

AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Proposed Revisions to the Academic, Operational and Financial Performance Frameworks

Issue

To ensure a minimum standard of achievement and operations charter holders should strive to obtain before expanding, staff is proposing adding eligibility criteria for expansion requests to the Board's Operational and Financial Performance Frameworks and aligning the expansion eligibility criteria and processes across the Board's Academic, Financial and Operational Performance Frameworks. In conjunction with these changes, staff is also proposing modifying when a financial performance response is required for expansion requests. During the public comment period, staff did not receive any comments on these proposed changes.

Background

Under the Board's current framework, a charter holder is eligible to submit a request for expansion if 75% or more of its schools eligible to receive an overall rating have a minimum rating of "Meets Standard" on its academic dashboard. Prior to Board consideration, staff conducts a compliance check to review a charter holder's operational performance. A charter holder that does not meet the Board's financial performance expectations due to measures being rated "Does Not Meet Standard" or "Falls Far Below Standard" must submit a financial performance response with some, but not all, expansion requests.

Proposed Revisions to the Performance Frameworks Eligibility Criteria for Expansions

Attachment A: Eligibility Criteria for Expansions includes the details on the proposed revisions.

In summary, the proposed revisions include:

- Criteria to evaluate the academic, financial, and operational performance of the charter holder and its Associated Schools or Associated Charters.
- A process for ensuring a charter holder maintains eligibility throughout the Expansion Request review process (administrative and substantive reviews).
- Conditions for determining when an Associated School or Associated Charter may be excluded from eligibility consideration for expansion requests.

Expansion Requests

The proposed changes to the eligibility criteria will apply to the following requests made to the Board to expand a charter's operations.

- Add a new charter school that is currently not in operation under an existing charter contract
- Increase the number of students a charter holder may serve at its school(s)
- Add or change to an Arizona Online Instruction program of instruction
- Increase the grade levels a charter holder is approved to serve
- Replicate an existing charter
- Transfer a charter school from an existing charter contract to its own charter contract
- Transfer of a charter school or charter contract from the current Charter Holder to an existing Charter Holder with a different dashboard¹

¹ For these requests, only the academic, financial, and operational performance of the receiving Charter Holder is considered when determining eligibility.



Financial Performance Response

Attachment B: Financial Performance Response includes the details on the proposed revisions to the financial framework's Appendix B. The major revisions include modifying when a financial performance response is required for expansion requests when the charter holder meets the eligibility requirements, but does not meet the Board's financial performance expectations, and incorporating provisions of the Board's current administrative rules.

The intent of this change is to allow the Charter Holder an opportunity to provide the Board additional financial information and context before going in front of the Board.

Public Comment

In accordance with A.A.C. R7-5-404 (A), the proposed substantive changes were open for public comment from July 28 through August 25, 2017. The initial communication was sent to all charter representatives in an email. In order to reach more stakeholders, the request to comment on the proposed changes was circulated through:

- The Board's website, monthly newsletter and social media.
- The Association's newsletter.

Attachment A: Eligibility Criteria for Expansions

Attachment A

Eligibility Criteria for Expansions

In order to be eligible to submit an expansion request, the charter holder must meet the following eligibility criteria (*see table below*) based on its performance on the academic, financial, and operational dashboards.

Academic Performance² Eligibility Criteria

1. An academic dashboard for each school operated by the charter holder is available through ASBCS Online,
2. 75 percent or more of schools under its charter have a minimum Overall Rating of “Meets Standard” in the most recent fiscal year presented on each school’s academic dashboard, and
3. 75 percent or more of all Associated Schools (*defined below*) have a minimum Overall Rating of “Meets Standard” in the most recent fiscal year presented on the Associated Schools’ academic dashboards, or
4. If one or more Associated Schools are excluded for academic performance purposes, then 100 percent of the remaining Associated Schools eligible to receive an Overall Rating must have a minimum Overall Rating of “Meets Standard” on the most recent fiscal year presented on the Associated Schools’ academic dashboards.

Maintaining Eligibility

If during the expansion review process the Board develops new academic dashboards for the schools operated by the charter holder, Associated School(s) or both, then Board staff will reevaluate the charter holder’s eligibility based on the most recent fiscal year academic dashboard. For a charter holder determined to no longer be academically eligible, Board staff will notify the charter holder and close the request.

Special Exclusions: An Associated School may be excluded if the Associated School is in its first year of operation or has a distinct learning environment (philosophy, population, program of instruction, schedule) that is clearly documented in its charter which is significantly different from the schools operated by the charter holder that will be impacted by the expansion request.

Financial Performance³ Eligibility Criteria

1. A dashboard for the charter holder is available through ASBCS Online⁴,
2. The charter holder has no measure rated “Falls Far Below Standard” for the most recent fiscal year presented on the charter holder’s dashboard, and
3. 75 percent or more of all Associated Charters (*defined below*) have no measure rated “Falls Far Below Standard” for the most recent fiscal year presented on the Associated Charters’ dashboards, or
4. If one or more Associated Charters are excluded for financial performance purposes, then 100 percent of the remaining Associated Charters must have no measure rated “Falls Far below Standard” for the most recent fiscal year presented on the Associated Charters’ dashboards.

² Excluding replication as it has additional requirements which are unchanged by this proposal.

³ A Charter Holder eligible to submit an expansion request must submit a financial performance response as described in Appendix B to the Financial Performance Framework.

⁴ The Board must have received the Charter Holder’s first audit reporting package for the charter holder to be eligible to submit an expansion request. If the audit reporting package has been submitted but a dashboard is not available through ASBCS Online, please contact your Education Program Manager.



Maintaining Eligibility

If during the processing of an expansion request the Board receives the next audit reporting package for the charter holder, Associated Charter(s) or both, then Board staff will update the applicable dashboard(s) and reevaluate the charter holder's eligibility based on the most recent audit reporting package(s). For a charter holder determined to no longer be financially eligible, Board staff will notify the charter holder and close the request.

Special Exclusions: An Associated Charter may be excluded if the Associated Charter is in its first year of operation and has not yet submitted its first audit reporting package to the Board.

Operational Performance

1. A dashboard for the charter holder is available through ASBCS Online,
2. The charter holder meets the Board's operational performance standard for the most recent completed fiscal year,
3. The charter holder meets the Board's operational performance standard for the current evaluated year, and
4. 75 percent or more of its Associated Charters meets the Board's standard on its operational dashboard for the most recently completed fiscal year and the current evaluated year.

Maintaining Eligibility

If during the expansion review process the Board receives data for the charter holder, Associated Charter(s) or both, then Board staff will update the applicable dashboard(s) and reevaluate the charter holder's eligibility based on the most recent fiscal year operational dashboard. For a charter holder determined to no longer be eligible, Board staff will notify the charter holder and close the request.

Definitions

- An Associated Charter is:
 - A charter operated by a charter holder that contracts with the same Education Service Provider.
 - A charter operated by the same charter holder.
 - A charter operated by a charter holder with at least 50 percent of the officers, directors, members or partners in common, as reflected in the charter contract.
- An Associated School is:
 - A school operated by a charter holder that operates one or more other schools that contract with the same Education Service Provider.
 - A school operated by the same charter holder but under different charter contracts.
 - A school operated by a charter holder with at least fifty (50) percent of corporate board officers, directors, members or partners in common, as reflected in the charter contract.

Attachment B: Financial Performance Response

Appendix B

Financial Expectations Not Met: Charter Holder Action & Board Consideration

For charter holders that do not meet the Board’s financial performance expectations but do meet the expansion eligibility requirements, as applicable, the table below specifies by monitoring, expansion or transfer area what the charter holder must do and how that information will be used by the Board in its decision-making. This table in no way precludes the Board from considering a charter holder’s financial performance or from assigning a financial performance response at other times when the Board makes decisions, for example, related to a charter holder’s academic performance and/or a charter holder’s compliance with its charter and state and federal laws.

In accordance with A.A.C. R7-5-509, if the process the charter holder is in requires consideration at a Board meeting and at least one measure was rated as “Not Acceptable” in Board staff’s evaluation conducted under Appendix C, Board staff shall provide the charter holder with the opportunity to supplement the financial performance response based on the feedback included in the evaluation.

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	Charter Holder Action	Board Consideration
Academic Performance Framework (Monitoring)	If a charter school operated by the charter holder has failed to meet the Board’s academic performance standard for three consecutive years <u>and</u> the charter holder does not meet the Board’s financial performance expectations, the charter holder must submit a financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a “Does Not Meet Standard” or a “Falls Far Below Standard”. For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C.	Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. The charter holder’s financial performance response <u>(supplemented, as applicable)</u> and the <u>final</u> evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers the charter holder’s academic performance. Additionally, a table showing the charter holder’s financial data and financial performance for the last three audited fiscal years (if three years are available) will be included in the staff report provided to the Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder’s financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to meet the Board’s target and using information from the charter holder’s response and related documents. The charter holder’s financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.
Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) – Addition of or change to an AOI program of Instruction Program of Instruction Amendment Request (Expansion)	<u>If the charter holder meets the eligibility requirements specified on pages 6 and 7,</u> the charter holder must submit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a “Does Not Meet Standard” or a “Falls Far Below Standard”. For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C. A start-up budget <u>detailing all expenditures that cover the start-up</u> 	Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. Additionally, Board staff will review the start-up and operational budgets and assumptions. The charter holder’s financial performance response <u>(supplemented, as applicable), including the start-up budget, operational budget and assumptions, as well as the final</u> evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers the amendment <u>charter holder’s</u> request. Additionally, a table showing the charter holder’s financial data and financial

	Charter Holder Action	Board Consideration
	<p>plans to cover expenses projected to occur during the start up period (until August 1 of the year the school opens).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An <u>first-year</u> operational budget <u>to detailing all expenditures that</u> cover the first year of operations. • For each budget, <u>a separate document describing budget</u> assumptions for each line item <u>in the budget, including a description of how revenues cover expenses. If the revenues do not cover expenses, describe how this will not negatively affect the charter holder's overall financial performance, to include disaggregated costs, and basis for determining those costs. Demonstrate through the assumptions that the amounts listed are viable and adequate for the start up period and first year of operation.</u> <p>If the charter holder submits the amendment request prior to the Board receiving the charter holder's first audit reporting package, then the charter holder must submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal, unaudited financial statements for the fiscal year(s) to date. • A start up budget to cover expenses projected to occur during the start up period (until August 1 of the year the school opens). • An operational budget to cover the first year of operations. • For each budget, a separate document describing assumptions for each line item, to include disaggregated costs, and basis for determining those costs. Demonstrate through the assumptions that the amounts listed are viable and adequate for the start up period and first year of operation. 	<p>performance for the last three audited fiscal years (<u>if three years are available</u>) will be included in the staff report provided to the Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder's financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to meet the Board's target and using information from the charter holder's response and related documents.</p> <p>The charter holder's financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.</p>
<p><u>Enrollment Cap – Increase in the number of students the charter holder may serve at its school(s) (Expansion)</u></p>	<p><u>If the charter holder meets the eligibility requirements specified on pages 6 and 7, the charter holder must submit a financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a "Does Not Meet Standard". For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C.</u></p>	<p><u>Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. The charter holder's financial performance response (supplemented, as applicable) and the final evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers the charter holder's request. Additionally, a table showing the charter holder's financial data and financial performance for the last three audited fiscal years (if three years are available) will be included in the staff report provided to the</u></p>

	Charter Holder Action	Board Consideration
		<p><u>Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder's financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to meet the Board's target and using information from the charter holder's response and related documents.</u></p> <p><u>The charter holder's financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.</u></p>
<p>"F" Letter Grade – A charter school operated by the charter holder has been assigned a letter grade of "F" under the state accountability system Failing School Designation (Monitoring)</p>	<p><u>if a charter school operated by the charter holder has been assigned a letter grade of "F" under the state accountability system and the charter holder does not meet the Board's financial performance expectations.</u> The charter holder must submit a financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a "Does Not Meet Standard" or a "Falls Far Below Standard". For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C.</p>	<p>Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. The charter holder's financial performance response <u>(supplemented, as applicable)</u> and the <u>final</u> evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers whether to revoke or restore the charter of the failing school. Additionally, a table showing the charter holder's financial data and financial performance for the last three audited fiscal years <u>(if three years are available)</u> will be included in the staff report provided to the Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder's financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to meet the Board's target and using information from the charter holder's response and related documents.</p> <p>The charter holder's financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.</p>
<p>Five-Year Interval Review (Monitoring)</p>	<p>The charter holder must submit a financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a "Does Not Meet Standard" or a "Falls Far Below Standard". For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C.</p>	<p>Board staff will review the charter holder's financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. A copy of the completed evaluation instrument will be placed in the charter holder's DMS in ASBCS Online.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The Board may consider the charter holder's financial performance at the time of the interval review. In these instances, Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. The charter holder's financial performance response <u>(supplemented, as applicable)</u> and the <u>final</u> evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers the charter holder's performance at the time of the interval review. Additionally, a table showing the charter holder's financial data and financial performance for the last</p>

	Charter Holder Action	Board Consideration
		three audited fiscal years will be included in the staff report provided to the Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder's financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to meet the Board's target and using information from the charter holder's response and related documents. The charter holder's financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.
Grade Levels – Increase in the grade levels the charter holder is approved to serve (Expansion)	<u>If the charter holder meets the eligibility requirements specified on pages 6 and 7, the charter holder must submit a financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a "Does Not Meet Standard". For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C.</u>	<u>Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. The charter holder's financial performance response (supplemented, as applicable) and the final evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers the charter holder's request. Additionally, a table showing the charter holder's financial data and financial performance for the last three audited fiscal years (if three years are available) will be included in the staff report provided to the Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder's financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to meet the Board's target and using information from the charter holder's response and related documents.</u> <u>The charter holder's financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.</u>
New School – Addition of a new school that is currently not in operation under an existing charter contract¹Site Notification Request (Expansion)	<u>If the charter holder meets the eligibility requirements specified on pages 6 and 7, the charter holder must submit:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a "Does Not Meet Standard" or a "Falls Far Below Standard". For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C. A start-up budget <u>detailing all expenditures that cover the start-up plan to cover expenses projected to occur during the start-up period (until August 1 of the year the school opens).</u> 	Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. Additionally, Board staff will review the start-up and operational budgets and assumptions. The charter holder's financial performance response <u>(supplemented, as applicable), including the start-up budget, operational budget and assumptions, as well as the final evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board if when the Board considers the notification charter holder's request.</u> Additionally, a table showing the charter holder's financial data and financial performance for the last three audited fiscal years <u>(if three years are available)</u> will be included in any the staff report provided to the

¹ See also "Transfer of a charter school or charter contract from the current charter holder to an existing charter holder with a different dashboard."

	Charter Holder Action	Board Consideration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A first-year operational budget to detailing all expenditures that cover the first-year of operations. • For each budget, a separate document describing budget assumptions for each line item in the budget, including a description of how revenues cover expenses. If the revenues do not cover expenses, describe how this will not negatively affect the charter holder's overall financial performance, to include disaggregated costs, and basis for determining those costs. Demonstrate through the assumptions that the amounts listed are viable and adequate for the start-up period and first year of operation. <p>If the charter holder submits the notification request prior to the Board receiving the charter holder's first audit reporting package, then the charter holder must submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal, unaudited financial statements for the fiscal year(s) to date. • A start-up budget to cover expenses projected to occur during the start-up period (until August 1 of the year the school opens). • An operational budget to cover the first-year of operations. • For each budget, a separate document describing assumptions for each line item, to include disaggregated costs, and basis for determining those costs. Demonstrate through the assumptions that the amounts listed are viable and adequate for the start-up period and first year of operation. 	<p>Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder's financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to meet the Board's target and using information from the charter holder's response and related documents.</p> <p>The charter holder's financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.</p>
Renewal Application Package (Monitoring)	<p>The charter holder must submit a financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a "Does Not Meet Standard" or a "Falls Far Below Standard". For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C.</p>	<p>Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. The charter holder's financial performance response <u>(supplemented, as applicable)</u> and the <u>final</u> evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers the charter holder's renewal application package. Additionally, a table showing the charter holder's financial data and financial performance for the last three audited fiscal years will be included in the staff report provided to the Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder's financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to</p>

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	Charter Holder Action	Board Consideration
		<p>meet the Board’s target and using information from the charter holder’s response and related documents.</p> <p>If the charter holder is not meeting the Board’s academic performance expectations and/or is not complying with statutory and contractual requirements, the charter holder’s financial performance may be considered as an aggravating factor by the Board in its decision about whether or not to renew the charter contract.</p>
<p>Replication Application Package (Expansion)</p>	<p><u>If the charter holder meets the eligibility requirements specified on pages 6 and 7,</u> the charter holder must submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a “Does Not Meet Standard” or a “Falls Far Below Standard”. For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C. • A start-up budget to cover expenses projected to occur during the start-up period (until August 1 of the year the school opens). • A three-year operational budget to cover expenses projected to occur during the first three years of operation. • For each budget, a separate document describing assumptions for each line item, to include disaggregated costs, and basis for determining those costs. Demonstrate through the assumptions that the amounts listed are viable and adequate for the start-up period and first three years of operation. <p>The templates for the replication start-up budget and three-year operational budget are available on the Board’s website.</p>	<p>Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. Additionally, Board staff will review the start-up and operational budgets and assumptions. The charter holder’s financial performance response <u>(supplemented as applicable), including the start-up budget, operational budget and assumptions, as well as the final evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers the replication application package.</u> Additionally, a table showing the charter holder’s financial data and financial performance for the last three audited fiscal years <u>(if three years are available)</u> will be included in the staff report provided to the Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder’s financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to meet the Board’s target and using information from the charter holder’s response and related documents.</p> <p>The charter holder’s financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.</p>
<p>Transfer of a charter school or charter contract from the current charter holder to an existing charter holder with a different dashboard (Expansion)</p>	<p><u>If the receiving charter holder meets the eligibility requirements specified on pages 6 and 7, but the current charter holder, receiving charter holder or both do not meet the Board’s financial performance expectations, please see below.</u></p> <p><u>Receiving Charter Holder Does Not Meet</u> <u>The receiving charter holder must submit a financial performance response that</u></p>	<p><u>Board staff will review the financial performance responses and evaluate them in accordance with Appendix C. The charter holders’ financial performance responses (supplemented, as applicable) and the final evaluation instruments completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers the charter holders’ request. Additionally, tables showing the charter holders’ financial data and financial</u></p>

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	Charter Holder Action	Board Consideration
	<p><u>addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a “Does Not Meet Standard”. For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C.</u></p> <p><u>Current Charter Holder Does Not Meet</u> <u>The current charter holder must submit a financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a “Does Not Meet Standard” or a “Falls Far Below Standard”. For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C.</u></p>	<p><u>performance for the last three audited fiscal years (if three years are available) will be included in the staff report provided to the Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holders’ financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holders failed to meet the Board’s target and using information from the charter holders’ responses and related documents.</u></p> <p><u>The charter holders’ financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.</u></p>
Transfer of a charter school from an existing charter contract to its own charter contract held by a charter holder with a different name than the existing charter holder (Expansion)	<p><u>If the charter holder meets the eligibility requirements specified on pages 6 and 7, the charter holder must submit a financial performance response that addresses each measure for the most recent audited fiscal year presented in the dashboard where the charter holder received a “Does Not Meet Standard”. For additional information regarding the financial performance response, please see Appendix C.</u></p>	<p><u>Board staff will review the financial performance response and evaluate it in accordance with Appendix C. The charter holder’s financial performance response (supplemented, as applicable) and the final evaluation instrument completed by staff will be provided to the Board when the Board considers the charter holder’s request. Additionally, a table showing the charter holder’s financial data and financial performance for the last three audited fiscal years (if three years are available) will be included in the staff report provided to the Board, as well as an analysis prepared by staff of the charter holder’s financial performance, focusing on those measures where the charter holder failed to meet the Board’s target and using information from the charter holder’s response and related documents.</u></p> <p><u>The charter holder’s financial performance may be considered by the Board as an aggravating factor in its decision-making.</u></p>
Transfer Application Package Involving the Transfer of the Charter Contract from Another Sponsor to the Board (Transfer)	<p><i>Charter holders that want to transfer their charter contracts to the Board should contact the Board at (602) 364-3080 for the requirements.</i></p>	<p>If the charter holder is not meeting the Board’s academic performance expectations and/or is not complying with statutory and contractual requirements, the charter holder’s financial performance may be considered as an aggravating factor by the Board in its decision about whether or not to transfer the charter contract.</p>

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