



FY 2015 PERFORMANCE PLAN
District of Columbia Public Charter School Board

MISSION

The D.C. Public Charter School Board's (PCSB) mission is to provide quality public school options for DC students, families, and communities by conducting a comprehensive application review process, providing effective oversight of and meaningful support to DC public charter schools, and by actively engaging key stakeholders.

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

PCSB carries out four key functions: 1) ensure that only the highest quality organizations are approved to open charter schools, which is accomplished through our comprehensive application review process; 2) make effective oversight decisions in the interest of students and hold charter schools to high standards with respect to results; 3) provide clear feedback to charter schools and maintain a system of rewards and consequences to manage progress towards desired outcomes; 4) actively engage key stakeholders to ensure transparency and accountability through an exchange process that facilitates the sharing of critical information and feedback regarding community impact and preferences.

AGENCY WORKLOAD MEASURES

Measure	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 YTD¹
Number of Public Charter Schools Applications	12	11	10
Number of Qualitative Site Reviews (formally PDRs)	29	54	42
Number of Compliance Reviews	98	102	109
Number of Financial Reviews	285	285	285
Number of Workshops	N/A	35	10
Number of School Openings (New Charters and New Campuses)	4 new charters schools; 1 expansion	4 new charter schools; 2 expansions	4 new charter schools, 5 expansions
Number of School Closings	0	0	4

¹ The date was not given at the time this report was published.



OBJECTIVE 1: Promote increased school academic quality through oversight reviews and our Performance Management Framework (PMF).

INITIATIVE 1.1: Conduct rigorous 5, 10 and 15-year reviews of DC charter schools.

PCSB will complete rigorous reviews of schools in their 5th, 10th or 15th year of operation, ensuring that low-performing schools, according to our PMF, take one or more actions to improve performance or close. Rigorous reviews will include Qualitative Site Reviews (QSRs); review of academic performance and non-academic, finance, and compliance indicators; and assessment of performance against the goals and academic achievement expectations of a school's charter.

Completion date: September 2015

INITIATIVE 1.2: Address low-performing schools in any year of their charters.

PCSB will continue to effectively monitor the performance of each school in its portfolio. School leadership will be required to meet with PCSB staff and board to discuss a school's performance if performance is found to be lacking.

Completion date: September 2015

INITIATIVE 1.3: Encourage Tier 1 schools to expand or replicate.

PCSB will continue to promote the expansion of Tier 1 schools. Schools that are high achievers will be given help to promote their expansions.

Completion date: September 2015

INITIATIVE 1.4: Complete successful releases of our Early Childhood and Adult Education PMFs and implement the newly tiered PMFs for SY14-15 (Age-Friendly DC: Domain 6).

PCSB released the Early Childhood and Adult Education PMFs for the first time in November 2014. PCSB will work to tier both frameworks for the first time during the upcoming year. PCSB staff will be required to facilitate numerous working group sessions to ensure that the charter school community is able to inform and shape the new mechanisms.

Completion date: September 2015

OBJECTIVE 2: Ensure charter schools fulfill their roles as public schools serving all students.

INITIATIVE 2.1: Use improved data quality and data transparency, along with other efforts at education and technical assistance to reduce incidences of expulsion, long-term suspension, and truancy.

In FY15 PCSB will collect data from schools to inform policy, provide schools with sector-level trends, and ensure compliance of applicable law. PCSB will also provide transparency to the public and stakeholders, identify schools that may be outliers in regards to truancy, discipline, student populations served, and



disparities in performance of subgroups within a school. These data are currently being shared with schools via PCSB's dashboards.

Completion date: September 2015

INITIATIVE 2.2: Develop and share discipline and attendance data for schools with similar populations to help reduce incidences of expulsion, long-term suspensions, and truancy.

PCSB uses, and will continue to use facilitate file and data sharing amongst PCSB staff and with each charter LEA. The PCSB SharePoint program has an internal and external interface. The internal interface is what PCSB uses to store important documents, keep track of organizational goals, and test real-time data reports before releasing them to LEAs. The external interface allows schools to view their enrollment, attendance, and discipline data in customized reports. For example, schools are able to view reports that state whether they have uploaded at least 90% of their attendance. By developing a secure external interface, PCSB will continue to be able to develop dynamic student and school level reports for LEAs to view the data they have submitted to ProActive. These reports will allow schools to monitor their attendance submissions in real-time and also view reports that summarize their discipline and truancy incidents.

PCSB will create summary reports meant to encourage schools to check that the data in ProActive accurately reflects the data in their own school information systems, and allows LEAs to compare how they are performing in these areas relative to the sector average and schools that serve similar grade levels. In FY14, PCSB developed visual dashboards on its external interface for discipline, truancy, enrollment and academic performance. PCSB will continue to implement the use of these dashboards to allow LEAs to drill down and evaluate how students are performing by sub-group in these areas, including PMF performance disaggregated by subgroup.

Completion date: September 2015

INITIATIVE 2.3: Improve service oversight for students with special needs by implementing a detailed self-study to help schools improve education delivery through reflective practice and implementing audit policies to address issues. Expand mystery shopper program of contacting schools posing as parents of special needs children seeking to apply.

PCSB will continue to conduct Special Education audits using data housed in ProActive in efforts to assess potential discriminatory practices against students with disabilities through the analysis of varying indicators, such as suspensions, expulsions, or mid-year withdrawal rates of students with disabilities relative to their non-disabled peers. **Completion date: September 2015**



OBJECTIVE 3: Improve fiscal and compliance oversight.

INITIATIVE 3.1: Continue efforts to improve fiscal monitoring of charter schools, publishing Finance Audit Review reports for Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015 that provide clear indicators of charter school financial health.

Public charter schools are required to submit annual financial audits performed by PCSB-approved independent auditors. PCSB reviews each school audit. Additionally, PCSB has for years reviewed key financial ratios of all schools it oversees, comparing these ratios with industry standards of health. In January 2011, PCSB established the Audit Management Unit (AMU) to enhance its charter school financial oversight. The AMU consists of three District agencies with responsibility for aspects of charter school finances: PCSB, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE) Office of Charter School Financing and Support.

The AMU engaged Bearsolutions LLC, an independent financial consulting firm with hands-on experience and background in nonprofit and educational organizations, to develop analytical tools and processes to support fiscal oversight. This engagement resulted in the deployment of CHARM (Charter Audit Resource Management), a fiscal oversight model and supporting database tool, which was renamed Finance and Audit Review (FAR) in 2014. FAR analyzes data from schools' financial audits to measure the fiscal performance of DC charter schools. Pilot reports were issued for FY10 and FY11; since then, the FY12 and FY13 reports have been made available to schools and the public.

Completion date: September 2015

INITIATIVE 3.2: Use the Financial Audit Review Score to work with financially struggling charter schools on steps to improve their health.

An essential component of each annual financial review is to identify schools potentially in danger of insolvency. Since FY11, PCSB has used the Financial Audit Review (FAR, formally known as CHARM) score to provide a more sophisticated measure of financial health. However, the score is not published on the FAR Report Cards, because school leaders expressed concern about the score being used as a financial rating tool or risk measure by commercial lenders and investors.

PCSB will continue to rely on the FAR score for internal guidance in identifying low-performing schools for more in-depth financial oversight, including but not limited to collections of monthly financial statements and regular meetings with school leaders and business managers. School leaders have reported that these meetings are helpful in improving their understanding of financial performance standards, clarifying results of the individual school reports, and developing plans to address agreed-upon issues. Minutes of the meetings, documenting the discussions and agreements, are distributed to school representatives as well as PCSB and OCFO.



The number of high-performing schools has increased by 20 while the number of low-performing schools has decreased by 8 since FY11.

Completion date: September 2015

OBJECTIVE 4: Increase community engagement and parent education about school quality.

INITIATIVE 4.1: Improve community engagement and awareness of charter schools and their ratings by enhancing PCSB website (www.dcpcsb.org), increasing awareness and usage of our mobile app (MyDCcharters), and widely distributing PMF tiers through our PMF Parent Guide in English and Spanish.

PCSB's stakeholder engagement plan includes community outreach activities, including community forums, information provided through publications, refreshing the PCSB website and updates to email subscribers, hosting or participating in community events, active engagement with the Community Advisory Group and encouraging community member participation and feedback in PCSB hearings, community forums and events. PCSB will also make a concerted effort to widely disseminate PMF parent guides in English as well as Spanish. PCSB will also continue to increase Twitter activity including Tweeting information on each monthly Board meeting and other positive news about charter schools.

Completion date: September 2015

INITIATIVE 4.2: Improve ease of applying to charter schools by creating a common enrollment process and publicizing this widely through various print and electronic platforms.

Completion date: September 2015

In 2013-14 PCSB, DCPS, DME, and most charter LEAs collaborated to create a common application and lottery called My School DC. The My School DC application is a single online application DC families use to apply for the 87 participating public charter schools (PK3–12), DCPS out-of-boundary schools (K–12), DCPS PK3 and PK4 programs, and DCPS specialized high schools (9–12) for 2014-15 schools year admission. This year the high school deadline was February 3rd and the PK3-8th grade deadline was March 3. The My School DC common lottery is a single, random lottery that determines placement for new students at all participating schools. Student-school matches are based on the number of spaces at each school; sibling, proximity, and other preferences; and each student's choices. Through the My School DC common lottery, the six DCPS specialized high schools admit students based on specific criteria. Students who want to stay in their current school or attend their feeder-pattern DCPS schools do not need to apply to the lottery but rather follow their school's reenrollment procedures. An extensive parent outreach campaign included door-to-door canvassing, attendance at community events, office hours for assistance with completing the application, media advertisements, and social media outreach. My School DC is also partnering with city agencies for example, DC Public Libraries, the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services, Office of



Latino Affairs, Office of Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, DC Water, and the Department of Human Services.

PCSB plans to partner with My School DC in FY15 as well and looks forward to helping publicize the common application and deadlines through our website and social media account as well as collaborating on the the EdFest being held November 22, 2014.

INITIATIVE 4.3: Improve transparency around PCSB's authorizer work.

To accomplish this initiative the Board will make board meetings and other materials available to the public and publish increased amounts of data on charter school performance, compliance, and finances. PCSB will continue to webcast all of its monthly Board meetings and other special Board meetings, such as when the Board reviews and votes on new charter applications. PCSB also will post all Board agendas and materials to their website 48 hours prior to Board meetings. PCSB also plans to post increasing levels of data relating to charter school performance on its website, including comprehensive discipline and attendance data, test score data, our performance management framework and the results of our annual Financial Audit Review. This data will also be posted in Socrata, a tool that allows others to download the raw data and manipulate it for their own purposes. Finally, PCSB is planning to launch a revamped website in FY15 that will increase access to data for PCSB stakeholders, particularly families and students.

Completion date: September 2015



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Through FY 2014)²

Measure	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2014 YTD ³	FY 2015 Projection	FY 2016 Projection	FY 2017 Projection
Number of charter LEAs receiving 5, 10 or 15 year review	16	16	11	13	12	4
Number of Tier 1 charter LEAs with announced plans to expand or replicate	9	5	6	5	TBD ⁴	TBD ⁵
Successful completion of Early Childhood / Adult Ed PMFs	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of PCS campuses receiving an out-of-compliance warning from our Board for violating our Data Submission Policy	3%	10%	2%	10%	10% ⁶	10% ⁷
Reduction in the rate of expulsions for “other charter reasons”	20%	20%	33%	20%	10%	5%
Number of schools participating in our Special Education self- study	12	10	15	10	NA ⁸	NA ⁹
Reduction in number of campuses with a Mystery Shopper Violation	27%	20%	38%	20%	10%	5%
Number of Audit Management Unit (AMU) reports issued	1	1	1	1	1	1
Number of schools with weak financials receiving enhanced fiscal oversight from PCSB.	7	7	6	7	NA ¹⁰	NA ¹¹

² These KPIs will no longer be tracked after FY 13.

³ The date was not given at the time this report was published.

⁴ Data will be submitted after the FY14 Fourth quarter data is updated.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ 10% or less

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Unknown at this time; based on school need.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Unknown at this time.

¹¹ Ibid.



Measure	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Target	FY 2014 YTD³	FY 2015 Projection	FY 2016 Projection	FY 2017 Projection
Number of schools whose fiscal health improved as a result of oversight efforts	6	2	2	2	NA ¹²	NA ¹³
Number of PMF Parent Guides distributed	7,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Number of Twitter followers (Additional followers each fiscal year)	1,1500	1,000 ¹⁴	1,600	1,500	2,000	2,500
Number of community meetings participated in	10	11	16	10	15	18
Number of PCSB Board meetings televised	0	2	5 ¹⁵	10	10	10
Increase in charter school data available on www.dcpcsb.org , compared to SY2013-4	15%	10%	15%	10%	10%	15%
Number of qualitative site review reports	N/A	42	42	40	NA ¹⁶	NA ¹⁷

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Additional Followers

¹⁵ Webcast Meetings

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.