

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

Academic Performance Framework and Guidance

Date approved, 2012



Support and funding for the development of the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools Performance Framework, which includes the Academic Framework, Operational Framework and Financial Framework, were provided by NACSA and through its Fund for Authorizing Quality.



Additional funding to support the implementation of the Performance Framework was provided by:

- Governor Brewer's Office of Education Innovation
- Arizona Community Foundation
- Stand for Children
- Rodel Charitable Foundation of Arizona
- Arizona Virtual Academy

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Academic Performance Framework Guidance

Charter schools may be established to provide a learning environment that will improve pupil achievement (A.R.S. § 15-181). As the authorizer or sponsor of charter schools, the State Board for Charter Schools must adopt a performance framework that includes the academic performance expectations of the charter school and the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations (A.R.S. § 15-183. R).

Charter holders have the autonomy to select and implement programs of instructions that align with their philosophical and methodological ideology and operational structure consistent with state and federal law and the charter contract. The purpose of the Academic Performance Framework (“academic framework”) is to communicate the State Board for Charter Schools’ (“Board”) academic expectations for ensuring that all charter holders in its portfolio are providing a learning environment where measurable improvement in pupil achievement can be demonstrated. This Framework focuses purposefully on quantitative academic outcomes as a basis for analysis to be used in high-stakes decisions.

In developing the academic framework, the Board remained conscious of its limited resources to implement the academic framework. The Board was also mindful of its commitment to maintaining current levels of data collection so as not to unnecessarily burden the charter holders with requirements to submit additional information for the purpose of evaluating the academic performance of the charter holder. The successful implementation of the academic framework relies on having access to data collected through the administration and evaluation of state assessments.

The academic framework focuses purposefully on quantitative academic outcomes as a basis for analysis to be used in high-stakes decisions. If educational processes are required by law, such elements are included in the Organizational Framework and further guidance on the reasoning for this indicator can be found in the Organizational Framework Guidance.

Framework Structure

The academic performance framework is organized by indicators, measures, metrics, and targets.

Component	Definition	Example
Indicators	General categories of academic performance	Student achievement
Measures	General means to evaluate an aspect of an indicator	Proficiency on state assessments
Metrics	Method of quantifying a measure	Percentage of students achieving proficiency on specific exams
Targets	Thresholds that signify success in <i>meeting the standard</i> for a specific measure	The school's average proficiency rate on the state assessments meet or exceed the statewide average student performance
		
Ratings	Assignment of charter school performance into one of four rating categories, based on how the school performs against the framework targets	If school meets the target proficiency rate of meeting or exceeding the statewide average, the rating category is "Meets Standard"

Indicators

The framework has four indicators designed to evaluate each charter school's overall academic performance.

1. Student Progress over Time (Growth)

Growth models measure how much students learn and improve over the course of a school year. The inclusion of growth measures in the framework acknowledges that relying solely on a snapshot of student proficiency misses progress that schools may be making over time in bringing students up to grade level. Students who enter school behind their peers and students who are not meeting state standards need to make more than a year's worth of growth each year to "catch up." Equally important, students who are already at grade level, or proficient, should continue to make sufficient growth to meet and exceed proficiency standards. The academic framework considers aggregate growth for each charter school, as well as progress of the lowest-performing students within the school.

2. Student Achievement (Status)

The student achievement indicator focuses on the percentage of students meeting standards for proficiency on state assessments. The Board will hold charter schools accountable for how well children master fundamental skills and content such as literacy and mathematics. The academic framework

includes an analysis of proficiency rates overall and by subgroups in charter schools, and it compares these rates to the overall state rates, as well as to schools serving demographically similar populations.

3. State Accountability

The components of the Arizona A–F Letter Grade Accountability System were used as a starting point in developing the academic framework. Though the academic framework includes many of the same metrics as the state grading system, clear expectations for performance on each metric are defined in the Board’s academic framework. Breaking out the measures from the state accountability system provides more clarity to schools about the Board’s academic performance expectations and the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations; in some cases, the Board chose to set more rigorous targets than those set by the state. The academic framework includes the letter grade of each school operated by the charter holder as assigned through Arizona’s A–F Letter Grade Accountability System. The Board carefully considered how much weight to assign to the state accountability system as a whole in relation to the individual measures.

4. Post-Secondary Readiness (for High Schools)

This indicator examines how well a school’s students are prepared for college or employment after graduation. The academic framework includes graduation rates and recommends additional data collection efforts to assess post-secondary success of graduates such as ACT equivalencies and credit/course completion rates.

Measures

For each of the indicators, the academic framework provides a number of measures to evaluate schools. The combination of measures, taken on the whole, provides the Board with a balanced scorecard of each school’s performance over time. The measures take the form of questions about the school’s performance. For example:

- Is the school improving the performance of its lowest-performing students?
- Are students achieving proficiency on state examinations in math and reading?

The academic framework includes measures that are similar to components of the state A–F Letter Grade Accountability System as well as measures included to address factors specific to charter school accountability, such as a comparison of similar schools.

Metrics

Metrics are the methods of evaluating a measure. For example, to answer the question, “Are students achieving proficiency on state assessments?” the Board will calculate metrics such as:

- The school’s average proficiency rates compared to the state average proficiency rate for the same grade levels,
- The school’s average proficiency rate compared to students in similar schools, and

- The proficiency rate of a subgroup of students compared to the statewide average subgroup proficiency.

In the development of the academic framework, the Board reviewed the available data to determine which metrics apply the most to its charter schools.

Targets and Rating Categories

For each of the measures, targets are set to rate the schools against the academic framework. The targets establish the levels of performance needed to place each school into the following rating categories:

- *Exceeds standard*—The charter holder’s performance for any measure receiving this rating means that the charter school is exceeding academic performance expectations and showing exemplary performance.
- *Meets standard*— The charter holder’s performance for any measure receiving this rating means that the charter school is meeting minimum expectations for academic performance.
- *Does not meet standard*— The charter holder’s performance for any measure receiving this rating means that the charter school has failed to meet minimum expectations for performance and are not making sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations set forth in the academic framework.
- *Falls far below standard*— The charter holder’s performance for any measure receiving this rating means that the charter school is performing far below the Board’s academic performance expectations and on par with the lowest-performing schools in the district and state.

In establishing targets for the academic framework, the Board began by setting targets for the “meets standard” rating category, which set the expectation and definition of a quality school. Targets are applied consistently to all schools, although alternate methods are presented for alternative schools and small schools with very low enrollment numbers.

Indicators and Measures in Detail

Each of the indicators and measures is presented below. Included is an overview of each measure, methodological approaches, factors considered in the development of specific targets, and additional resources on related topics.

The academic framework is intended to be used in its *entirety*, unless otherwise indicated, though there may be individual measures that may not be included for individual schools.

Considerations for Alternative Schools

The Board has modified the performance framework to better fit schools designated as “alternative” or “small.” The alternative academic performance framework is presented in Appendix B. Specific modifications for alternative and small schools are noted throughout the document.

Indicator: Student Progress over Time (Growth)

Of utmost importance in evaluating school quality is the assessment of how much students are learning over time. While pass rates, or proficiency rates, answer the important question “Are students meeting grade-level expectations?” growth measures address the question “How much are students learning, and is that learning sufficient to achieve and maintain proficiency?” Many charter schools enroll students one or more years below grade level; it is appropriate and fair to consider how well they are doing in “catching students up.” Charter schools may require more than a year to bring students up to grade level if they start out far behind, but should be accountable for and credited with academic growth within any school year.

Many growth models used for school evaluation are “norm-referenced” in their approach. Norm-referenced models compare the progress made by individual students to the progress made by other students with a similar starting point or performance history; each student’s growth is compared to the growth of other students in the school, district, state, or nation.

Arizona Growth Model

The Arizona State Board of Education adopted the Arizona Growth Model, based on the Student Growth Percentile Methodology¹ first used in Colorado. This method provides an effective way of measuring norm-referenced student growth. A student growth percentile (SGP) calculates a student’s progress in comparison to his or her academic peers—students with similar performance on previous assessments. Each individual student’s growth in assessment results is ranked against the growth for all students with the same test result on the baseline assessment. A student with an SGP of 50 demonstrated higher growth than at least half of his academic peers across the state with similar performance. A school median SGP of 50 indicates that at least half of the students in the school showed more growth than at least half of their academic peers with similar performance across the state.

The framework has two measures of student growth: school median student growth percentile, based on the Arizona Growth Model, and school median student growth percentile for students in the lowest 25 percent of performance in math and reading. Growth is evaluated separately for reading and math. An additional measure, increase in AIMS performance level, is available for the evaluation of alternative high schools.

¹ More information on the methodology may be found at:
http://www.azed.gov/research-evaluation/files/2011/07/growth_percentile_primer_030809.pdf

Growth

1.a. Are schools making adequate growth based on the school’s median student growth percentiles (SGP) in reading and math?

Note: Pooled 3-year median used for small schools.

Exceeds Standard:

The school median SGPs for reading and math are 66 or above.

Meets Standard:

The school median SGPs for reading and math are from 50 to 65.

Does Not Meet Standard:

The school median SGPs for reading and math are from 34 to 49.

Falls Far Below Standard:

The school median SGPs for reading and math are below 34.

Targets for growth

The framework target for the “Meets Standard” category sets the expectation that at least half of the students in charter schools are showing growth that is greater than their academic peers across the state. The highest and lowest category targets were aligned with SGP performance benchmarks commonly used to distinguish students with highest and lowest levels of growth. Targets are applied separately for reading and math.

Modifications for Alternative and Small Schools

In the state A–F School Accountability Letter Grade System, a three-year pooled SGP is calculated for alternative schools and schools with fewer than 40 students. Aggregating three years’ worth of growth data minimizes variability due to student populations or very small numbers of students. The academic framework uses this method for small charter schools with fewer than 40 students, but not for alternative schools.

The targets for alternative schools are based upon a comparison to statewide performance of alternative schools.

Growth of Lowest-Performing Students

1.b. Are the lowest-performing students making adequate growth based on the median student growth percentiles (SGP) of the lowest 25% of students in reading and math?

Note: Pooled 3-year median used for small schools.

Exceeds Standard:

The school median SGPs for reading and math for the lowest 25% of students are 66 or above.

Meets Standard:

The school median SGPs for reading and math for the lowest 25% of students are from 50 to 65.

Does Not Meet Standard:

The school median SGPs for reading and math for the lowest 25% of students are from 34 to 49.

Falls Far Below Standard:

The school median SGPs for reading and math for the lowest 25% of students are below 34.

Closing achievement gaps between low-performing subgroups and majority groups is an issue of ongoing national concern. Many charter schools operate with the express mission of closing achievement gaps and providing a high-quality education to underserved students. Given this context, measuring changes in the performance of the lowest-performing students in reading and math is an important component of the academic framework. Without this analysis, strong growth on a school-wide growth measure could mask low growth by certain subgroups.

Targets for growth of lowest-performing students

The framework target for the “Meets Standard” category sets the expectation that at least half of the lowest-performing students in charter schools are showing growth that is greater than their academic peers across the state. These students’ growth is compared to other lowest-performing students with similar starting points, so the growth expectation is based upon a fair comparison to peers. The targets set for the “Exceeds Standard” and “Falls Far Below Standard” categories were aligned with SGP performance targets commonly used to distinguish students with the highest and lowest levels of growth. Targets are applied separately for reading and math.

Modifications for Alternative and Small Schools

A three-year pooled SGP is calculated for small schools (fewer than 40 students), but not for alternative schools. By aggregating three years’ worth of growth data, variability due to student populations or very small numbers of students is minimized.

Measure 1b is not included in the framework for alternative schools. An additional growth measure is added for alternative high schools— increase in AIMS performance level. This alternative measure evaluates the percentage of non-proficient students improving by at least one performance level. Targets are presented in Appendix B.

Indicator: Student Achievement (Status)

Although it is important to balance an evaluation of both the level at which students are performing and how much growth students are making toward proficiency each year, ultimately charter schools must prove that they can bring students up to and beyond grade level. The academic performance framework includes a number of evaluations of student proficiency rates within each charter school, including overall proficiency, comparison to schools serving similar populations, and a focus on proficiency rates of subgroups within the school. Targets are applied separately for reading and math.

Proficiency

2.a. Are students achieving proficiency on state examinations in math and reading?
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates are in the top 10% of statewide performance OR the school's proficiency rates are at least 90%.
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates meet or exceed average statewide performance but fall below the top 10%.
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates fall below average statewide performance but are above the bottom 20%.
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates are in the bottom 20% of statewide performance.

Proficiency targets

Proficiency targets offer authorizers the best opportunity to set a high bar for charter school performance. By setting performance targets, authorizers define what makes a quality school and set expectations for charter results.

The Board's academic framework uses comparative targets; the proficiency rates at each charter school are assessed against average proficiency rates across the state. These comparative targets will remain relevant, despite changes to state assessments. They can be clearly communicated to stakeholders. And they clearly identify highest- and lowest-performing schools, providing a case for renewal or revocation decisions.

Because proficiency rates vary by grade level, the framework makes adjustments based on the charter school's composition. The proficiency rate for each charter school is evaluated against the state average proficiency, weighted to the charter school grade-level enrollment. For example, a charter school that serves grades 3–8 would be compared to the percentage of students statewide in grades 3–8 that are deemed proficient, with each grade "counting" in proportion to the fraction of all students enrolled in that grade at the charter school.

Modifications for Alternative and Small Schools

Proficiency rates for alternative schools are compared to the statewide average proficiency rates for alternative schools, and proficiency rates for small schools are compared to the statewide average proficiency rates for small schools.

Schools Serving Similar Populations

2.b. Are students performing well on state examinations in math and reading in comparison to similar schools?
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rate exceeds similar schools by 15 or more percentage points.
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rate meets or exceeds similar schools by up to 15 percentage points.
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rate is less than similar schools by up to 15 percentage points.
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rate is less than similar schools by 15 or more percentage points.

Comparison analysis allows authorizers to judge how students are performing in charter schools compared to other schools serving similar student populations. By itself, such a comparison would not provide the basis for a strong accountability system. Ultimately, expectations for schools should not differ based on a school's student population. Comparative information may be useful, however, for judging whether a school targeting a low-performing population is moving in the right direction. In addition, if a school fails to meet the authorizer's overall performance targets, comparative information can help the authorizer decide on the best course of action.

Identification of Comparable Schools

Similar schools are selected for each charter school by comparing demographic data of the charter school in question to other schools across the state (traditional and charter) using the following criteria:

1. Serves the same grade levels as the charter school.
2. Percentage of FRL student enrollment is within 10 percentage points of the charter school. (Note: included only if the charter school reports FRL participation.)
3. Percentage of ELL student enrollment is within 10 percentage points of the charter school.
4. Percentage of students with disabilities is within 10 percentage points of the charter school.
5. Small schools and alternative schools are matched only to other small and alternative schools.

Another option for making a comparison to similar schools is to create a "composite" school by matching and aggregating student-level data for students statewide with similar characteristics. This approach could be used in place of the selection method described above or as an option when similar schools cannot be selected for a particular charter school.

Targets for similar schools comparison

Poor comparative performance is often seen as the strongest argument for closing a charter school. Targets for this measure were developed to clearly call out inadequate performance and show cases where closure should be considered.

The "Exceeds Standard" and "Falls Far Below Standard" categories for the similar schools comparison are defined by the size of the difference between the charter school's performance and the performance of similar schools. The framework defines the categories in increments of 15 percentage points. This increment was tested in a trial run of the framework and represents a relatively large gap in performance. The approach used to set targets in measures 1a and 1c, comparison to the highest and lowest performance across the state, is not appropriate here, where the charter school is being compared to a set of similar schools.

Modifications for Alternative and Small Schools

The similar schools analysis is not applied to alternative schools.

Subgroup proficiency

2.c. Are students in subgroups achieving proficiency on state examinations in math and reading compared to state subgroups? (Applies to all eligible subgroups in the school.)

Exceeds Standard:

School's subgroup proficiency rates are in the top 10% of statewide subgroup performance.

Meets Standard:

School's subgroup proficiency rates meet or exceed statewide subgroup performance, but fall below the top 10%.

Does Not Meet Standard:

School's subgroup proficiency rates fall below statewide subgroup performance, but are above the bottom 20%.

Falls Far Below Standard:

School's subgroup proficiency rates are in the bottom 20% of statewide subgroup performance.

Although Measure 2a evaluates school-level proficiency, it is important to look beyond the school-level proficiency averages to the performance of subgroups within the school. High performance of a majority group may mask poor performance of a subgroup. For example, a school with 10 percent of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch (FRL) could have a high overall proficiency rate, but on closer analysis, the FRL students may have dramatically lower rates of proficiency that are hidden by the performance of the rest of the student body.

The subgroup proficiency measure compares the proficiency rates of subgroups within the school to the state average proficiency rate for that same subgroup. This comparison allows the Board to analyze how charter school students are faring compared to similar students across the state. To maintain high expectations for all students, authorizers should not regard better-than-average subgroup performance as "good enough" if subgroups are not meeting overall authorizer targets for proficiency. However, evidence that a school's disadvantaged subgroups are performing at *lower* levels than their similarly disadvantaged peers around the state should prompt authorizers to take strong action.

Targets for subgroup proficiency

Comparative targets were developed for the subgroup proficiency measure. The proficiency rate of all eligible subgroups within each charter school are compared to statewide average subgroup performance as well as subgroup performance of schools in the top 10 percent and bottom 20 percent of schools statewide reporting subgroup performance.

Eligible subgroups are those that have at least 10 reported students. Schools that do not track or report FRL statistics will not be evaluated for FRL student performance.

Modifications for Alternative and Small Schools

Subgroup proficiency rates for alternative schools are compared to the statewide average subgroup proficiency rate for alternative schools

Indicator: State Accountability System

The academic framework includes the letter grade of each school operated by the charter holder as assigned through Arizona’s A–F Letter Grade Accountability System.

A–F Letter Grade Accountability System

3.a. Is the school meeting acceptable standards according to the state accountability system?
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School received an A rating from the state accountability system.
<i>Meets Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School received a B rating from the state accountability system.
<i>Does Not Meet Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School received a C rating from the state accountability system.
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School received a D or F rating from the state accountability system.

The state grading system contains many of the same measures as the Board’s academic framework. The academic framework includes these measures separately in order to set individual standards for each measure and to allow a disaggregated view of the academic framework. To prevent “double-counting” the measures duplicated in the state grading system, this measure is given a low weight in the overall framework. (See more about weighting in the “Use of the Framework” section.)

Targets for A–F Letter Grade Accountability System

Targets for this measure were aligned with the assessment of the state grading system. Schools receiving an “A” grade are assessed in the academic framework as “exceeding standard,” while schools receiving a “D” or “F” grade are considered “falling far below standard.”

Modifications for Alternative and Small Schools

Alternative and small schools receive ratings using the A-F Accountability Systems developed for alternative and small schools.

Indicator: Post-Secondary Readiness

Growing national attention has focused on increasing college attendance and ensuring that students are better prepared for college and employment. The Board’s academic framework includes measures using available post-secondary data--graduation rate.

Post-secondary measures apply to high schools only. Should additional post-secondary data become available, the Board could review and possibly revise the charter school academic framework.

High School Graduation Rate

4.a. Are students graduating from high school?
<p>Exceeds Standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2011-12: At least 82 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2012-13: At least 84 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2013-14: At least 86 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2014-15: At least 88 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2015-16: At least 90 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2016-17: At least 92 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2017-18: At least 94 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2018-19: At least 96 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2019-20: At least 98 percent of students graduated from high school.
<p>Meets Standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2011-12: 77 percent to 81 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2012-13: 79 percent to 83 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2013-14: 81 percent to 85 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2014-15: 83 percent to 87 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2015-16: 85 percent to 89 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2016-17: 87 percent to 91 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2017-18: 89 percent to 93 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2018-19: 91 percent to 95 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2019-20 forward: 93 percent to 97 percent of students graduated from high school.
<p>Does Not Meet Standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2011-12: 66 percent to 76 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2012-13: 68 percent to 78 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2013-14: 70 percent to 80 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2014-15: 72 percent to 82 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2015-16: 74 percent to 84 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2016-17: 76 percent to 86 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2017-18: 78 percent to 88 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2018-19: 80 percent to 90 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2019-20 forward: 82 percent to 92 percent of students graduated from high school.
<p>Falls Far Below Standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 2011-12: Fewer than 65 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2012-13: Fewer than 67 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2013-14: Fewer than 69 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2014-15: Fewer than 71 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2015-16: Fewer than 73 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2016-17: Fewer than 75 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2017-18: Fewer than 77 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2018-19: Fewer than 79 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2019-20 forward: Fewer than 81 percent of students graduated from high school.

An important measure of a charter high school’s success is its graduation rate. Are charter schools keeping students engaged in the education process and helping them to finish high school? The state of Arizona has adopted the National Governors’ Association’s² method of calculating graduation rate,

² More information is available at: www.NGA.org

which measures the percentage of entering ninth-graders who graduate from high school within four years.

Targets for graduation rate

The framework targets for graduation rate are based on the state target of achieving a 93 percent graduation rate by 2020. A set of “phased in” targets are included to gradually set the expectation that schools meet the state goal. This goal is set as the “meets standard” framework target for the year 2020.

Modifications for Alternative and Small Schools

Alternative schools are assessed against the graduation requirements included in the A-F Alternative Model.

College Readiness

4.b.1	Does students’ performance on the ACT and SAT reflect college readiness?
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> The percentage of students meeting benchmarks for ACT or SAT performance exceeds the national average by at least 20 percent.	
<i>Meets Standard:</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> The percentage of students meeting benchmarks for ACT or SAT performance meets or exceeds the national average by up to 20 percent.	
<i>Does Not Meet Standard:</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> The percentage of students meeting benchmarks for ACT or SAT performance falls below the national average by up to 20 percent.	
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> The percentage of students meeting benchmarks for ACT or SAT performance falls below the national average by at least 20 percent.	
4.b.2	Are students participating in the ACT or SAT?
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> More than 90 percent of students participated in the ACT or SAT.	
<i>Meets Standard:</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> 70 to 89 percent of students participated in the ACT or SAT.	
<i>Does Not Meet Standard:</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> 50 to 69 percent of students participated in the ACT or SAT.	
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 percent of students participated in the ACT or SAT.	

The ACT and SAT are the most commonly known and used college admissions tests; they are included in the framework to indicate how well-prepared students are to enter and succeed in college.

Both the College Board and ACT have conducted research to understand how ACT and SAT test scores are linked to future success in college. ACT research concluded that a target composite score of 21 is the score that is correlated with a 50% chance of earning a B or higher or a 75% chance of earning a C or

higher in the first year of college.³ According to ACT.org, 25% of recent high school graduates met the benchmark in all four subjects. The composite benchmark is an average of all four subjects, so the percentage of graduates that made the composite benchmark would presumably be higher. Similar research by the College Board followed a cohort of students from high school, at the time of participation in the SAT, through college. The results showed that a composite score of 1550 indicates a 65% likelihood of achieving a B average or higher in the first year of college and 43% of recent high school graduates met the benchmark in all four subjects.⁴

Participation rates are considered in addition to test performance. A charter school in which a small proportion of the student body prepares for and attends college could show a high ACT or SAT testing result if only those college-bound students are participating in testing. In this case a school could appear to be successfully preparing students for college, when only a small cohort is actually on a college “track.”

Targets for college readiness measure

Targets are aligned with national benchmarks for college success, based on research by ACT and The College Board.

Credit Accumulation

4.c. Are students completing credits/courses necessary to graduate? <i>Note: Preliminary until data become available and evaluation criteria are developed.</i>
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/>
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/>
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/>
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/>

As the State implements its Student-Teacher-Course Connection, there may be opportunities to use the data as it becomes available.

Targets for college readiness measure - Targets will be developed when data become available.

Testing/Trial Run

As part of the development of the academic charter framework, the Board conducted a trial run, testing the framework against actual charter school performance data for 36 schools in 2010–11. The trial run was instrumental in:

³ ACT. (2011). *The condition of college & career readiness 2011*. Available: <http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/ccr11/notes.html>

⁴ College Board. (2011). *SAT benchmarks: Development of a college readiness benchmark and its relationship to secondary and postsecondary school performance*. Available: <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/RR2011-5.pdf>

- Confirming the availability of necessary data elements for measures across the framework.
- Testing the validity of measures and targets.
- Reviewing weighting decisions and overall weighting schemes.
- Providing an accurate estimate of the time and resources required to complete the framework for charter schools.

As a result of the trial run, framework measures and targets were finalized and a list of necessary data elements was compiled. The academic framework relies upon accessibility to data from the state department of education.

Information Necessary to Use the Framework

The following data elements are needed to complete the academic framework:

- Median SGP for charter schools and lowest-performing students in each charter school
 - State median SGP at the school level (Reading and Mathematics)
 - School SGP by grade level for all Alternative schools in the state (Reading and Mathematics)
 - State median SGP at the grade level (Reading and Mathematics)
- Overall proficiency rates by grade for all schools in the state
 - State average percent proficient on AIMS for each grade (Reading and Mathematics)
 - Overall Percent Passing associated with the 90th and 20th percentile school by grade (Reading and Mathematics)
- Subgroup proficiency rates for FRL, ELL, and SPED students for all schools in the state, where eligible subgroups exist
 - FRL, ELL, and SPED enrollment for all schools in the state (used for similar schools selection)
 - FRL only Percent Passing associated with the 90th and 20th percentile school by grade (Reading and Mathematics)
 - ELL only Percent Passing associated with the 90th and 20th percentile school by grade (Reading and Mathematics)
 - SPED only Percent Passing associated with the 90th and 20th percentile school by grade (Reading and Mathematics)
 - List of charter schools that do not report FRL enrollment
- Graduation rate for all charter schools
- List of all alternative schools in the state
- List of all schools designated as a “small” school
- Number and percentage of students persisting at each school in the state

The consistent, annual collection, analysis, and presentation of academic performance data help to ensure that all charter schools are held to high standards. A rigorously constructed academic performance framework gives authorizers a vehicle to communicate expectations, monitor performance, and exercise oversight.

Use of the Academic Framework

The established targets are used to determine whether the charter holder is meeting or making sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations set forth in the academic framework. The evaluation is completed using the most recent State and other assessment data and up to five years of prior assessment data.

A charter holder's academic performance will be used by the Board during the term of the charter:

- To stipulate the conditions which waive the charter holder from any submission requirements related to its academic program; and/or
- To stipulate the conditions which require the charter holder to submit additional information or clarification that will be used to inform the Board's decision-making.

A charter holder's academic performance will be considered by the Board during reviews, including five-year interval reviews, and when making decisions about eligibility for expansion, and in considering whether to renew or revoke the charter contract. Academic performance will also be evaluated when considering the following requests:

- Adding Grade Levels to Charter Amendment Requests
- New School Site Notification Requests
- Arizona Online Instruction Program of Instruction Amendment Requests
- Program of Instruction Amendment Requests
- Alternative Calendar Notification Requests
- Enrollment Cap Notification Requests
- Site Specific Change in Grades Served Notification Request
- Instructional Days Amendment Request
- Replication applications
- Transfer applications involving the transfer of the charter contract from another sponsor to the Board
- New applications submitted by officers, directors, partners or members , or charter representatives of existing charter holders

Because academic performance can affect a charter holder's ability to meet the obligations of its charter contract or provisions of law, a charter holder's academic performance may also be reviewed at other times when the Board makes decisions related to a charter holder's financial and/or operational performance.

The Board can use academic performance information to make internal decisions about how to treat each school at the time of renewal and periodically during the school's charter term. For example, the Board may reward excellent schools with more autonomy, recognition, or the chance to expand. It may flag other schools for review because of evidence of performance challenges. And, of course, it will use performance data to make high-stakes decisions about charter renewals and revocations. The Board may also use performance data for public reporting to various stakeholders, such as schools, policymakers, students and families, and the public.

Aggregated Summary View

Summarizing data into an overall rating that leads to certain predictable decisions and consequences can help the Board make more objective, data-driven decisions that are consistent across schools, time, and personnel in the authorizing office. A clear, quantitative threshold for non-renewal or closure can make it more feasible politically to not renew or close schools. It is important to keep in mind, however, that making complex judgments about school performance often requires a nuanced understanding of the school’s outcomes that may be obscured by an oversimplified grading scheme. The Board may find it most effective to use grades or ratings to “flag” a school for certain consequences, and then make a judgment about how to apply the consequences, all things considered. For example, the Board could use a summary rating to identify schools for potential non-renewal: schools receiving a score of less than 70 on a 100-point scale, for example, might be flagged for potential non-renewal. But that flag triggers another set of reviews and scrutiny that informs the decision. This kind of two-step process can offer the best of both worlds—a transparent, data-driven method of placing schools in different categories of reward, review, or consequence, and the ability to exercise judgment.⁵

Weighting the Framework

The Board developed the following system of weights for the academic performance framework:

Measure	Charter Schools					
	Charter Schools		Alternative Charter Schools		Small Schools	
	Weight—Elementary and Middle	Weight—High School	Weight—Elementary and Middle	Weight—High School	Weight—Elementary and Middle	Weight—High School
1a Growth—Median SGP	25%	15%	30	10/5	25%	15%
1b Growth—Median SGP Lowest 25% (Improvement for Alternative schools)	25%	15%	20	10/25	25%	15%
2a Proficiency	15%	20%	15	30/20	15%	20%
2b Schools Serving Similar Populations Comparison	15%	15%	NA	NA	15%	15%
2d Subgroup Comparison	15%	10%	10	10	15%	10%
3a State/Federal Accountability	5%	10%	10	15/5	5%	10%
4a Graduation Rate	NA	10%	NA	10/20	NA	10%
4b ACT Equivalency	NA	NA	NA		NA	NA
4b Academic Persistence – Alternative Schools only	NA	NA	15	15	NA	NA
4c Credit Accumulation	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

⁵ A separate document will be provided with options for presenting and summarizing charter school performance against the framework.

Conclusion

The creation and implementation of the academic performance framework required that the Board consider many factors, including which data elements are available, the quality of the data, and what information will support the Board in making high-stakes decisions. A strong framework is critical for setting clear expectations for schools and for making high-stakes decisions more clear-cut and transparent. The work on the front end necessary to develop a rigorous framework will pay off on the back end with stronger accountability, easier decision-making, and, in the long term, a higher-quality charter school portfolio.

DRAFT

**APPENDIX A: PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK FOR
TRADITIONAL AND SMALL SCHOOLS**

DRAFT

**Arizona State Board for Charter Schools
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
for
Traditional and Small Schools**

1. STUDENT PROGRESS OVER TIME (GROWTH) *NOTE: POOLED 3-YEAR MEDIAN USED FOR SMALL SCHOOLS TO BE CONSISTENT WITH A-F LETTER GRADES.*

1.a. Are schools making adequate growth based on the school’s median student growth percentiles (SGP) in reading and math?
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs for reading and math are 66 or above.
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs for reading and math are from 50 to 65.
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs for reading and math are from 34 to 49.
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs for reading and math are below 34.
1.b. Are the lowest-performing students making adequate growth based on the median student growth percentiles (SGP) of the lowest 25% of students in reading and math?
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs for reading and math for the lowest 25% of students are 66 or above.
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs for reading and math for the lowest 25% of students are from 50 to 65.
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs for reading and math for the lowest 25% of students are from 34 to 49.
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs for reading and math for the lowest 25% of students are below 34.

2. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (STATUS) NOTE: POOLED 3-YEAR MEDIAN USED FOR SMALL SCHOOLS TO BE CONSISTENT WITH A-F LETTER GRADES.

2.a. Are students achieving proficiency on state examinations in math and reading?
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates are in the top 10% of statewide performance OR the school's proficiency rates are at least 90%.
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates meet or exceed average statewide performance but fall below the top 10%.
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates fall below average statewide performance but are above the bottom 20%.
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates are in the bottom 20% of statewide performance.
2.b. Are students performing well on state examinations in math and reading in comparison to similar schools? ⁶
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rate exceeds similar schools by 15 or more percentage points.
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rate meets or exceeds similar schools by up to 15 percentage points.
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rate is less than similar schools by up to 15 percentage points.
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rate is less than similar schools by 15 or more percentage points.
2.c. Are students in subgroups achieving proficiency on state examinations in math and reading compared to state subgroups? (Applies to all eligible subgroups in the school.) ⁷
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's subgroup proficiency rates are in the top 10% of statewide subgroup performance.
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's subgroup proficiency rates meet or exceed statewide subgroup performance, but fall below the top 10%.
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's subgroup proficiency rates fall below statewide subgroup performance, but are above the bottom 20%.
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> School's subgroup proficiency rates are in the bottom 20% of statewide subgroup performance.

⁶ Similar schools compare demographic data of the charter school in question to other schools in the state using the following criteria:

1. Serves the same grade levels as the charter school
2. Percentage of low-SES student enrollment is within 10 percentage points of the charter school
3. Percentage of ELL student enrollment is within 10 percentage points of the charter school
4. Percentage of students with disabilities is within 10 percentage points of the charter school

⁷ Necessary data to calculate this measure include:

- School subgroup proficiency rates by grade level for the most recent available year for all eligible subgroups, e.g. economically-disadvantaged, English-Language learners, and students with disabilities.
- State proficiency levels of those same subgroups by grade-level.

3. STATE ACCOUNTABILITY

3.a. Is the school meeting acceptable standards according to the state accountability system?

Exceeds Standard:

School received an A rating from the state accountability system.

Meets Standard:

School received a B rating from the state accountability system.

Does Not Meet Standard:

School received a C rating from the state accountability system.

Falls Far Below Standard:

School received a D or F rating from the state accountability system.

4. POST-SECONDARY READINESS (REQUIRED FOR HIGH SCHOOLS ONLY)

4.a. Are students graduating from high school?

Exceeds Standard:

- 2011-12: At least 82 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2012-13: At least 84 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2013-14: At least 86 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2014-15: At least 88 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2015-16: At least 90 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2016-17: At least 92 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2017-18: At least 94 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2018-19: At least 96 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2019-20: At least 98 percent of students graduated from high school.

Meets Standard:

- 2011-12: 77 percent to 81 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2012-13: 79 percent to 83 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2013-14: 81 percent to 85 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2014-15: 83 percent to 87 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2015-16: 85 percent to 89 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2016-17: 87 percent to 91 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2017-18: 89 percent to 93 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2018-19: 91 percent to 95 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2019-20 forward: 93 percent to 97 percent of students graduated from high school.

Does Not Meet Standard:

- 2011-12: 66 percent to 76 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2012-13: 68 percent to 78 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2013-14: 70 percent to 80 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2014-15: 72 percent to 82 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2015-16: 74 percent to 84 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2016-17: 76 percent to 86 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2017-18: 78 percent to 88 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2018-19: 80 percent to 90 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2019-20 forward: 82 percent to 92 percent of students graduated from high school.

Falls Far Below Standard:

- 2011-12: Fewer than 65 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2012-13: Fewer than 67 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2013-14: Fewer than 69 percent of students graduated from high school.
- 2014-15: Fewer than 71 percent of students graduated from high school.

4. POST-SECONDARY READINESS (REQUIRED FOR HIGH SCHOOLS ONLY)

<input type="checkbox"/> 2015-16: Fewer than 73 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2016-17: Fewer than 75 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2017-18: Fewer than 77 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2018-19: Fewer than 79 percent of students graduated from high school. <input type="checkbox"/> 2019-20 forward: Fewer than 81 percent of students graduated from high school.
4.b.1 Does students' performance on the ACT and SAT reflect college readiness?
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The percentage of students meeting benchmarks for ACT or SAT performance exceeds the national average by at least 20 percent.
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The percentage of students meeting benchmarks for ACT or SAT performance meets or exceeds the national average by up to 20 percent.
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The percentage of students meeting benchmarks for ACT or SAT performance falls below the national average by up to 20 percent.
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The percentage of students meeting benchmarks for ACT or SAT performance falls below the national average by at least 20 percent.
4.b.2 Are students participating in the ACT or SAT?
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> More than 90 percent of students participated in the ACT or SAT.
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> 70 to 89 percent of students participated in the ACT or SAT.
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> 50 to 69 percent of students participated in the ACT or SAT.
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 percent of students participated in the ACT or SAT.
4.c. Are students completing credits/courses necessary to graduate? <i>Note: Preliminary until data become available and evaluation criteria are developed.</i>
Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/>
Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/>
Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/>
Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/>

**APPENDIX B: PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK FOR
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS**

DRAFT

**Arizona State Board for Charter Schools
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
for
Alternative Schools**

1. STUDENT PROGRESS OVER TIME (GROWTH)

<p>1.a. Are schools making adequate growth based on the school’s median Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) in reading and math? <i>Note: Looking at only current year 3,4,5,6, 7, 8 and 10th graders.</i></p>
<p>Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs are in the top 10% of statewide alternative schools.</p>
<p>Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs meet or exceed the state median of all alternative schools, but below the top 10%.</p>
<p>Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs are below the state median of all alternative schools, but above the bottom 20%.</p>
<p>Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> The school median SGPs are in the bottom 20% of statewide alternative schools.</p>
<p>1.b. Are non-proficient students showing an increase in performance on state assessments in reading and math? (Calculation for 11th and 12th grades requires student participation in two consecutive administrations of Fall/Spring or Spring/Fall state assessments.)</p>
<p>Exceeds Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> At least 55 percent of students improved by at least one performance band in reading. <input type="checkbox"/> At least 40 percent of students improved by at least one performance band in math.</p>
<p>Meets Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> 45 percent to 54 percent of students improved by at least one performance band in reading. <input type="checkbox"/> 30 percent to 39 percent of students improved by at least one performance band in math.</p>
<p>Does Not Meet Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> 30 percent to 44 percent of students improved by at least one performance band in reading. <input type="checkbox"/> 20 percent to 29 percent of students improved by at least one performance band in math.</p>
<p>Falls Far Below Standard: <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 30 percent of students improved by at least one performance band in reading. <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 20 percent of students improved by at least one performance band in math.</p>

2. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (STATUS)

2.a. Are students achieving proficiency on state examinations in math and reading?
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates are in the top 10% of statewide alternative school performance.
<i>Meets Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates meet or exceed average statewide alternative school performance but fall below the top 10%.
<i>Does Not Meet Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates fall below average statewide alternative school performance but are above the bottom 20%.
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School's proficiency rates are in the bottom 20% of statewide alternative school performance.
2.b. Are students in subgroups achieving proficiency on state examinations in math and reading compared to state alternative subgroups? (Applies to all eligible subgroups in the school.) Subgroups being defined as SPED, ELL and FRL when available.
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School's subgroup proficiency rates are in the top 10% of statewide subgroup performance in alternative schools.
<i>Meets Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School's subgroup proficiency rates meet or exceed statewide subgroup performance in alternative schools, but fall below the top 10%.
<i>Does Not Meet Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School's subgroup proficiency rates fall below statewide subgroup performance in alternative schools, but are above the bottom 20%.
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School's subgroup proficiency rates are in the bottom 20% of statewide subgroup performance in alternative schools.

3. STATE ACCOUNTABILITY

3.a. Is the school meeting acceptable standards according to the state accountability system?
<i>Exceeds Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School received an A- ALT rating from the state accountability system.
<i>Meets Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School received a B-ALT rating from the state accountability system.
<i>Does Not Meet Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School received a C-ALT rating from the state accountability system.
<i>Falls Far Below Standard:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> School received a D-ALT or F-ALT rating from the state accountability system.

4. POST-SECONDARY READINESS (REQUIRED ONLY FOR HIGH SCHOOLS ONLY)

4.a. Are students graduating from high school?

Meets Standard:

Earned the graduation points in the A-F Alternative Letter Grade calculation.

Does Not Meet Standard:

Did not earn the graduation points in the A-F Alternative Letter Grade calculation.

4.b. Are students remaining enrolled in school across school years?

Exceeds Standard:

At least 90 percent of students remained enrolled in school from the previous school year.

Meets Standard:

70 percent to 89 percent of students remained enrolled in school from the previous school year.

Does Not Meet Standard:

50 percent to 69 percent of students remained enrolled in school from the previous school year.

Falls Far Below Standard:

Less than 50 percent of students remained enrolled in school from the previous school year.

4.c. Are students completing credits/courses necessary to get on track to be able to graduate?

Note: Preliminary until data become available and evaluation criteria are developed.

Exceeds Standard:

Meets Standard:

Does Not Meet Standard:

Falls Far Below Standard: