

TOOL FOR ANALYSIS
Charter School Plan for School Improvement

Summary Questions

This page contains summative questions that should serve as the focus for plan review. These questions should be answered *after* Steps 1 through 3, on subsequent pages, are completed.

1. Has the charter school presented a responsive and coherent (integrated/logical/prioritized) plan for improving student performance?

Evidence

The plan presents a logical and extensive focus on English/language arts but a similar comprehensive response on mathematics is lacking throughout the plan. Considering the performance status in math (Corrective Action) versus ELA (Identified for Improvement), the plan does not prioritize mathematics initiatives and convey a sense of urgency for improvement. The plan does include the required self-analysis, hypotheses, assessment of necessary conditions, planned improvements, and benchmarking sections but the coherence and integration between each is not clearly articulated. The following initiatives are planned to address the gaps in student achievement:

1. MCAS rubrics and scoring criteria
2. Standards-based report card
3. Standards-based instruction
4. Demonstration of proficient performance
5. Effectiveness of instructional block
6. Developing meta-cognitive and higher-order thinking abilities
7. Delivery of writing instruction

2. Does the plan seem feasible and viable in this charter school?

Evidence

The plan appears to be feasible and viable, despite the lack of articulation to previous efforts and the rationale for planned improvements. Inputs such as professional development and lesson plans are varied to address the multiple barriers to improvement. Going forward, the school should ensure that all inputs are explicitly linked to the outputs of improved student performance, which should be frequent and measurable, in addition to identified MCAS results.

3. Does the charter school demonstrate a sense of commitment and urgency to making whatever changes in the school's systems, personnel, and practices are necessary for implementing the plan?***Evidence***

There appears to be sufficient commitment to a variety of implementation initiatives; however, a sense of urgency was not communicated in the narrative. Changes in practices were articulated but changes in personnel and systems that will facilitate the improvement needed were not detailed in depth. The plan states, "Grade-level teams and instructional Coaches/Teachers struggle with instructional rigor, pacing and continuity of content applications, resulting in gaps in student performance." Although coaching positions are in place, if the content and pedagogical expertise is a barrier to improvement, what changes are planned to remove this obstacle to improving the instructional capacity of the staff and providing rigorous instruction to all students?

4. Is the plan an effective tool for communication with faculty, the Board of Trustees, and other stakeholders?***Evidence***

The plan is a sufficient communication tool for stakeholders to understand the overarching initiatives but it lacks the level of specificity needed to clearly guide implementation. Moving forward, action plans tied to student performance should communicate roles, responsibilities, and accountability to fidelity of implementation focused on student achievement.

5. Do plan reviewers have additional questions that need to be answered? If so, please note them below.***Evidence***

1. How will the school ensure that there is a logical and comprehensive approach to improving student performance in mathematics?
2. How will the school address the individual needs of particular subgroups? What safety nets will be in place for all students during school hours?
3. Consistent, frequent, and supportive monitoring of implementation is critical. What classroom observation system and tools will the school utilize to measure the level of effectiveness of standards-based instruction, impact on student achievement, and correlation to formative assessment data?
4. Who is responsible to monitor adherence to the plan and timelines set forth?

**Draft TOOL FOR ANALYSIS of
District Plan for School Improvement**

Use the following criteria to evaluate the charter school plan. Note evidence that coincides with your evaluation of this part of the plan.

STEP 1. Self Analysis

<p>1. <u>Performance Targets:</u> The plan includes performance targets for the school to make AYP in the aggregate and subgroups and substantially increases the percentage of students attaining proficiency.</p>	
<p>A. ELA Student performance targets to reach AYP in ELA are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stated accurately for the aggregate and subgroup populations. ▪ Composed to significantly increase the numbers of students performing at proficient and advanced. ▪ Focused on subgroups and grade levels exhibiting the greatest need. 	<p><i>Evidence (Provide numeric targets and use AYP data.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase ELA CPI from 71.5 in 2006 to 75.1 in 2007, 78.6 in 2008, 82.2 in 2009, and 85.8 in 2010. ○ Increase the number of students who score Proficient from 202 in 2006 to 217 in 2007, 247 in 2008, 280 in 2009, and 295 in 2010. ○ Decrease the number of students performing in Warning/Failing from 82 in 2006 to 55 in 2007, 44 in 2008, 31 in 2009, and 14 in 2010.
<p>B. Mathematics Student performance targets to reach AYP in Mathematics are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stated accurately for the aggregate and subgroup populations. ▪ Composed to significantly increase the numbers of students performing at proficient and advanced. ▪ Focused on subgroups and grade levels exhibiting the greatest need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase Math CPI from 55.6 in 2006 to 61.2 in 2007, 66.7 in 2008, 72.3 in 2009, and 77.8 in 2010. ○ Increase the number of students who score Proficient from 125 in 2006 to 150 in 2007, 170 in 2008, 200 in 2009, and 240 in 2010. ○ Decrease the number of students performing in Warning/Failing from 205 in 2006 to 158 in 2007, 121 in 2008, 93 in 2009, and 68 in 2010.

2. Hypotheses: Plan includes the charter school’s analysis about the underlying reasons for the school’s performance problems. It identifies the barriers, policies, or past practices that inhibited establishing the conditions for effective practice, as well as what it will take to eliminate the barrier(s). It provides an overview of past efforts to resolve these impediments.

<p>A. Identification of Barriers and Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The charter school’s analysis draws conclusions about barriers to improving student performance. ▪ The analysis considers and addresses barriers to improving performance in all student groups for which targets are set. 	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The school addressed multiple “essential needs” but not specific barriers to improving student performance. ○ Needs articulated, that appear to be most closely linked to developing a coherent system include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional development for teachers to enhance their knowledge of standards, rigor, and curriculum mapping ▪ A systematic K-6 assessment to inform writing instruction ▪ A refinement of the School Wide Accountability Monitoring Team classroom walkthroughs ▪ Integration of supplemental and intervention strategies in every academic block ▪ Aligned professional development
<p>B. Elimination of Barriers</p> <p>The charter school addresses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How it will eliminate barriers to establishing conditions for effective practice at the school. ▪ Its past efforts to remove barriers for establishing conditions for effective practice and how its current preparations ensure a more effective result. 	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The plan articulates needs for improvement but does not clearly connect the barriers, root causes, and related improvement initiatives that will establish effective practices at the school. ○ No evidence provided referred specifically to past practices and how the planned improvements are different from previous initiatives or efforts and how they are linked to improve student performance.

3. Assessment of Necessary Conditions: The charter school describes the extent to which essential personnel and related infrastructure establish the conditions for improved student achievement. A Worksheet is provided at the end of this document to collect evidence that will lead you to answers to the following:

<p>A. Assessment The charter school’s assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thoroughly documents the current status of the necessary conditions in the major levers (aligned curriculum, data to inform instruction, time for students and teachers, instructional leadership, and governance). ▪ Reflects systemic, integrated analysis of present conditions. 	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safety nets for all struggling students, not just for those that volunteer to stay after school for homework assistance, were not articulated. ○ The variety and frequency of math formative assessments was not commensurate to the literacy formative assessments. ○ Governance and leadership appear to have active roles in supporting teaching and learning.
<p>B. Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides evidence of the implementation of the essential conditions, looking critically and honestly at what is in place and what is lacking. ▪ Where the conditions are in place, the charter school demonstrates a good understanding of why the essential conditions have not yet had sufficient impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General evidence of the implementation of essential conditions was provided. As this plan is implemented, the school needs to be cognizant of all specifics of essential conditions. ○ The plan states, “Grade-level teams and instructional Coaches/Teachers struggle with instructional rigor, pacing and continuity of content applications, resulting in gaps in student performance.”
<p>C. Prioritization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The charter school provides a rationale for prioritizing implementation of the conditions in its plan, if applicable. ▪ The charter school’s choices emphasize systemic approaches. ▪ A feasible plan for instituting all conditions over time is provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Neither the prioritization nor its rationale was addressed in the plan. ○ The school plan did not convey a systemic approach as choices were articulated. ○ Although a calendar and monitoring tool were provided, it was neither comprehensive nor specifically tied to the essential conditions.

STEP 2. Planned Improvements

1. Planned Improvements: The charter school identifies needed changes in essential personnel and conditions, describes the redeployment of existing personnel and the redesign of existing infrastructure, describes how the Board of Trustees will monitor and evaluate the school’s progress and take action, describes how the Board of Trustees will evaluate school leadership, provides a timeline for key changes, and defends its prioritization of changes and the feasibility of its proposals.

A. Addressed Needs and Powerful Levers

The charter school’s planned improvements:

- Respond to its hypotheses and conditions.
- Identify the expected impact on meeting performance targets for identified groups of students.
- Are integrated into a coherent system.
- Are prioritized based on an articulated rationale.
- Are feasible.

Evidence

- The planned improvements appear to respond to the hypotheses and conditions with annual expected targets for adequate yearly progress in ELA and math.
- The plan does not clearly articulate a prioritization that intentionally creates a coherent system of changes and improvements.

B. New and/or Reallocated Personnel and Conditions

The charter school:

- Identifies changes in personnel and essential conditions at the school level and specifies how they will result in improvements.
- Uses a systemic approach to reallocating and realigning personnel and infrastructure at the school.
- Shows how it is taking responsibility for maximizing the use of the personnel and infrastructure changes in implementing improvements.
- Describes and provides details on any changes in resource allocation.

Evidence

- The plan did not identify changes in personnel, conditions, infrastructure, or resources.
- References to past practice and intended changes were not included in the plan’s narrative.

<p>C. Timeline The charter school provides a timeline that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sets annual goals and/or meets the terms of conditions specified. ▪ Maps out the narrative’s plan for improvements to teaching and learning. ▪ Expedites the implementation of the current year’s planned improvements. ▪ Schedules sessions needed to plan improvements for the following years. 	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual AYP goals are clearly articulated. ○ A timeline distinguishing the current year’s planned improvements and planning sessions for future improvements was not clearly mapped out.
<p>D. Governance The charter school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gives specific information on how the Board of Trustees will monitor and evaluate progress, and take action if goals are not being met. ▪ The Board of Trustees makes strategic decisions based on data. ▪ Gives specific information on how and with what tool the Board of Trustees will evaluate school leadership. 	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The governance structure, roles, and responsibilities were clearly articulated in the plan’s narrative and the attached appendices.

<p>2. Benchmarking Progress and Impact: The charter school, through its Plan and Accountability Plan, describes how it will monitor progress and measure the impact of changed expectations to school organization and student learning experiences.</p>	
<p>A. Monitoring and Measuring Progress The charter school Plan and Accountability Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitors progress, measures impact of initiatives. 	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The monitoring of inputs, such as professional development, looking at student work, etc., appears to be purposeful. ○ The evaluation, however, needs to be directly linked to outputs such as student performance data, student work products, etc. in order to effectively measure its impact on improving achievement.
<p>B. Addressed Needs and Powerful Levers The charter school’s planned improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Respond to its hypotheses and conditions. ▪ Identify the expected impact on meeting performance targets for identified groups of students. ▪ Are integrated into a coherent system. ▪ Are prioritized based on an articulated rationale. ▪ Are feasible. 	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The plan’s focus on improving English/language arts is clearly communicated and more specific and measurable than mathematics. However, an equal and intensive focus is not conveyed for mathematics through a prioritized, systematic, coherent approach that addresses specific needs.
<p>C. Benchmarks The charter school establishes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student-learning benchmarks that are aligned to its planned improvements, are achievable, and are rigorous. ▪ Clear and high standards for adult performance. 	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The plan mapped out Composite Performance Index (CPI) gains through the year 2010. ○ Internal and external formative benchmarks were not mapped out.
<p>D. Standards-Based and Observable Practices The charter school’s expectations for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students are defined by observable practices and behaviors that are standards-based. ▪ Adults are tied to observable practices or behaviors and are clearly linked to student learning. 	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The school’s plan articulates general, broad, and not clearly measurable practices in mathematics. For example, the adult observable practices such as professional development and lessons plans were not explicitly linked to outcomes in student performance.

School: Boston Renaissance Charter Public School

Reviewers: Emily Finkel & Joan Tuttle

Step 3. Outcomes The charter school reports on this Plan and on its Accountability Plan as determined by the charter school statute and regulations, by the terms of any conditions placed on the school's charter, and as may be otherwise required.

<p>A. Monitoring, Measuring Progress, and Reporting</p> <p>The charter school Plan and Accountability Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Establishes processes for monitoring progress and measures the impact of initiatives.▪ Is reported on in the school's Annual Report, which provides comprehensive information on the status of all goals and benchmarks defined in the Improvement Plan and the Accountability Plan.	<p>Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The monitoring processes were articulated in the plan's narrative. However, the systems, tools, feedback and ability to measure the impact were not as clear.
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