FY 2014 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

The 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

Metric	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Actual
Number of Public Charter Schools Applications	Provide data	12	11
Number of Qualitative Site Reviews (formally PDRs)	Provide data	29	54
Number of Compliance Reviews	Provide data	98	102
Number of Financial Reviews	Provide data	285	285
Number of Workshops	Provide data	NA	35
Number of School Openings (New Charters and New Campuses)	Provide data	4 new charters schools; 1 expansion	4 new charter schools; 2 expansions
Number of School Closings	Provide data	0	0

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 2014**
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> **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 2014**
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> **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 rewards to help promote their expansions.
> **Completion date: September 2014**
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> **INITIATIVE 1.4: Complete successful pilots of our Early Childhood and Adult Education PMFs and implement the new PMFs for SY14-15.**
> PCSB will work to introduce the Early Childhood and Adult Education PMFs during the upcoming school 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 2014**

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 FY14, 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, identifiy 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 spreadsheets as we continue to build dashboards.
> **Completion date: September 2014**

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 a program, SharePoint, to facilitate file and data sharing amongst PCSB staff and with each 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 has been able to develop dynamic student and school level reports for LEAs to view the data they have submitted to ProActive. These reports allow schools to monitor their attendance submissions in real-time and also view reports that summarize their discipline and truancy incidents.

The summary reports created by PCSB are 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 has plans to develop visual dashboards on its external interface for discipline, truancy, enrollment and academic performance. These dashboards will allow LEAs to drill down and evaluate how students are performing by sub-group in these areas. One dashboard that is under development is PMF performance disaggregated by subgroup.
Completion date: September 2014

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 creating 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 to determine if schools are assigning suspensions and expulsions to students with disabilities at a higher rate than students without.
Completion date: September 2014

OBJECTIVE 3: Improve fiscal and compliance oversight.

INITIATIVE 3.1:   Continue efforts to improve fiscal monitoring of charter schools, publishing "Audit Management Unit" ("AMU") reports for SY11, SY12 and SY 13 that provide clear indicators of charter school financial health.
The D.C. School Reform Act of 1995 (SRA) vests the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board (PCSB) with authority and obligation to monitor the

operations of DC public charter schools (PCS), including periodically reviewing each school's fiscal management (PCSB Fiscal Policy Handbook, Fourth Edition, January 2011).

Per the SRA, 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. Historically, this review was conducted using a tool known as the General Performance Assessment Tool (GPA).

In January 2011, PCSB established an 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.

An immediate goal of the AMU was to improve on the GPA tool by enhancing its financial metrics, incorporating qualitative inputs, and standardizing interventions with poorly performing schools. The AMU engaged bearsolutions LLC, an independent financial consulting firm with hands-on experience and background in nonprofit and educational organizations, for the analytical tools and processes necessary to satisfy the immediate goals and requirements of the AMU. This engagement resulted in the deployment of CHARM™ (Charter Audit Resource Management), a fiscal oversight model and supporting database tool. CHARM™ analyzes uniform data from PCS financial audits in order to measure the fiscal performance of DC charter schools. Pilot reports were issued for FY10 and FY11, and this FY12 report is the second report made available to schools and the public. The CHARM™ model is currently used annually; an abbreviated version is being developed for quarterly reviews.
Completion date: September 2014

INITIATIVE 3.2: Use the CHARM™ Score **to work with financially struggling charter schools on steps to improve their health.**
An essential component of each financial review is to identify early on those schools showing low and inadequate fiscal performance, placing them in danger of insolvency. This is a critical function since according to the SRA, PCSB can close a charter school at any time if the school "has a pattern of non-adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), a pattern of fiscal mismanagement or is no longer economically viable." According to a report by Jeremy Williams (PCSB's CFO), Data Driven Authorizing: Evaluating Fiscal Performance, 60% of PCS that closed between 2004 and 2009 were closed for financial reasons (ranging from mismanagement of funds to insufficient cash balances). Some of these cases were sudden, causing significant disruption to the school community and considerable expense to PCSB. It was therefore important

to develop an "early warning" system that allowed PCSB to work with schools early enough to avoid insolvency-driven closures.

For the FY10 review, a subjective measure was used to identify at-risk schools. For FY11, the CHARM™ Score was developed to provide a more sophisticated measure of financial health. This Score was also calculated for the FY12 Review. An AMU Task Force3, comprised of PCS leaders, accounting service providers and PCSB representatives, convened in April 2013. PCS leaders expressed concern about the CHARM™ Score being used as a financial rating tool or risk measure by commercial lenders and investors. Hence, the FY12 CHARM™ PCS Report Cards do not include the CHARM™ Score and the AMU Task Force will further consider the role of the CHARM™ Score this summer.

PCSB will continue to rely on the CHARM™ Score for internal guidance in identifying low-performing schools for financial review and PCSB site visits. In some cases, information gathered during site visits clarified a school's unique financial structure. Certain financial structures, such as New Market Tax Credits4, have adverse effects on a school's financials and lead to a lower CHARM™ Score than is reflective of the school's actual financial health. In other cases, schools identified actions to improve financial performance and remediate audit deficiencies, steps that PCSB monitors. PCS leaders report the review meetings are helpful in improving understanding of financial performance standards, clarifying results of the individual PCS 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 participants.

The AMU's work has produced results. Improvement has been dramatic. The number of high-performing schools has increased by 13 (118%) while the number of low-performing schools has decreased by 10 (77%) since FY10.
Completion date: September 2014

INITIATIVE 3.3: Improve payment processes to charters through the establishment of a summer school audit process.

PCSB will develop a desktop summer school audit process to reduce the likelihood of the District making duplicate payments for students mistakenly identified on multiple school summer school rosters.
Completion date: September 2014

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 the PCSB website, (www.dcpcsb.org) increasing awareness and usage of our mobile app, (MyDCcharters) and

widely distributing PMF rankings 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 2014

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.

In 2013 PCSB took a lead role in in helping to address the challenges parents face in applying to charter schools. We facilitated the creation of a common application deadline, with more than 45 LEA's representing 91 campuses voluntarily adopting the common application deadline of March 15, the lottery deadline of March 22, and April 12 as the deadline for parents to commit to a lottery spot. These campuses used to have more than 30 deadlines – now they have one. We launched a major promotional effort around the city so that parents were aware of this deadline. Early indicators show a huge increase in applications and we are currently collecting data on the number of newly accepted students, final application numbers, waiting list data, and information on available seats.

We are now in early discussions with these schools about creating a common system of choice as a pilot in FY14 and are optimistic that we will have the same sort of voluntary participation as we had with the common deadline in FY13. We have also been actively collaborating with DCPS to create a common application and lottery system across charters and DCPS. For coming year's pilot we are planning to use philanthropic and existing operating funds. However as we are still creating a detailed budget, we may learn throughout the spring and summer that more funds are required. As we learn more we pledge to share ongoing updates with the DC Council. We expect to learn more about ongoing operating costs through this pilot and anticipate submitting a budget request for 2014-15.

There are four major work streams in the next phase of this project: policy decisions, parent education, technical solutions, and school level communication. To create policies to govern a common system charter LEAs and DCPS will need to collaborate on business rules for a common application and lottery such as the number of schools to which students can apply and the role of waitlists and policy decisions for mid-year placement. Given the power and flexibility of the lottery algorithm, many of these decisions can look different for each LEA – the business rules just need to be transparent and documented. Costs associated with this work

stream are estimated at $100,000 for a project manager who will convene school leaders, document business rules and decision-making, and manage the project overall – including the remaining work streams. The second work stream, parent education, includes creating comprehensive, easy to access school program information and providing clear guidance on the application and lottery process.

This work includes paid and earned media, resources, website material but most importantly additional capacity for high-touch assistance for parents who may need more help navigating a new system. Costs associated with this work stream are estimated at $500,000. The technical work stream includes the web-based interface (and possibly a synonymous paper-based application) for a common online application reflecting the agreed upon business rules as well as the lottery algorithm that work behind the scenes to match students with their preferred schools using the agreed upon business rules. Costs related to the website and application integration are estimated at $100,000 and the cost for the algorithm is $300,000- $400,000. School level communications are the least costly, but perhaps most important work stream. This work stream includes engaging deeply with the LEAs upfront as part of the opt-in process and decision-making process.

This also includes sharing data and improving data processes before and after the lottery. Costs related to this are included in the staff-time associated with the first work stream.
Completion date: September 2014

INITIATIVE 4.4: Improve transparency around PCSB's authorizer work, making board and other materials available to the public and publishing increased amounts of data on charter school performance, compliance, and finances.
Completion date: September 2013

Measure	FY2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Projection	FY 2015 Projection	FY 2016 Projections
Number of new items posted to the website (weekly)	10	10	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Community member subscriptions for email updates	2000	2,200	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Number of PCSB events on Twitter	20	20	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Number of Twitter Followers	600	200	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Average # of community members participating and/or attending PCSB meetings and hearings	33	30	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Meetings or hearings held by the PCSB each year	16	20	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Community meeting or events hosted or participated in by PCSB members or staff	10	10	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
PCSB community-oriented publications distributed	55	8	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Number of campuses passing initial compliance screen	87	99	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Number of campuses passing initial governance screen	Not Available	89	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Number of campuses requiring a targeted Program Development Review	22	26	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Number of campuses requiring a full Program Development Review	28	32	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

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[1] These KPIs will no longer be tracked after FY 13.

Measure	FY2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Projection	FY 2015 Projection	FY 2016 Projections
Number of performance measures to demonstrate charter school performance	75	40	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Number of PMF Review Reports by Sept 15	105	105	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Donors identified to support MODMS/technology	1	Not Applicable	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Donors identified to support MASP initiative	1	Not Applicable	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Donors identified to support PCS oversight	1	1	Data Not Available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (FY 2014 and beyond)

Measure	FY2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target[2]	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Projection	FY2015 Projection	FY2016 Projection
Number of charter LEAs receiving 5, 10 or 15 year review	Not Applicable	16	Data Not Available	16	16	TBD
Number of charter LEAs under review having one or more campuses with a PMF score of 40 or below taking concrete actions such as closure, reduction in grade span, or aggressive turnaround	Not Applicable	5	Data Not Available	5	5	TBD
Number of Tier 1 charter LEAs with announced plans to expand or replicate	Not Applicable	5	Data Not Available	5	5	TBD
Successful completion of Early Childhood/ Adult Ed PMFs	Not Applicable	100%	Data Not Available	100%	TBD	TBD

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[2] These metrics are only applicable to fiscal years 2013 and beyond.

Measure	FY2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target[2]	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Projection	FY2015 Projection	FY2016 Projection
Number of PCS campuses receiving an out-of-compliance warning from our Board for violating our Data Submission Policy	Not Applicable	10%	Data Not Available	10%	10%	TBD
Reduction in the charter school truancy rate for the charter sector through partnerships with CFSA, DC Superior Court, and other agencies that can help schools identify and solve the core issues causing educational neglect	Not Applicable	20%	Data Not Available	20%	20%	TBD
Reduction in the rate of expulsions for "other charter" reasons	Not Applicable	20%	Data Not Available	20%	20%	TBD
Number of schools participating in our SPED self-study	Not Applicable	10	Data Not Available	10	10	TBD
Reduction in number of campuses with a Mystery Shopper Violation	Not Applicable	30%	Data Not Available	20%	20%	TBD
Number of AMU reports issued	Not Applicable	1	Data Not Available	1	1	TBD
Number of schools worked with on Financial issues	Not Applicable	7	Data Not Available	7	7	TBD
Number of schools whose fiscal health improved as a result of oversight efforts	Not Applicable	2	Data Not Available	2	2	TBD
Establishment of a summer school audit process	Not Applicable	100%	Data Not Available	100%	TBD	TBD
Number of PMF Parents guides distributed	Not Applicable	4000	Data Not Available	4000	4000	TBD
Number of campuses participating in common deadline	Not Applicable	90	Data Not Available	90	90	TBD

Measure	FY2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target[2]	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Projection	FY2015 Projection	FY2016 Projection
Number of unique visitors to "Your Charter Your Choice" website	Not Applicable	3000	Data Not Available	3000	3000	TBD
Number of Twitter followers	Not Applicable	1000	Data Not Available	1000	1500	TBD
Number of community meetings participated in	Not Applicable	10	Data Not Available	10	10	TBD
Number of PCSB Board meetings televised	Not Applicable	2	Data Not Available	10	10	TBD
Increase in charter school data available on www.dcpcsb.org	Not Applicable	15%	Data Not Available	10%	10%	TBD