fundamental obligations to the public, including providing sound governance, management, and stewardship of public funds; and public information and operational transparency in accordance with the law;
- Ensuring the following in its own work: ethical conduct; focus on the mission of chartering high-quality schools; clarity, consistency, and public transparency in authorizing policies, practices, and decisions; effective and efficient public stewardship; and compliance with applicable laws and regulations; and
- Supporting parents and students in being well-informed about the quality of education provided by charter schools.”⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Id.

Exhibit 3: Summative Report Template

Summative Report: Authorizer Staff Recommendations and Areas of Concern Template

CHARTER RENEWAL SUMMATIVE REPORT: Authorizer Staff Recommendations and Areas of Concern	
School Name:	
Principal Name:	
Chair, Board of Directors:	
Authorizer Staff Renewal Recommendations:	
Areas of Strength:	
Areas of Concern Including State Watchlist Considerations:	

Summative Report Details Template

CHARTER RENEWAL SUMMATIVE REPORT DETAILS	
School Name:	
Principal Name:	
Chair, Board of Directors:	
Academic Performance and Ratings:	
<u>Domain</u>	<u>Rating</u>
<u>Overall Domain Performance</u>	<u>Overall Domain Rating</u>
Board Governance and Ratings:	
<u>Domain</u>	<u>Rating</u>
<u>Overall Domain Performance</u>	<u>Overall Domain Rating</u>
Legal and Contractual Compliance and Ratings:	
<u>Domain</u>	<u>Rating</u>
<u>Overall Domain Performance</u>	<u>Overall Domain Rating</u>
Financial Performance and Ratings:	
<u>Domain</u>	<u>Rating</u>
<u>Overall Domain Performance</u>	<u>Overall Domain Rating</u>

Exhibit 4: District Board Renewal Resolution Templates

SAMPLE BOARD RESOLUTION REQUESTING CHARTER RENEWAL

[Enter Full School Name Here]
[Enter Full School Address Here]

Charter School Resolution [#]

This charter school Resolution is executed on this [Date]

SECTION 1: RECITALS

WHEREAS, the existing charter school contract between the [District] and [Charter School (“the Applicant”)] is set to expire on date;

WHEREAS, on the [Date], the Applicant was notified along with all renewal schools about the renewal process and the body of evidence for the charter school renewal analysis and decision-making;

WHEREAS, on the [Date], the [District] received a charter renewal application from the Applicant;

WHEREAS, the renewal application process was conducted in accordance with Colorado law C.R.S. § 22-30.5-511;

WHEREAS, the renewal application was examined in accordance with national best practices for charter school application review which included, but was not limited to, [District] staff review of all available cumulative annual and interim student performance data, school financial performance data, governance data, legal and contractual data, and other outcomes data covering the full term of the Applicant’s contract;

WHEREAS, on the [Date], [District] staff conducted a site visit to corroborate and augment the information found in the charter renewal application and the renewal evaluation report, and verify that the Applicant is implementing the charter school model with fidelity;

WHEREAS, on [Date], the Applicant received its preliminary renewal evaluation report summarizing cumulative academic information, financial performance data, governance data, legal and contractual data; and had the opportunity to provide additional information related to the preliminary evaluation report and the annual review documentation;

WHEREAS, on [Date], [District] staff provided a copy of the attached staff report and renewal recommendation, to the Applicant;

WHEREAS, on [Date], the [District Board] convened to discuss the application and staff recommendation, and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for consideration on [Date].

WHEREAS, the [District Board] has fully considered the renewal request from the Applicant, as well as the recommendation report from [District] staff, and all the additional information provided by the Applicant;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE District Board that the application from [Charter School] is hereby approved for a FIVE-YEAR period;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following conditions be fulfilled prior to execution of the charter renewal contract:

Condition #1:

Condition #2:

Adopted this [Date]

By: _____

Chair, Board of Directors

I certify that the foregoing Resolution [#] was adopted by the [District] Board of Directors at a regular Board meeting upon notice as required by law on [Date], by a roll-call vote.

By: _____

Secretary, Board of Directors

SAMPLE BOARD RESOLUTION REQUESTING CHARTER NONRENEWAL

[Enter Full School Name Here]
[Enter Full School Address Here]

Charter School Resolution [#]

This charter school Resolution is executed on this [Date]

SECTION 1: RECITALS

WHEREAS, the existing charter school contract between the [District] and [Charter School (“the Applicant”)] is set to expire on [Date];

WHEREAS, during the [Date], the Applicant was notified along with all renewal schools about the renewal process and the body of evidence for the charter school renewal analysis and decision-making;

WHEREAS, during the [Date], the [District] received a charter renewal application from the Applicant;

WHEREAS, the renewal application process was conducted in accordance with Colorado law C.R.S. § 22-30.5-511;

WHEREAS, the renewal application was examined in accordance with national best practices for charter school application review which included, but was not limited to, [District] staff review of all available cumulative annual and interim student performance data, school financial performance data, governance data, legal and contractual data, and other outcomes data covering the full term of the Applicant’s contract;

WHEREAS, during the [Date], [District] staff conducted a site visit to corroborate and augment the information found in the charter renewal application and the renewal evaluation report, and verify that the Applicant is implementing the charter school model with fidelity;

WHEREAS, on [Date], the Applicant received its preliminary renewal evaluation report summarizing cumulative academic information, financial performance data, governance data, legal and contractual data; and had the opportunity to provide additional information related to the preliminary evaluation report and the annual review documentation;

WHEREAS, [District] may nonrenew or revoke a charter pursuant to the criteria in C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(3) and (3.5).

WHEREAS, based on [District’s] review of the body of evidence summarized in the renewal evaluation report it has been determined that [District] has cause to nonrenew.

NOW, THEREFORE, [District] provides the following grounds for charter nonrenewal: *(The authorizer should include the relevant provisions from C.R.S. § 22-30.5-110(3) and (3.5). Hypothetical examples of reasons for nonrenewal in italics below).*

- (a) Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in the charter contract;

The Applicant consistently failed to follow the conflict of interest policies in selecting board members and issuing contracts. See Renewal Report, Attachment.

The Applicant did not implement enrollment policies in a nondiscriminatory manner. See Renewal Report, Attachment.

- (b) Failed to meet or make adequate progress toward achievement of the goals, objectives, content standards, pupil performance standards, targets for the measures used to determine the levels of attainment of the performance indicators, applicable federal requirements, or other terms identified in the charter contract; and

- (c) If the local board of education finds that the charter school's evidence of improvement is not sufficient or if the charter school is required to implement a turnaround plan for a third consecutive school year, the local board of education may revoke the school's charter.

The Applicant was accredited with a priority improvement plan for four years. See Renewal Report, Attachment.

- (d) Violated any provision of law from which the charter school was not specifically exempted.

The Applicant consistently failed to perform evaluations to comply with its Child Find obligations as required by IDEA. See Renewal Report, Attachment.

WHEREAS, on [Date], [District] staff provided a copy of the attached staff report and nonrenewal recommendation, to the Applicant;

WHEREAS, on [Date], the [District Board] convened to discuss the application and staff recommendation, and the recommendation was forwarded to the full Board for consideration on [Date].

WHEREAS, the [District Board] has fully considered the renewal request from the Applicant, as well as the recommendation report from [District] staff, and all the additional information provided by the Applicant;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE District Board that the application from [Charter School] is hereby nonrenewed;

Adopted this [Date]

By: _____
Chair, Board of Directors

I certify that the foregoing Resolution [#] was adopted by the [District] Board of Directors at a regular Board meeting upon notice as required by law on [Date], by a roll-call vote.

By: _____
Secretary, Board of Directors

Exhibit 5: CACSA Annual Report Template

Table 8. CACSA Annual Report Template

Authorizer Name					
School Name					
Management Company					
Board President	Grades Served	Enrollment	% FRL/ED	% IEP	% EL

Overall Performance			
Overall Assessment of Performance and Compliance	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Domain Rating for Academic Performance	Partially Meets	Partially Meets	Meets
Domain Rating for Board Governance	Meets	Meets	Does Not Meet
Domain Rating for Legal and Contractual Compliance	Meets	Does Not Meet	Meets
Domain Rating for Financial Performance	Does Not Meet	Meets	Meets
Is the school in good standing based on a review of all domains?	No	No	Yes

Academic Performance			
Measures of Academic Performance	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
CDE-Determined: Accreditation Status	Approaching	Approaching	Approaching
CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement for All Students	Approaching	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement for Minority Students	Meets	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement for Economically Disadvantaged Students	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds
CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement for Students with IEPs	Meets	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement for Students who are English Learners	Meets	Meets	Meets

CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for All Students	Approaching	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for Minority Students	Meets	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for Economically Disadvantaged Students	Meets	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for Students with IEPs	Meets	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for Students who are English Learners	Meets	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for All Students	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet
CDE-Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for Minority Students	Meets	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for Economically Disadvantaged Students	Meets	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for Students with IEPs	Meets	Meets	Meets
CDE-Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for Students who are English Learners	Meets	Meets	Meets
Authorized-Determined: School Specific Measure #1	Exceeds	Partially Meets	Exceeds
Authorized-Determined: School Specific Measure #2	Meets	Meets	Meets
Authorized-Determined: School Specific Measure #3	Partially Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet
Authorized-Determined: School Specific Measure #4	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Meets
Domain Rating for Academic Performance	Partially Meets	Partially Meets	Meets

Board Governance			
Expectations for Board Governance	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Board has no evidence of violations of CO ethics laws.	Meets	Meets	Meets
Board has no evidence of violations of legal and contractual obligations.	Meets	Meets	Meets
Board complies with all open meetings laws/CO Sunshine Laws.	Meets	Meets	Meets
Board satisfies all relevant training obligations including those for new members.	Meets	Meets	Does Not Meet
Domain Rating for Board Governance	Meets	Meets	Does Not Meet

Legal and Contractual Compliance			
Expectations for Legal and Contractual Compliance	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Reporting Compliance: The school is complying with laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to relevant reporting requirements to the authorizer.	Meets	Does Not Meet	Meets
Required Programming: School implements mandated programming, including Colorado History, Alcohol & Controlled Substances, Constitution Day, and Comprehensive Human Sexuality Education.	Meets	Meets	Meets

School Environment and Discipline: School uses discipline practices that comply with policy and legal expectations and provides students and families with due process.	Meets	Meets	Meets
Special Student Populations: School materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the treatment of students with identified disabilities and those suspected of having a disability.	Meets	Meets	Meets
Student Enrollment: School materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to admissions, lottery, waiting lists, recruitment, and enrollment.	Meets	Meets	Meets
Domain Rating for Legal and Contractual Compliance	Meets	Does Not Meet	Meets

Financial Performance			
Expectations for Financial Performance	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21
Liquidity: Current Assets Ratio	Meets	Meets	Exceeds
Liquidity: Unrestricted Days Cash	Meets	Meets	Partially Meets
Sustainability: Loan/Debt Service Payments	Meets	Meets	Meets
Sustainability: TABOR Requirements*	Meets	Meets	Meets
Annual Independent Audit	Meets	Meets	Meets
Domain Rating for Financial Performance	Does Not Meet	Meets	Meets

*The TABOR Amendment “sets limits on the amount of tax revenue a governmental entity can collect and sets certain other restrictions on government finances. The two most practical and direct effects TABOR has on individual charter schools are the TABOR emergency reserve requirement and the restriction on entering into long-term debt.”⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Charter School Financial Management Guide, Updated June 2009. See also Colo. Const. art. X, 20(2)(b).

Exhibit 6: CACSA Annual Report Template: Domain Rating Guidance

Category	Sub-Category	Standard	Rubric				Rating (2018–19)	Rating (2019–20)	Rating (2020–21)
			Does Not Meet	Partially Meets	Meets	Exceeds			
Academic	State Measures	CDE-Determined: Accreditation Status	CDE Ratings				Approaching	Approaching	Approaching
		CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement for All Students					Meets	Meets	Meets
		CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement for Minority Students					Meets	Meets	Meets
		CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement for Economically Disadvantaged Students					Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds
		CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement for Students with IEPs					Meets	Meets	Meets
		CDE-Determined: Academic Achievement					Meets	Meets	Meets

	for Students who are English Learners			
	CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for All Students		Approaching	Meets
	CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for Minority Students		Meets	Meets
	CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for Economically Disadvantaged Students		Meets	Meets
	CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for Students with IEPs		Meets	Meets
	CDE-Determined: Academic Growth for Students who are English Learners		Meets	Meets
	CDE-Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for All Students		Does Not Meet	Does Not Meet

	CDE- Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for Minority Students					Meets	Meets	Meets
	CDE- Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for Economically Disadvantaged Students					Meets	Meets	Meets
	CDE- Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for Students with IEPs					Meets	Meets	Meets
	CDE- Determined: Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness for Students who are English Learners					Meets	Meets	Meets
District Measures	Authorized- Determined: School Specific Measure #1	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	Exceeds	Partially Meets	Exceeds
	Authorized- Determined: School Specific Measure #2	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	Meets	Meets	Meets
	Authorized- Determined: School Specific Measure #3	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	Partially Meets	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet

		Authorized-Determined: School Specific Measure #4	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	District must develop as appropriate	Partially Meets	Does Not Meet	Meets
		Domain Rating for Academic Performance	<i>Each authorizer needs to determine how to roll-up the individual standard ratings to a comprehensive domain rating. We recommend the use of a four-point rubric for this domain.</i>				Partially Meets	Partially Meets	Meets
Governance	Governance	Board has no evidence of violations of CO ethics laws.	Evidence of egregious, repeated, and/or unresolved non- compliance with CO ethics laws.	N/A	Board is in compliance with Colorado ethics laws based on all available evidence.	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets
		Board has no evidence of violations of legal and contractual obligations.	Evidence of egregious, repeated, and/or unresolved non- compliance with legal and contractual obligations.	N/A	School is not currently in breach of any legal or policy expectations and within the current charter term has not been found to have committed an egregious or repeated violations of relevant law and policy expectations.	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets
		Board complies with all open meetings laws/CO Sunshine Laws.	Evidence of egregious, repeated, and/or unresolved noncompliance with legal and policy expectations.	N/A	Board is in compliance with Colorado sunshine laws based on all available evidence.	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets
		Board satisfies all relevant training	Board does not provide evidence of having complete	N/A	Board has completed all relevant	N/A	Meets	Meets	Does Not Meet

		obligations including those for new members.	all relevant trainings.		trainings based on all available evidence.				
	Domain Rating for Board Governance		<i>Each authorizer needs to determine how to roll-up the individual standard ratings to a comprehensive domain rating. We recommend the use of a binary (meets or does not meet) rubric for this domain. Note: Schools cannot score higher than "does not meet" on this domain unless they satisfy each individual expectation.</i>			Meets	Meets	Does Not Meet	
Legal and Contractual Compliance	Reporting Compliance	Reporting Compliance: The school is complying with laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to relevant reporting requirements to the authorizer.	Evidence of egregious, repeated, and/or unresolved noncompliance with legal and policy expectations.	N/A	School is not currently in breach of any legal or policy expectations and within the current charter term has not been found to have committed egregious or repeated violations of relevant law and policy expectations.	N/A	Meets	Does Not Meet	Meets
	Required Programming	Required Programming: School implements mandated programming, including Colorado History, Alcohol & Controlled Substances, Constitution Day, and Comprehensive Human	Evidence of egregious, repeated, and/or unresolved noncompliance with legal and policy expectations.	N/A	School is not currently in breach of any legal or policy expectations and within the current charter term has not been found to have committed egregious or repeated violations of relevant law	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets

	Sexuality Education.			and policy expectations.				
School Environment & Discipline	School Environment and Discipline: School uses discipline practices that comply with policy and legal expectations and provide students and families with due process.	Evidence of egregious, repeated, and/or unresolved noncompliance with legal and policy expectations.	N/A	School is not currently in breach of any legal or policy expectations and within the current charter term has not been found to have committed egregious or repeated violations of relevant law and policy expectations.	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets
Special Student Population Programming & Compliance	Special Student Populations: School materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to the treatment of students with identified disabilities and those	Evidence of egregious, repeated, and/or unresolved noncompliance with legal and policy expectations.	N/A	School is not currently in breach of any legal or policy expectations and within the current charter term has not been found to have committed egregious or repeated violations of relevant law and policy expectations.	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets

		suspected of having a disability.							
	Student Enrollment	Student Enrollment: School materially complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter contract relating to admissions, lottery, waiting lists, recruitment, and enrollment.	Evidence of egregious, repeated, and/or unresolved noncompliance with legal and policy expectations.	N/A	School is not currently in breach of any legal or policy expectations and within the current charter term has not been found to have committed egregious or repeated violations of relevant law and policy expectations.	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets
	Domain Rating for Legal and Contractual Compliance		<i>Each authorizer needs to determine how to roll-up the individual standard ratings to a comprehensive domain rating. We recommend the use of a binary (meets or does not meet) rubric for this domain. Note: Schools cannot score higher than "does not meet" on this domain unless they satisfy each individual expectation.</i>				Meets	Does Not Meet	Meets
Financial	Near Term Measures	Liquidity: Current Assets Ratio	Current ratio is less than 0.9	Current ratio is between 0.9 and 1.1	Current ratio is above 1.1	Current ratio has been above 1.1 for two years	Meets	Meets	Exceeds
		Liquidity: Unrestricted Days Cash	Less than 30-days cash	Between 30- and 60-days cash	More than 60-days cash	Maintained more than 60-days cash for two years	Meets	Meets	Partially Meets
	Financial Sustainability : Loan/Debt Service Payments	Sustainability: Loan/Debt Service Payments	Is in default of loan covenant(s) and/or is delinquent with debt service payments	N/A	Is not in default of loan covenant(s) and/or is not delinquent	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets

					with debt service payments				
	Sustainability: TABOR requirements	Does not meet TABOR requirements	N/A		Meets TABOR requirements	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets
	Audit Performance	Annual Independent Audit	Annual independent audit includes significant findings/conditions, material weaknesses, and/or significant internal control weaknesses.	N/A	Annual independent audit is devoid of significant findings/conditions, material weaknesses, or significant internal control weaknesses.	N/A	Meets	Meets	Meets
	Domain Rating for Financial Performance		<i>Each authorizer needs to determine how to roll-up the individual standard ratings to a comprehensive domain rating. We recommend the use of a four-point rubric for this domain. Note: Schools must satisfy the TABOR requirements in order to receive "partially meets" or higher in this domain.</i>				Does Not Meet	Meets	Meets
Comprehensive Assessment of Good Standing	Is the school in good standing based on a review of all domains?	No		Yes					
		School receives a rating of "Does Not Meet" in one or more domains		School receives a rating of "Partially Meets" or better in each domain		No	No	Yes	

Exhibit 7: Renewal Application

Application: Part 1. Renewal Reflection

Charter Renewal Application — Part 1. Renewal Reflection Template

CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION Part 1. Renewal Reflection	
School Name:	
Principal Name:	
Chair, Governing Board:	

Section 1: Academic Performance

Question 1: Describe and reflect on school's mission and vision.

Provide School's Mission:

Reflection on Achieving Mission:

Provide School's Vision:

Reflection on Achieving Vision:

Question 2: Describe and reflect on the school's authorizer-determined, school-specific measures (add additional rows as necessary).

Authorizer-Determined School Specific Measure 1:

Reflection on Achieving:

Authorizer-Determined School Specific Measure 2:

Reflection on Achieving:

Question 3: Is the school’s education program a success?

Question 4: What changes, if any, do you propose making to your educational program or model?

Question 4: Is the school effectively serving all students, including students with disabilities and English learners?

Section 2: Board Governance

Question 1: Is the school operating and governed effectively?

Question 2: Reflect on the board’s compliance with ethics and open meetings laws/Sunshine laws.

Question 3: Reflect on board training for new members.

Question 4: Is the charter school advancing equity and access and fulfilling its obligations as a public school, including through its admissions, programs, services, and outcomes?

Question 5: Describe how the board monitors the school’s academic, operational, and financial performance.

Section 3: Legal and Contractual Compliance

Question 1: How has the school ensured compliance with federal law, state law, and the school’s charter contract? (Please describe any Notices of Concern and the school’s response, as applicable.)

Section 4: Financial Performance

Question 1: Provide an analysis of the school’s financial strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth.

Question 2: Is the school financially solvent/viable?

Question 3: Has the school met the financial goals described in its charter?

Application: Part 2. Required Body of Evidence Submissions Checklist Template

Charter Renewal Application — Part 2. Required Body of Evidence Submissions Checklist

CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION Part 2. Required Body of Evidence Submissions Checklist	
Academic Performance	
<input type="checkbox"/>	School Performance Framework and/or District Framework
<input type="checkbox"/>	School Calendar
<input type="checkbox"/>	Master Staff Schedule (including class times, teachers, content, and location)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Roster (including roles, responsibilities, grades taught, etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Curriculum Overview
<input type="checkbox"/>	English Learner Self-Reflection
<input type="checkbox"/>	SPED Self-Reflection
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff PD Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher/Leader Evaluation Template (including criteria, rubrics, schedules, and confirmation of completion)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Handbook
<input type="checkbox"/>	Classroom Observation Protocol and Schedule
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assessment Plan (including Interim Assessments)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Graduation Requirements
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIP Plan
Board Governance	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Board Meeting Schedule
<input type="checkbox"/>	Board Roster
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Board Handbook (including Bylaws and Conflict of Interest Policy)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Board Self-Evaluation/Needs Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	New Waiver Requests
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organizational Chart (for 2020–21)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complaint/Grievance Policy
Legal and Contractual Compliance	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Title IX Plan/Policy (including name responsible for compliance with Title IX)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Discipline Policy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student discipline data by subgroup for previous four years
<input type="checkbox"/>	Parent/Student Handbooks (including Student Admissions, Lottery, Waiting List, Recruitment, and Enrollment Policies; lottery and enrollment forms)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Enrollment by Subgroups (last 4 years)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Re-enrollment Rates (last 4 years)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student Enrollment Projections
<input type="checkbox"/>	Notices of Concern and School’s Response (if applicable)

<input type="checkbox"/> Waivers*
<input type="checkbox"/> Requests for Contract Modifications**
Financial Performance
<input type="checkbox"/> Long-term budget (5-years if available)
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Policies and Procedures
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Independent Audit
<input type="checkbox"/> Audit's Management Letter
<input type="checkbox"/> Unaudited Financial Statements

* Charter schools may request waivers from specified areas of the statute after the initial charter contract is executed. This flexibility is intended to provide charters with the autonomy to fully implement the educational plan outlined in the school's contract with the authorizing district. Charter school waiver requests must meet the requirements set forth in the CSA (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-101). Colorado law allows districts to request waivers from state statutes and rules. These waivers can apply to the entire district or individual schools within the district, "if the waivers will enhance educational opportunity and quality" (C.R.S. § 22-2-117(1)(a)).

** Charter contract modifications must be approved by the district board and school's governing board (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-105(4)). Schools intending to request contract modifications during the renewal process should include a description of this request when they submit Part 2 of the Renewal Application.

Exhibit 8: Board Recommendation Memo Template

TO: Members of the District Board of Trustees

FROM: Superintendent/Authorizing Staff

DATE:

SUBJECT: Recommendation Regarding Charter Renewal [Name of Charter School]

The purpose of this document is to make a recommendation to the Board regarding the charter renewal of [Name of Charter School].

Background:

Provide a brief description of the charter school’s model, history of performance, and prior renewals if applicable.

Summary of Performance:

Authorizer Name					
School Name					
Management Company					
Board President	Grades Served	Enrollment	% FRL/ED	% IEP	% EL
Overall Performance					
	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23
Domain Rating for Academic Performance					
Domain Rating for Board Governance					
Domain Rating for Legal and Contractual Compliance					
Domain Rating for Financial Performance					

The basis for the recommendation is set forth below.

<u>Reason 1:</u>
<u>Attached Evidence</u>
<u>Reason 2:</u>
<u>Attached Evidence</u>
<u>Reason 3:</u>
<u>Attached Evidence</u>

Superintendent Recommendation:

Based on the foregoing, the Superintendent is making the recommendation that [Name of Charter School] shall be [renewed/nonrenewed] for a [term length]-year term at the end of the [date] school year. The following conditions are also recommended:

Condition #1:

Condition #2:

Condition #3:

Exhibit 9: CACSA Site Visit Protocol

Site Visit Protocol Alignment to Annual Report Evaluation Components	
Site Visit Review Topic	Annual Report Evaluation Component
Instruction	Academics
Educational Program: Curriculum/Materials	Academics
School Culture & Discipline	Legal and Contractual Compliance
Board Governance	Governance
Board Legal Obligations	Governance
Safety	Legal and Contractual Compliance
Special Education Files	Academics, Legal and Contractual Compliance

REVIEW PROTOCOL: Below are the steps required to collect all information needed to evaluate the school on each review topic.					
Review Topic	School Walk-Through	Classroom Observation	Document Review	Board Interview	SL Interview
Instruction	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
Educational Program: Curriculum/Materials	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓
School Culture & Discipline	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Board Governance	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Board Legal Obligations	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Safety	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
Special Education Files	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓

SCORING: For each review topic, schools will be evaluated according to the scoring system outlined here.		
TYPE OF RESPONSE	WHAT THE RESPONSE REPRESENTS	SCORE
Meets	Expectations met	3
Partially Meets	Expectations partially met	2
Not Met	Does not meet expectations	1
N/A	Not applicable	0

Standards followed by an asterisk (*) do not apply to schools that received a performance rating Meets across academic performance indicators in the previous school year.

REVIEW PROTOCOL						
Annual Report Evaluation Component	Review Topic	School Walk-Through	Classroom Observation	Document Review	Board Interview	SL Interview
Academics	Instruction	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗

REVIEW PROTOCOL						
Annual Report Evaluation Component	Review Topic	School Walk-Through	Classroom Observation	Document Review	Board Interview	SL Interview
		Notes: The individual conducting the site visit will spend 20–40 minutes, as needed, collecting information in accordance with the criteria outlined in the table below. Note the instances in which certain criteria are not applicable.				

INSTRUCTION: This section does not apply to schools that received a performance rating Meets across academic performance indicators in the last SY.

CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
Communicating with Students	Teacher’s oral and written communication contains errors or is unclear or inappropriate to students. Teacher’s purpose in a lesson or unit is unclear to students. Teacher’s explanation of the content is unclear or confusing or uses inappropriate language.	Teacher’s oral and written communication contains no errors but may not be completely appropriate or may require further explanations to avoid confusion. Teacher attempts to explain the instructional purpose, with limited success.	Teacher communicates clearly and accurately to students both orally and in writing. Teacher’s purpose for the lesson or unit is clear, including where it is located within broader learning. Discussion of content is appropriate and connects with students’ knowledge and experience.	Teacher’s oral and written communication is clear and anticipates possible student misconceptions. Makes the purpose of the lesson or unit clear. Discussion of content connects with students’ knowledge and experience. Students contribute to explaining concepts to their peers.
Engaging Students in Learning	Students are not at all intellectually engaged in significant learning, as a result of inappropriate activities or materials, poor representations of content, or lack of lesson structure.	Students are partially intellectually engaged, resulting from activities or materials or uneven quality, inconsistent representation of content or uneven structure of pacing.	Students are intellectually engaged throughout the lesson, with appropriate activities and materials, instructive representations of content, and suitable structure and pacing of the lesson.	Students are highly engaged throughout the lesson and make material contributions to the representation of content, the activities, and the materials. The structure and pacing of the lesson allow for student reflection and closure.
Using Assessment in Instruction	Students do not know the criteria by which their work will be evaluated.	Students know some of the criteria by which their work will be evaluated. Teacher monitors the progress of the class as a whole but elicits no diagnostic information; feedback to	Students are fully aware of the criteria by which their work will be evaluated. Teacher monitors the progress of groups of students in the curriculum, making limited use of diagnostic prompts	Students are fully aware of the criteria by which their work will be evaluated. Teacher actively and systematically elicits diagnostic information from individual students regarding understanding and

INSTRUCTION: *This section does not apply to schools that received a performance rating Meets across academic performance indicators in the last SY.*

CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
		students is uneven and inconsistent in its timeliness.	to elicit information; feedback is timely, consistent, and of high quality.	monitors progress of individual students; feedback is timely, high quality, and students use feedback in their learning.
COLUMN TOTALS				0
TOTAL SCORE				0

SCORING SCALE: INSTRUCTION	TOTAL
EXEMPLARY	8 – 9
ACCEPTABLE	5 – 7
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	3 – 4
INADEQUATE	0 – 2

REVIEW PROTOCOL					
Review Topic	School Walk-Through	Classroom Observation	Document Review	Board Interview	SL Interview
Educational Program: Curriculum/Materials	×	✓	✓	×	✓
	Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to Site Visit: The school leader will consolidate all information relevant to the school’s curriculum, assessments, ELA programming, and Special Education programming in a binder for document review. • SL Interview: The individual conducting the site visit will reserve a portion of the school leader interview to ask any questions that arose during document review necessary to evaluate the school according to the criteria outlined below. 				

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: CURRICULUM & MATERIALS				
CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
Curriculum	The school does not have research-based, Common Core/CAS-aligned curricula in place.	The school has research-based, Common Core/CAS-aligned curricula for all core subjects in place. There are scope and sequence documents that outline grade and subject learning objectives;	All criteria for partially meets expectations plus: Common Core/CAS-aligned curricula and resources extend into intervention, special education,	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The school has tailored their curriculum to meet the needs of the particular student population, including the inclusion of

		teachers are familiar with curriculum documents and use them consistently to guide their planning.	acceleration, the arts, and PE.	culturally relevant materials.
Assessment*	The school does not have a system to administer interim assessments or use the data to inform instruction and identify students in need of support.	The school utilizes multiple grade-level appropriate assessments that were chosen based on research and the needs of a particular student population. There is a clear schedule and protocol for data analysis and data is used to identify students for remediation or acceleration.	All criteria for partially meets expectations plus: There is a clear process for ensuring assessments are aligned with curriculum, standards, and performance goals.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: Students are able to articulate their goals and performance toward meeting those goals.
Academic Intervention and Acceleration*	The school provides limited supports for students who are struggling academically or in need of acceleration. The RTI process is not systematically structured to assist all learners in need of intervention.	Tiered interventions are in place to provide needed additional academic and behavior supports. Although the MTSS/RTI process is in place and used by some teachers, the MTSS/RTI process is unclear to some.	All criteria for partially meets expectations plus: There are sufficient research-based resources and strategies available to provide services to students in need of intervention and/or acceleration.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The school collects data to inform and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of academic intervention and acceleration programming.
English Language Acquisition	Observed content instruction does not demonstrate explicit strategies to effectively meet the needs of ELL students. The focus of the lesson is on content, not on language.	Observed content instruction meets the needs of only a subset of ELL students. Language is referenced but is not taught explicitly and/or teacher provides some opportunities for students to practice language orally and/or in writing.	Observed content instruction meets the needs of all ELL students. Instruction explicitly addresses academic language and vocabulary, and teacher provides regular opportunities for students to practice language orally and/or in writing.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: Strategies and supports utilized for ELL students (in ELD or content classes) are monitored on an ongoing basis for effectiveness.
Special Education Instruction	Observed Special Education instruction and instructional environment provides minimal access to the appropriate grade	Observed Special Education instruction and instructional environment provides access to the appropriate grade level standards or extended	Observed Special Education instruction and instructional environment provide meaningful access to	All criteria for meets expectations plus: instruction and systems result in quality of programming that

	level standards. Systems for developing IEPs do not result in a clear connection between the strengths and needs identified in the present levels, goals, and the service delivery statement.	evidence outcomes such as through accommodations, specially designed instruction, etc. There is a system in place to collect progress monitoring data, including evidence of student progress and growth.	the appropriate grade level standards or extended evidence outcomes such as through accommodations, specially designed instruction, etc.	exceed compliance standards.
Cultural Competency*	The school has not provided training or support to staff on cultural competency and/or there is evidence of a lack of cultural competency across the school.	The school staff has had some training in cultural competency and considers the culture of their population when planning for schoolwide events and parent outreach. There are systems to promote culturally responsive teaching.	Teachers have received PD on cultural competency that they utilize in their classrooms. The school leader creates an environment that promotes the recognition of students' cultural backgrounds and celebrates the school's diversity.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: Teachers encourage students to challenge and question the dominant culture and students appear comfortable doing so in respectful ways.
COLUMN TOTALS	0			
TOTAL SCORE	0			

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM: CURRICULUM & MATERIALS				
CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
Curriculum	The school does not have research-based, Common Core/CAS-aligned curricula in place.	The school has research-based, Common Core/CAS-aligned curricula for all core subjects in place. There are scope and sequence documents that outline grade and subject learning objectives; teachers are familiar with curriculum documents and use them consistently to guide their planning.	All criteria for partially meets expectations plus: Common Core/CAS-aligned curricula and resources extend into intervention, special education, acceleration, the arts, and PE.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The school has tailored their curriculum to meet the needs of the particular student population, including the inclusion of culturally relevant materials.

SCORING SCALE: CURRICULUM & MATERIALS	TOTAL
EXEMPLARY	10 – 12

ACCEPTABLE	8 – 9
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	5 – 8
INADEQUATE	0 – 4

REVIEW PROTOCOL					
Review Topic	School Walk-Through	Classroom Observation	Document Review	Board Interview	SL Interview
School Culture & Discipline	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
	Notes: The individual conducting the site visit will spend 20–40 minutes, as needed, collecting information in accordance with the criteria outlined in the table below. Note the instances in which certain criteria are not applicable.				

SCHOOL CULTURE: <i>This section does not apply to schools that received a performance rating Meets across academic performance indicators in the last SY.</i>				
CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
Creating an Environment of Respect	Classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students are negative or inappropriate and characterized by sarcasm, putdowns, or conflict.	Classroom interactions are generally appropriate and free from conflict but may be characterized by occasional displays of insensitivity.	Classroom interactions reflect general warmth and caring and are respectful of the cultural and developmental differences among groups of students.	Classroom interactions are highly respectful, reflecting genuine warmth and caring toward individuals. Students themselves ensure maintenance of high levels of civility among members of the class.
Establishing a Culture for Learning	The classroom does not represent a culture for learning and is characterized by low teacher commitment to the subject, low expectations for student achievement, and little student pride in work.	The classroom environment reflects only a minimal culture for learning, with only modest or inconsistent expectations for student achievement, little teacher commitment to the subject, and little student pride in work. Both teacher and students are performing at the minimal level to “get by.”	The classroom environment represents a genuine culture for learning, with commitment to the subject on the part of both teacher and students, high expectations for student achievement, and student pride in work.	Students assume much of the responsibility for establishing a culture for learning in the classroom by taking pride in their work, initiating improvements to their products, and holding the work to the highest standard.
Managing Behavior	Student behavior is poor, with no clear expectations, no monitoring of	Teacher makes an effort to establish standards of conduct for students, monitor	Teacher is aware of student behavior, has established clear standards of conduct,	Student behavior is entirely appropriate, with evidence of student participation

SCHOOL CULTURE: This section does not apply to schools that received a performance rating Meets across academic performance indicators in the last SY.

CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
	student behavior, and inappropriate response to student misbehavior.	student behavior, and respond to student misbehavior, but these efforts are not always successful.	and responds to student misbehavior in ways that are appropriate and respectful of the students.	in setting expectations and monitoring behavior.
COLUMN TOTALS	0			
TOTAL SCORE	0			

SCORING SCALE: SCHOOL CULTURE & DISCIPLINE	TOTAL
EXEMPLARY	8 – 9
ACCEPTABLE	5 – 7
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	3 – 4
INADEQUATE	0 – 2

REVIEW PROTOCOL					
Review Topic	School Walk-Through	Classroom Observation	Document Review	Board Interview	SL Interview
	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Board Legal Obligations	Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to Site Visit: The school leader will consolidate all information relevant to the board governance criteria outlined below in a binder for document review. • Board Interview: The individual conducting the site visit will reserve a portion of the board interview to ask any questions that arose during document review necessary to evaluate the school according to the criteria outlined below. 				

BOARD LEGAL OBLIGATIONS		
ITEM	MET (1)/ NOT MET (0)	NOTES
Bylaws in place that outline board role and legal obligation		
Articles of incorporation in place that indicate current nonprofit status		
Board handbook in place that outlines board member expectations		

BOARD LEGAL OBLIGATIONS		
ITEM	MET (1)/ NOT MET (0)	NOTES
Financial transparency compliance		
Financial reporting compliance		
Board complies with open meetings requirements		
Board holds meetings (at least quarterly)		
Regular revision and approval of key policies (employment, enrollment, etc.)		
Approval of annual audit		
Approval of annual budget		
Board meets authorizer deadlines and requirements		
COLUMN TOTALS	0	

SCORING SCALE: BOARD LEGAL OBLIGATIONS	TOTAL
EXEMPLARY	19 – 24
INADEQUATE	0 – 6

REVIEW PROTOCOL					
Review Topic	School Walk-Through	Classroom Observation	Document Review	Board Interview	SL Interview
	✘	✘	✔	✔	✘
Board Governance	Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to Site Visit: The school leader will consolidate all information relevant to the board governance criteria outlined below in a binder for document review. • Board Interview: The individual conducting the site visit will reserve a portion of the board interview to ask any questions that arose during document review necessary to evaluate the school according to the criteria outlined below. 				

BOARD GOVERNANCE				
CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
The charter school has adopted and implemented conflict of interest policies that prevent real or apparent conflicts of interest.	The charter school has not adopted and implemented conflict of interest policies that prevent real or apparent conflicts of interest.	NOT APPLICABLE		The charter school has adopted and implemented conflict of interest policies that prevent real or apparent conflicts of interest.
The charter school administration provides monthly financial reports to its governing board for review and approval.	The charter school administration does not provide monthly financial reports to its governing board for review and approval.			The charter school administration provides monthly financial reports to its governing board for review and approval.
Academic Oversight	The Board does not receive sufficient data on the school's academic performance to understand how the school is performing.	The Board regularly monitors some academic metrics, which they use to guide decision-making. However, the Board lacks sufficient expertise to fully understand all data.	The Board has members with expertise in E-12 education, and all Board members are able to understand student achievement data. Student achievement metrics, both interim and summative and aggregate as well as disaggregated, are regularly monitored by the Board.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The Board receives annual PD on student achievement data.
Financial Oversight	The Board does not regularly monitor the school's financial performance.	The Board sets and regularly monitors progress around key financial metrics that are both short- and long-term, including budget versus actuals. There is a	All criteria for partially meets expectations plus: The Board has members with finance expertise, and all Board members are able to understand budgets, audits,	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The Board sets and monitors progress towards financial goals that are related to the school's long-term financial health.

BOARD GOVERNANCE				
CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
		comprehensive, Board-adopted financial policies document in place that is followed by both the Board and school leadership. The Board monitors implementation of internal controls.	and development. The Board sets and regularly monitors progress towards financial goals. The budget creation process is based on data, including sound revenue and enrollment projections.	
Operational Oversight	The Board does not monitor operational metrics — such as facilities, transportation, school culture, and enrollment metrics as appropriate for the school — or does not use data to inform decision making.	The Board regularly monitors some of the school’s operational metrics, which they use to guide decision making. However, the Board lacks sufficient expertise to fully understand all data or data conversations are incomplete.	The Board has members with expertise in school operations, and all Board members are able to understand operational data. Appropriate operational metrics are regularly monitored by the Board. The Board sets goals around relevant operations systems.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The Board receives annual PD on relevant operational data.
Strategic Planning	The Board does not engage in strategic planning and spends the majority of its time on reactive conversations and decision.	The Board has expertise in strategy and long-term planning but spends close to half its time on reactive conversations and decision.	The Board regularly engages in strategic planning to influence the school’s short- and long-term direction as appropriate for its stage of development.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The Board has a formal long-term strategic plan that is revisited and revised as needed on an annual basis.
Human Capital Oversight	The Board has not discussed future leadership plans within the last twelve months.	The Board has discussed leadership succession in the last twelve months but has not developed any corresponding written plans.	The Board has a leadership succession plan in place to ensure consistency in implementing the mission and vision of the school during transition of leadership. The Board evaluates the school leader at least annually.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: There is a strong plan for developing/maintaining a school leader pipeline, including both internal candidate development and external partnerships for leadership development.

BOARD GOVERNANCE				
CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
COLUMN TOTALS	0	0	0	0
TOTAL SCORE				0

SCORING SCALE: BOARD GOVERNANCE	TOTAL
EXEMPLARY	19 – 24
ACCEPTABLE	13 – 18
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	7 – 12
INADEQUATE	0 – 6

Review Topic	School Walk-Through	Classroom Observation	Document Review	Board Interview	SL Interview
Safety	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Walk-Through: The authorizer will confirm that any signage indicated in both plans listed below are current and posted throughout the school. Prior to Site Visit: The school leader will consolidate all information relevant to the school safety criteria outlined below in a binder for document review. 				

SCHOOL SAFETY				
CRITERIA	0	1	2	3
The school presents current (dated within calendar year) plans to respond to inclement and/or severe weather.		NOT APPLICABLE		
The school presents current (dated within calendar year) plans to protect and/or evacuate students as appropriate in the instance of an emergency.				
COLUMN TOTALS	0			
TOTAL SCORE	0			

SCORING SCALE: SCHOOL SAFETY	TOTAL
EXEMPLARY	19 – 24
ACCEPTABLE	13 – 18
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	7 – 12
INADEQUATE	0 – 6

Review Topic	School Walk-Through	Classroom Observation	Document Review	Board Interview	SL Interview
	✗	✗	✓	✗	✓
Special Education Files	Notes:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document Review: The authorizer will select three special education files at random during document review and will evaluate those files using the forms below. The school leader shall not pull these files in advance of the site visit. School Leader Interview: The authorizer will raise any related questions or concerns during the school leader interview. 				

Student A Name:	Grade Level:		Exceptionality:
Folder Contents	Requirement	Outcome of Review	Notes
IEP Date	IEP dated within one calendar year	<input type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Available <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Evaluation Date	Evaluation or waiver dated within 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Available <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
IEP Compliance with Evaluation	Student exceptionality on IEP aligns with evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Available <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
IEP Signatures	IEP is signed by all required parties	<input type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Available <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Service Minutes Provided	Evidence of service minutes provided in accordance with current IEP for previous and current semester (or since IEP creation/date)	<input type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Available <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Progress Reports	Most recent 2 progress reports are present in the folder and signed by parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Compliant <input type="checkbox"/> Not Available <input type="checkbox"/> Other	

SCORING SCALE: SPECIAL EDUCATION FILES	TOTAL
EXEMPLARY	19 – 24
ACCEPTABLE	13 – 18
NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	7 – 12
INADEQUATE	0 – 6

Exhibit 10: Renewal Resource Bank

The final section of the package includes additional charter renewal resources to assist authorizer staff in preparing for and executing the renewal process. There are also resources that may assist school leadership and governing boards in the renewal preparation. (This is not an exhaustive list.)

General

- [NACSA, Principles & Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing, https://www.qualitycharters.org/for-authorizers/principles-and-standards/](https://www.qualitycharters.org/for-authorizers/principles-and-standards/)
- [NACSA, 2021 Supplemental Renewal Guidance, https://www.qualitycharters.org/2021/08/public-charter-school-renewal-guidance-resource/](https://www.qualitycharters.org/2021/08/public-charter-school-renewal-guidance-resource/)
- [Colorado Standards for Charter Schools and Charter School Authorizers](#)
- [2021-CSI-Charter-Renewal-Handbook.pdf](#)
- [CSI Renewal Timeline & Submissions Overview](#)
- [CSI Strategic Planning Guide for Charter School Boards](#)
- [DPS School Quality Framework](#)
- [DPS Renewal Policy](#)

Renewal Application and Body of Evidence

- [2020 21 Full Application PART A For Schools.pdf](#)
- [2020 21 Charter Renewal App PART B For Schools.pdf](#)
- [2020-2021 APS Charter Renewal Application \(under AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION heading\)](#)
- [Academic-Financial-and-Organizational Governance-Requirements-for-Renewal.pdf](#)
- Board [Minutes](#) Compliance Checklists

Serving Students with Disabilities

- [Student-Services-Screener-2020.pdf](#)
- [NACSA, Special Education Toolkit](#)

Serving English Learners

- [Student-Services-Screener-2020.pdf](#)

- [NACSA, EL Toolkit](#)

COVID

- [2020-2021-CSI-UIP-Handbook-COVID-update.pdf](#)
- [CSI-2020-Charter-Renewal-Modifications-due-to-COVID-19.pdf](#)

Options Short of Nonrenewal

- [Tiered-Supports-One-Pager-FINAL.pdf](#)

Developing a Recommendation Report

- [SAMPLE Signed Board Resolution Requesting Charter Renewal \(last item under Board Specific Resources\)](#)