



Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework

OBJECTIVE

To provide charter school operators and boards with clear expectations, fact-based oversight, and timely feedback while ensuring charter autonomy.

- Clear standards, timely feedback, maximum transparency
- Objective information for schools, students, and families
- Differentiated oversight including incentives for high-performing charter schools
- Comprehensive information to guide charter renewal determinations

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Section 1: Introduction

This document describes the Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework, the accountability mechanism for all charter schools authorized by the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board (MCSAB).

This document provides:

- a conceptual overview of the Charter School Performance Framework (the body of the document); along with
- the specifics regarding Performance Framework implementation developed with charter school leader input (the appendices).

In addition to establishing performance criteria for charter schools, the Charter School Performance Framework also ensures that the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board is accountable to charter schools.

The MCSAB is accountable for implementing a rigorous and fair oversight process that respects the autonomy that is vital to charter school success.

It is this mutual obligation that drives the Charter School Performance Framework – a collaborative effort with the common objective of providing Mississippi students with a high quality education that prepares them for post-graduation academic and career success.

Charter School Performance Framework: Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board Obligations

- Clearly communicate standards and expectations to schools;
- Conduct a transparent, consistent, and predictable oversight process;
- Conduct an oversight process that is respectful of schools' autonomy;
- Focus on student outcomes and not on inputs; and
- Provide fact-based feedback to schools and communities indicating where schools stand relative to performance framework expectations and standards.

Section 2: Objective of the Charter School Performance Framework

The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board has the responsibility of making sure charter schools provide an excellent education for Mississippi public school students.

The MCSAB acknowledges that charter schools need independence in order to develop and apply the policies and educational strategies that maximize their effectiveness.

The Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework balances these two considerations.

The objective of the Charter School Performance Framework is to provide charter school operators and boards with clear expectations, fact-based oversight, and timely feedback while ensuring charter autonomy.

In addition to achieving this objective, the Performance Framework should deliver important secondary benefits:

- incentives for high-performing charter schools that regularly achieve their academic, financial soundness and organizational performance standards;
- comprehensive information for data-driven charter renewal determinations;
- differentiated oversight based on each school's performance;
- maximum transparency so all stakeholders can understand where charter schools are meeting or exceeding standards, and where they are failing to achieve key performance standards; and
- objective information for students and families who want to learn more about the charter schools in their community.

The Performance Framework describes methods that seek the optimal balance between oversight and independence, while delivering the secondary benefits important to each targeted stakeholder. The Performance Framework is a dynamic process subject to continuous review and improvement.

The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board invites Mississippi's charter schools to be partners in the continuous improvement of the Performance Framework.

Section 3: Performance Framework Assessment Components

The Performance Framework assesses schools on their ability to operate as sound, independent entities that successfully serve all students. The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board has selected assessment components that strike the balance between easy-to-submit documents and data that provide fact-based insight on school performance.

Routine Ongoing Submissions

During the year, schools are required to submit a variety of academic, financial, and organizational data to the MCSAB and to the Mississippi Department of Education. It is vital that this information is submitted by the given due date. These required submissions are often linked to funding allotments or federal reporting requirements. The Authorizer Board will work closely with MDE to streamline the nature and timing of data requests. See the Mississippi Charter School Reporting Calendar for greater detail on each requirement and its function.

Performance Frameworks

Academic – The Academic Performance Framework includes measures that allow the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board to evaluate charter school academic performance. This section includes indicators, measures, and metrics for student academic proficiency, student academic growth, performance of major student subgroups, and optional, additional school-specific measures. Also, MCSAB will include a breakdown of all statewide accountability data along with the indicators and metrics in each school’s annual performance report.

A charter school that meets the expectations in this area is implementing its academic program effectively. For each measure, a school receives one of four ratings: Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Approaches Expectations, or Fails to Meet Expectations. A school that receives a Fails to Meet Expectations in any category may receive increased oversight including but not limited to additional site visits and corrective action steps. A school that receives three or more consecutive Fails to Meet Expectations on Indicator 1: State Accountability Letter Grade may result in a recommendation of revocation of the charter.

Financial – The Financial Performance Framework measures the financial health and viability of schools through four indicators: 1) fund balance; 2) audit findings; 3) debt to asset ratio; and 4) timely reporting. These four indicators will be evaluated on an annual basis. A school that receives three or more consecutive Fails to Meet Expectations may result in a recommendation of revocation of the charter.

Organizational – The Organizational Performance Framework provides performance targets and compliance targets for the legal and contractual obligations that schools must meet. There are six areas of focus: 1) educational program requirements; 2) enrollment; 3) discipline; 4) special education and at-risk student populations; 5) school environment; and 6) governance. Schools begin with 100 points and provide assurances that they are following policies and procedures mandated by state law and MCSAB policy. A school loses points when it receives more than one Notice of Concern or one Notice of Breach per indicator. A school that receives three or more consecutive Fails to Meet Expectations may result in a recommendation of revocation of the charter.

There are several indicators that MCSAB deems as “Critical Indicators.” These indicators are highlighted in yellow in Appendix A. If schools fail to perform in these highlighted areas, they will bypass Level 1 intervention and automatically receive a Notice of Breach. They must cure this concern in order to receive an Organizational Performance Framework score.



Mississippi Charter School Performance Framework

Annual Performance Report

The Annual Performance Report is a process that compiles all data from the Performance Framework components and provides a year-long evaluation of school performance. In the Annual Performance Report, each school will receive academic, financial, and organizational performance ratings. Each framework has a variety of indicators that are worth points, which are then totaled to determine a rating.

The MCSAB is committed to clearly communicating information from the Charter School Performance Framework to families, schools, and the public. Annual Performance Reports will be provided to charter school boards of directors and school leaders each fall following the release of accountability data. These reports will also be posted on the MCSAB website and included in any required legislative and public reports.

Section 4: Performance Framework Process Description

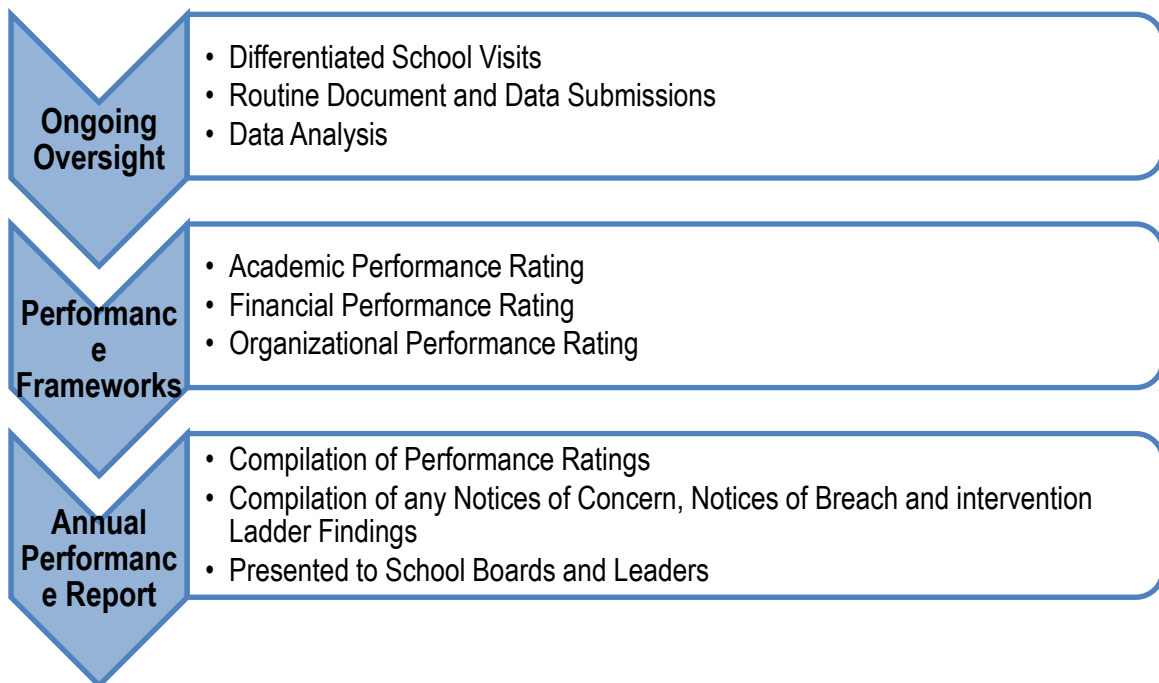
Process Description

The MCSAB has collaborated with charter school leaders to develop the Performance Framework process depicted in this flowchart. Throughout the school year, every charter school will submit scheduled documents and data that enable MCSAB to assess their compliance with critical policies and laws, and their progress in achieving important school milestones.

The document submissions required – and the timetable for each submission – are indicated in the Mississippi Charter School Reporting Calendar.

During the year, MCSAB staff will visit the campus of each charter school. The frequency and intensity of visits will depend on the number of years in operation, a school’s performance, and eligibility for a high-stakes decision.

In the fall of each school year, every charter school will receive an Annual Performance Report. The Annual Performance Report communicates a school’s academic, financial and organizational performance ratings along with information collected from the regular oversight process. The parameters of these analyses are indicated in detail in Appendix A: Detailed Performance Indicator Descriptions.



Differentiated Oversight: Site Visits vs. School Tours

Site visits and school tours provide MCSAB with a chance to connect with school leaders and boards, collect supporting evidence for renewal decisions, ensure the safety of school buildings, and verify that the needs of special student populations are being met. While the frequency and intensity of visits will depend on a school's performance and eligibility for a high-stakes decision, schools will receive at least one visit annually. Visits will be designed to limit disruption to the school day and on a routine basis will last no longer than one school day. Furthermore, MCSAB will notify schools of the nature and timing of their visit in advance. Specific issues may arise that necessitate another visit. In this case, MCSAB will provide schools with as much advance notice as possible.

Initial Five-Year Contract - Ongoing Monitoring Schedule – Years 1 and 2

		All Schools
Year 1	Site Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 1 informal visit within first month of school • 1 official site visit – 1st semester (after 1st round of benchmark data) • 1 official site visit – 2nd semester
	Data Submissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School submits all benchmark testing data on routine basis (including data on school selected indicators)
Year 2	Site Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 official site visit – 1st semester (after 1st round of benchmark data) • 1 official site visit – 2nd semester

		School On Track to Meet Expectations (Meets Expectations on ≥ 3 Academic Framework Indicators)	School Not on Track to Meet Expectations (Meets Expectations on < 3 Academic Framework Indicators)
Year 3	Site Visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 official site visit/school tour – 2nd semester 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 official site visit – 1st semester (after 1st round of benchmark data) • 1 official site visit – 2nd semester
Year 4	Site Visit		
Year 5	Site Visit		

- Schools will receive formal communication from the staff of the Authorizer Board after each official visit.
- The Performance and Accountability Committee will hold meetings after all visits to schools.
- Performance and Accountability Committee meetings will be called as necessary if an issue arises outside of the regular oversight schedule.

School Tours – Schools that are high performing in all three of the performance frameworks and aren't up for a renewal decision will receive a school tour. These tours are designed to conform to the daily routine of high-performing schools with minimal disruption. They may include:

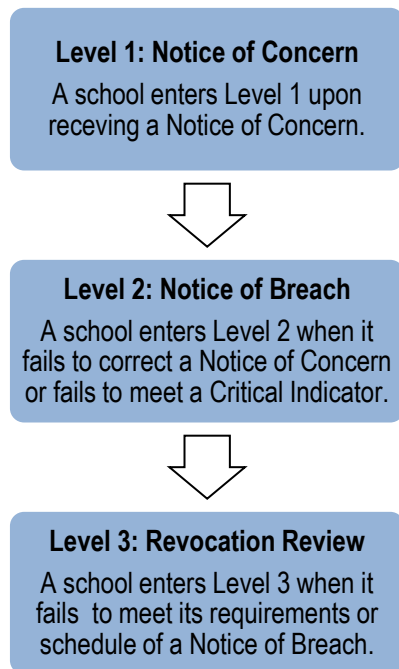
Component	Objective
Policies and Procedures Follow-Up	Ensure that schools have policies and procedures in place
Informal Classroom Visits	Gain a greater understanding of school operations
Facility Review	Evaluate the health and safety of the school facility
School Leader Conversation	Discuss the direction of the school and its continued path to success

Site Visits – Schools that are in their first year of operation, lower performing, or are up for a renewal decision will receive a more intensive annual site visit. These visits will examine school operations thoroughly in order to make informed renewal decisions or to highlight areas of growth for schools with staggering performance. They may include:

Component	Objective
Policies and Procedures Audit	Ensure that schools have all required policies and procedures in place to operate sound schools
Classroom Visits	Gain a greater understanding of school operations and school quality
Facility Review	Evaluate the health and safety of the school facility
Special Education Coordinator Interview	Gain additional information about how the school supports special student populations
School Leader Interview	Assess the school leader's operation of the school
Board / CMO Interview	Assess the board's understanding of the school's performance and any future plans for improvement

Intervention Ladder

Occasionally, the routine oversight process may result in adverse findings. Charter schools may fall out of compliance on important legal or contractual requirements. Academic standards may not be met. Financial soundness may become an issue. When these situations occur, schools enter into the intervention process.



All schools begin outside of the intervention ladder and are considered to be in **Good Standing**. Schools in good standing receive non-invasive regular oversight and submissions tracking. Schools must meet performance targets and maintain open communication with MCSAB in exchange for this level of non-invasive oversight.

Schools can enter **Level 1** of the intervention ladder if MCSAB receives a verified complaint of significant concern, or if regular oversight generates significant questions or concerns. We will communicate with school leaders, parents, and any other necessary stakeholders to verify complaints. We will contact the school leader and Board president to issue a formal Notice of Concern. The Notice of Concern contains specific actions and due dates required to remedy the concern. Upon remedying the concern, the school returns to **Good Standing**. If the concern is not remedied in the time allotted, the school progresses to **Level 2** of the intervention ladder.

At **Level 2**, the school is issued a Notice of Breach. The Notice of Breach outlines the actions necessary to cure the breach. A school can enter the ladder at **Level 2** if it fails to meet a Critical Indicator or it fails to correct a Notice of Concern. Once a Notice of Breach is issued, MCSAB monitors the school's implementation of the steps required to cure the breach. Once the school has met the Notice of Breach requirements, they exit from **Level 2** and return to in **Good Standing**. Repeated Notices of Concern or Breach may lead to increased oversight.

Failure to meet the requirements specified in the Notice of Breach will result in entry to **Level 3**, charter school revocation review. The review may include additional visits to the school or an in-depth audit to assess financial and organizational health. Schools in **Level 3** are at risk of contract revocation. Schools may also progress on the ladder to **Level 3** if they receive repeated Notices of Breach in the same school year. Findings from the revocation review will determine whether a school enters into revocation proceedings or is granted a revised Notice of Breach, returning to **Level 2**.

In unfortunate cases, data gathered from the Performance Framework process can be used to initiate charter school revocation proceedings. The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board recognizes the severity of this process and will use this authority only in the case of persistent shortcomings or a grave incident that threatens the health, safety, or welfare of students. If a school enters revocation proceedings, MCSAB will follow the closure and revocation procedures outlined in board policy.

Renewal Requirements

The Performance Framework provides timely and accurate information necessary for appropriate charter renewal decisions. Decisions will be made in accordance with the Charter Contract and the Performance Framework based on extensive longitudinal information over a school's charter term. The Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board will consider Performance Framework ratings, document submissions, school tours and site visits, annual performance reports, parental complaints, and other relevant information in its decisions. The MCSAB is charged with grounding its renewal decisions in evidence of the school's performance over the term of the charter contract in accordance with this performance framework.

Academic Requirements for Renewal

Initial Renewal

To be eligible for an initial renewal, a school must demonstrate that it's effectively implementing its academic program.

Most Recent Academic Performance Framework Indicator 1 Rating	Additional Evidence Needed	Eligibility for Renewal
Exceeds or Meets Expectations (A – C)	No Additional Evidence Needed	Eligible for Renewal
Approaches Expectations (D)	School Must Demonstrate Evidence of Significant Growth Over Charter Term OR Receives an Exceeds or Meets Expectations on 2/3 Additional Academic Indicators	Eligible for Renewal
Fails to Meet Expectations (F)	No Additional Evidence Needed	Not Eligible for Renewal

Subsequent Renewals

To be eligible for subsequent renewal terms, a school must demonstrate that it is effectively implementing its academic program and has demonstrated growth or exemplary performance.

Most Recent Academic Performance Framework Indicator 1 Rating	Eligibility for Renewal
Exceeds or Meets Expectations (A – C)	Eligible for Renewal
Approaches Expectations or Fails to Meet Expectations (D – F)	Not Eligible for Renewal

Financial and Organizational Requirements for Renewal

In order to be eligible for renewal, a school must demonstrate financial and organizational success by receiving a Meets or Approaches Expectations on both the Financial and Organizational Performance Frameworks. However, the Authorizer Board may grant a waiver of this requirement based on evidence and specific circumstances.

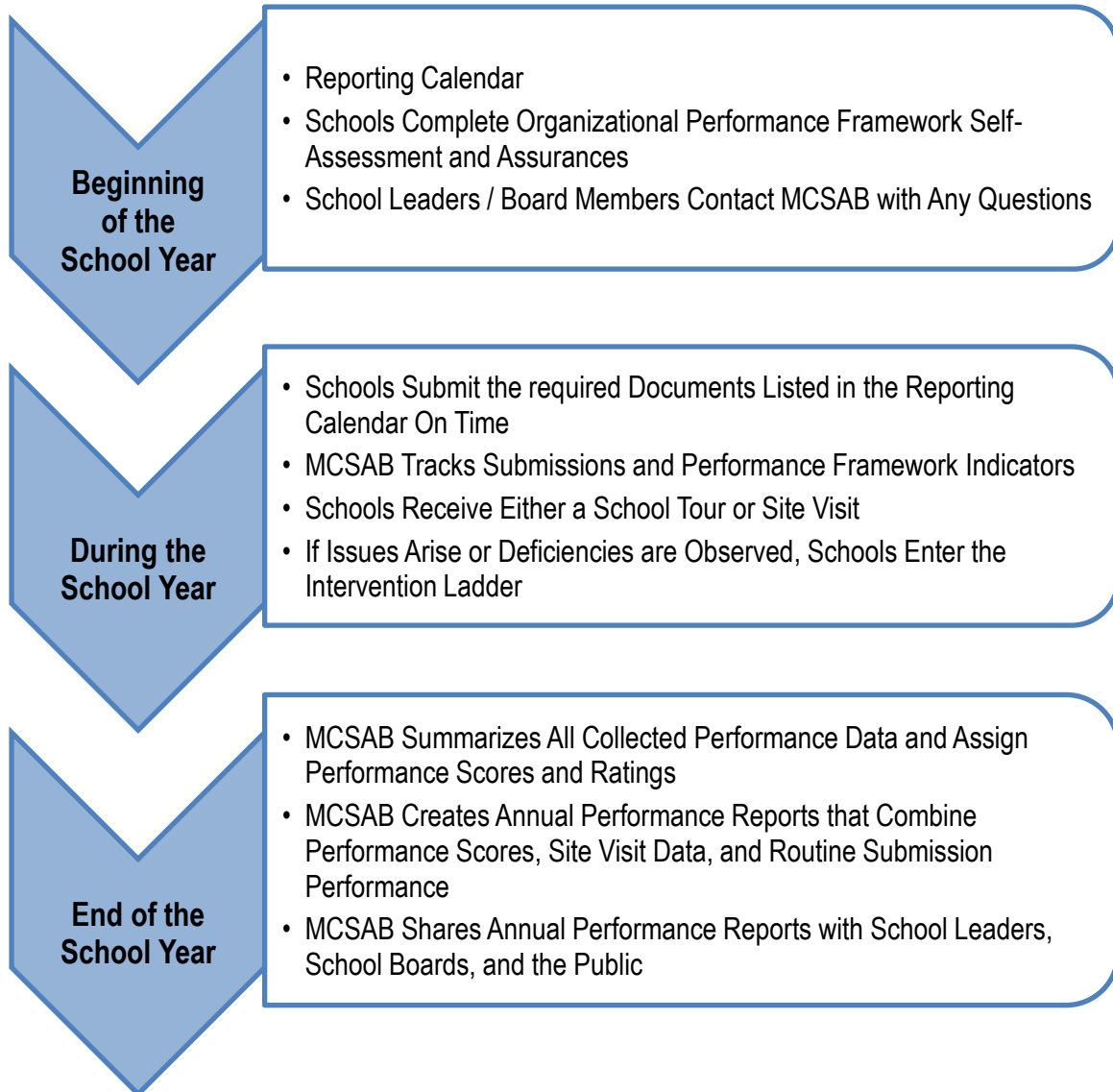
Renewal Terms

Once a school has been recommended for renewal, MCSAB will determine a renewal term length. Schools will receive base renewal term lengths determined by their Academic Performance Framework Indicator 1 Rating. Schools that achieve financial and organizational scores in the range of 80 – 100 are eligible for extra years added to the length of their charter terms. The table below details the number of additional years charter schools may earn.

Academic Base Term	Financial & Organizational Additional Years	Potential Term Lengths
Exceeds Expectations (A) 4 Years	Up to 1 Additional Year for Meets Expectations in Both Financial and Organizational Performance	4 – 5 Years
Meets Expectations (B) 4 Years	Up to 1 Additional Year for Meets Expectations in Both Financial and Organizational Performance	4 – 5 Years
Meets Expectations (C) 3 Years	Up to 1 Additional Year for Meets Expectations in Both Financial and Organizational Performance	3 – 4 Years
Approaches Expectations (D) 3 Years	No Additional Years Added	3 Years
Fails to Meet Expectations (F)	Not Eligible for Renewal	

Section 5: Performance Framework Timeline

The Performance Framework is implemented according to an annual timeline. The goals of the timeline: a) to set clear expectations for MCSAB’s interaction with schools; while b) standardizing the oversight process.



Schools should contact MCSAB at any time for additional support and information about meeting any of the Performance Framework components.

Appendix A: Detailed Performance Indicator Descriptions

I. Academic Performance Framework – Academic Performance Rating – K – 8				
Measure	Rating			
	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Approaches Expectations	Fails to Meet Expectations
1. State Accountability Letter Grade – Proficiency and Growth	A	B - C	D	F
2. School-Specific Academic Goals*	School exceeds school-specific annual goals.	School meets school-specific annual goals.	School did not meet school-specific academic goals.	School fell far below school-specific academic goals.
3. Subgroup Performance – Growth [^]	76 to 100% of subgroup students achieved growth target.	51 to 75% of subgroup students achieved growth target.	26 to 50% of subgroup students achieved growth target.	0 to 25% of subgroup students achieved growth target.
4. Subgroup Performance – Proficiency [^]	76 to 100% of subgroup students achieved a score of proficient or higher.	51 to 75% of subgroup students achieved a score of proficient or higher.	26 to 50% of subgroup students achieved a score of proficient or higher.	0 to 25% of subgroup students achieved a score of proficient or higher.

*Specific metrics and targets for school-specific academic goals will be developed and agreed upon by each charter school and the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board.

[^]Subgroup performance will be calculated for each eligible subgroup. Potential eligible subgroups include: gender, race, poverty status, special education status, English learner status, and gifted education status. Subgroup performance will be evaluated separately for reading and math exams and End of Course assessments by subgroup.

II. Financial Performance Framework – Financial Performance Rating	
Rating	Score
Meets Expectations	80 – 100
Approaches Expectations	60 – 79
Fails to Meet Expectations	0 – 59

Financial Performance Score Indicators				
Indicators	Potential Points	Full Credit	Partial Credit	No Credit
Fund Balance	Full Credit – 20 Points Partial Credit – 10 Points No Credit – 0 Points	Y1: >2% Y2: >3% Y3: >4% Y4: >5% Y5: >6% +Y5: >7.5%	Y1: 1-2% Y2: 1.5-3% Y3: 2-4% Y4: 2.5-5% Y5: 3-6% +Y5: 3.75-7.5%	Y1: <1% Y2: <1.5% Y3: <2% Y4: <2.5% Y5: <3% +Y5: <3.75%
Audit Findings	Full Credit – 20 Points Partial Credit – 10 Points No Credit – 0 Points	Unqualified Audit with No Findings	Unqualified Audit with No Recurring or Material Findings	-Unqualified Audit with Recurring or Material Findings; Or -Qualified Audit
Debt to Asset Ratio	Full Credit – 20 Points No Credit – 0 Points	<0.9	N/A	>0.9
Timely Reporting	Full Credit – 20 Points Partial Credit – 15 Points Partial Credit – 10 Points No Credit – 0 Points	-Quarterly reports, MDE Financial Submission Data, and Audit All Submitted Timely	1 Late – 15 Points 2 Late – 10 Points	3 – 5 Late

All information used to assess a school’s Financial Performance Rating and Score will come from annually audited financial documents.

III. Organizational Performance Framework – Organizational Performance Rating			
Rating	Score	Components	
Meets Expectations	80 - 100	Key Indicator	Points Possible
Approaches Expectations	60 - 79	Educational Program Requirements	12
Fails to Meet Expectations	0 - 59	Enrollment	19
<p>All schools start with the full amount of points and assure that they follow these policies and procedures.</p> <p>A school loses points when more than 1 Notice of Concern is issued or a Notice of Breach is issued.</p> <p>Some indicators are based on data outcomes and schools must achieve specified outcomes in order to earn points.</p>		Discipline	11
		Special Education / At-Risk Student Populations	28
		School Environment	21
		Governance	9
		Total	100
		<p>Critical Indicators: Boxes highlighted below in yellow represent, high priority indicators. Non-compliance in one of these items triggers an automatic Notice of Breach.</p>	

Organizational Performance Score Indicators			
A. Educational Program Requirements			
Indicator	Points	Detail	Credit
i. School Meets the Essential Terms Identified in Charter Contract	3		Education program meets contract specifications
ii. School Complies with All Reporting Requirements	3		No more than 1 Notice of Concern per Indicator No Notices of Breach per Indicator
iii. School Meets Attendance Goals	3		Attendance daily attendance meets at least 90% of students enrolled.
iv. Teachers and Administrators Meet All Credentialing Requirements	3		Teacher credentialing data meets legal specifications

Organizational Performance Score Indicators			
B. Enrollment			
Indicator	Points	Detail	Credit
i. Student Enrollment and Underserved Student Percentage	3		Enrollment data meets contract specifications
ii. School Follows Recruitment, Enrollment Plan, and Lottery Policy	3		No more than 1 Notice of Concern per Indicator No Notices of Breach per Indicator
iii. Non-Discriminatory Admissions	4	Admissions process in non-discriminatory against students with disabilities and other at-risk student populations.	Critical Indicator
iv. School Follows Compulsory Attendance Laws, Truancy Policy, and Timely Transfer of Records	3		No more than 1 Notice of Concern per Indicator No Notices of Breach per Indicator
v. School Re-Enrolls High Percentage of Students	3	Percentage of students returning to school that aren't enrolled in a terminal grade	At least 85% of students return to school for the next year
vi. School Has Low Transfer Rates During the School Year	3	Percentage of students who transfer schools for reasons outside of residency issues	School's transfer rate is at or below 7.5%

Organizational Performance Score Indicators			
C. Discipline			
Indicator	Points	Detail	Credit
i. School Adheres to Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy	4		Critical Indicator
ii. Suspensions and Expulsions are Conducted Properly	4		
iii. School Has Low In-School and Out-of-School Suspension Rates and Expulsion Rates	3		Suspension and expulsion rates are at or below district percentage

Organizational Performance Score Indicators			
D. Special Education / At-Risk Student Populations – Observed During School Visit or MDE Monitoring			
Indicator	Points	Detail	Credit
i. Enrollment and Retention	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School maintains recurrent enrollment – term to term. School promotes attendance policy and intervention. School ensures provision of transition activities (age 16+) and access to programs that support diploma choices. 	Critical Indicator
ii. Schools Identify At-Risk Students	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School locates and/or identifies students who are eligible for or may be eligible for special education services. School identifies students in need of ELL services 	
iii. School Conducts Evaluations	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School conducts appropriate and timely evaluations, re-evaluations, and re-evaluation waivers. If school contracts with external provider, it has established and implemented standards of practice for evaluators. 	
iv. School Writes Required IEPs and Section 504 Plans	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IEPs are appropriately developed, revised, and reviewed. Section 504 Plans are developed and implemented properly. 	
v. School Provides Programming and Placement	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special education services and ELL services are implemented. School exits and monitors students from ELL services as necessary. Curricular modifications and accommodations are provided. 	
vi. School Follows Discipline Procedures	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School follows procedural safeguards for disciplining students with disabilities or students suspected of having a disability. 	
vii. Assessments	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are administered appropriate state and local assessments Alternate assessments are provided for students 	

Organizational Performance Score Indicators			
E. School Environment – Observed During Facilities Review			
Indicator	Points	Detail	Credit
i. School Meets Local and State Fire and Life Safety Codes	4		Critical Indicator
ii. School Meets Public Health Sanitary Codes	4		
iii. School Meets ADA Requirements	3		No more than 1 Notice of Concern per Indicator No Notices of Breach per Indicator
iv. School Follows Transportation Plan	3		
v. School Follows Bus Safety Protocols	3		
vi. School Conducts Background Checks for All Employees, Staff, and Volunteers	4		Critical Indicator

Organizational Performance Score Indicators			
F. Governance			
Indicator	Points	Detail	Credit
i. Board Maintains Registered Non-Profit Status	3		Sec. of State Verification
ii. School and Board Adhere to Mississippi Open Meetings Act	3		No more than 1 Notice of Concern per Indicator No Notices of Breach per Indicator
iii. School and Board Adhere to Public Records Act and FERPA	3		