

AGENDA ITEM: Academic Intervention ([PMP](#) and [DSP](#)) Process Revisions; Revisions to [Renewal Application Requirements](#), and [Eligibility for Expansion Requests](#); Revisions to [Academic Performance Framework Guidance Document](#) and [Methodology](#)

Issue

Consideration of revisions to the processes by which the Board implements its oversight and administrative responsibilities regarding the academic performance expectations of the charter school and the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations established by the Board.

Background

A.R.S. §15-183(R) requires that in implementing its oversight and administrative responsibilities, the Board 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.” The Board must ground its actions in evidence of the charter holder's performance in accordance with the performance framework. Board staff utilizes the methods of measurement described in the Academic Performance Framework when evaluating the academic performance of the schools it sponsors at times of review, renewal, and when a Charter Holder submits an expansion amendment or notification request.

In FY15, the Board staff will be evaluating up to 184 schools operated by 153 Charter Holders to determine whether they are making sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations. Additionally, based on prior year data, staff anticipates as many as 25 expansion requests by Charter Holders operating schools that do not currently meet the Board’s academic expectations.

Board staff is proposing revisions to the processes and requirements for the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations, as reflected in the materials provided for consideration. Board staff is also proposing revisions to the requirements and process for renewal applications and expansion amendment and notification requests. These revisions were developed considering lessons learned from recent evaluation processes and recent Board decisions, and as a means to manage the academic workload while maintaining the integrity of the Board’s academic intervention processes and expansion request processes.

Academic Intervention (PMP and DSP) Process Revisions

The Board’s “Academic Performance Framework and Guidance Document” currently identifies two processes for the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations, a Performance Management Plan (PMP) and a Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP). Throughout the implementation of these two processes, Board staff has received feedback from various stakeholders. That feedback and recommendations from a review of the processes are incorporated in the proposed revisions.

[PMP Process Revisions](#). Board staff has revised the PMP requirements to align more closely with the DSP process.

- The evaluation criteria, found in the proposed revisions to the Academic Performance Framework and Guidance Document in Appendix D, establishes the criteria for an “acceptable” PMP as one that provides a sufficiently detailed and comprehensive improvement plan that identifies sufficient evidence that will be maintained and addresses each of the following areas:

Data, Curriculum, Assessment, Monitoring Instruction, Professional Development, and when required Graduation Rate and Persistence.

- The PMP [Template](#) and [instructions](#) were also revised. The revision includes eliminating the narrative requirement and replacing it with guided reflection questions intended to increase efficiency as a Charter Holder completes the PMP.

[DSP Process Revisions.](#) Board staff revised the DSP requirements and evaluation criteria to increase clarity and efficiency, and to respond to Charter Holder feedback. Revisions are included in the materials provided for consideration.

- The revised DSP evaluation criteria, found in the proposed revisions to the Academic Performance Framework and Guidance Document in Appendix E, does not change the requirements for an “acceptable” DSP. Rather the revised criteria more simply state the requirements for an “acceptable” DSP as well as the criteria that identify a DSP that “does not meet” or “falls far below” the requirements.
- A [template](#) replaces the open narrative. The evaluation and feedback suggested the narrative was not the most efficient method for Charter Holders to communicate their improvement efforts. A template was created to provide the requested “structure” for Charter Holders to provide the information sought by the Board in the DSP process. Revisions to the DSP [instructions](#) reflect this change.
- Changes were made to the site visit protocol that are intended to allow the Charter Holder manage the site visit.

[Revision to the Implementation of Processes.](#) Staff proposes the implementation of a “tiered” intervention process which will limit the number of site visits conducted. In the current year, Charter Holders assigned a DSP would have a site visit for renewal, interval reviews, annual monitoring if they operate a school that received a “Falls Far Below” overall rating or a “Does Not Meet” overall rating and a D letter grade for the previous year, the restoration or revocation determination if they received an F letter grade for the previous year, and for expansion requests. All other Charter Holders subject to annual monitoring will be assigned a DSP Template Only or Template with Desk Audit, or a PMP depending on where they fall in the intervention schedule. A graphic of this tiered intervention process is attached.

[Revisions to Renewal Application Requirements](#)

Staff proposes a revision to the Academic Performance Section of the renewal application to align with the Board’s recent renewal decisions. Currently, a Charter Holder that does not meet the Board’s Academic Performance Expectations because they operate one or more schools that received a “Meets” or “Exceeds” overall rating in the most recent year for which there is an Academic Dashboard available, but a “Does Not Meet” or “Falls Far Below” overall rating in the prior year, is required to complete a DSP with a site visit. In June and July, the Board voted to renew charters that were rated “Not Acceptable” at the conclusion of the DSP process because all schools operated by those Charter Holders had received a “Meets” or “Exceeds” overall rating in the most recent year for which there was an Academic Dashboard available. The Board’s decision was based on its ability to continue monitoring those schools’ academic performance through the intervention schedule. Based on this decision, Board

staff is recommending that an applicant for renewal be required to complete the Academic Performance Section of the renewal application only if they operate one or more schools that have received “No Rating” or a “Does Not Meet” or “Falls Far Below” overall rating in the most recent year for which there is an Academic Dashboard available.

Eligibility for Expansion Requests

Having reviewed recent expansion requests with DSPs in the past year, staff proposes the following changes for Charter Holders that do not meet the Board’s academic standard in the two most recent years that State Assessment data is available:

Overall rating ¹		Proposal	Rationale
Prior Year	Most Recent Year		
Meets	Meets	No change. Eligible to submit an expansion request in current fiscal year	Meeting for two years indicates a Charter Holder has sustainable processes that produce results.
DNM	Meets	Eligible to submit an expansion request with a DSP in current fiscal year between Jan 1 – March 31	Timeframe provides at least 2 points of benchmark data that supports the sustainability of the school’s improvement processes and allows for Board consideration before the end of the school year.
Meets	DNM	Not eligible to submit an expansion request with a DSP until receives an overall rating of meets OR may submit an expansion request with a DSP when the Charter Holder has one year of benchmark data that demonstrates continuous improvement	Provides a complete academic year for the Charter Holder to assess its systems and make necessary corrections for year over year success.
DNM	DNM	Eligible to submit an expansion request when the school receives an overall rating of “Meets” or “Exceeds” standard	Not meeting for two years indicates a Charter Holder does not have sustainable processes that produce results and should focus on improving their systems for the students they currently serve.

¹ In this table, “Meets” is intended to denote an overall rating of “Meets” or “Exceeds” and “DMN” is intended to denote an overall rating of “Does Not Meet” or “Falls Far Below.”

Revisions to [Academic Performance Framework Guidance Document](#) and [Methodology](#)

Board staff proposes revisions to the Academic Performance Framework Guidance Document and Methodology including:

- changes to enhance the readability of the methodology,
- technical changes as described below,
- technical changes as recommended by the Board’s legal counsel, and
- proposed policy changes discussed above.

Technical change to the definition of a small school. Currently, both in the A-F model and the Board’s Academic Performance Framework, a small school is a school that has fewer than 30 test records including both math and reading from current year students who meet the definition of Full Academic Year. Board staff identified important differences in the A-F model and the Board’s Academic Performance Framework that require revising this definition for the Board’s Academic Performance Framework. Specifically, the Board’s Academic Performance Framework disaggregates math and reading while the state A–F Letter Grade Accountability System aggregates the two subjects. In order to minimize variability due to student populations or very small numbers of students as intended when the Board adopted the revised small school definition, proposed revisions reflect a small school definition that applies to schools that do not have at least 30 test records in math and at least 30 test records in reading for current year students who meet the definition of FAY.

Enhancement to ensure the soundness of the improvement calculation. Currently, the improvement calculation is completed by 1) finding the percentage of students who improved in spring to fall, 2) finding the percentage of students who improved in fall to spring, and 3) averaging the two percentages. The more sound calculation is to find 1) the number of students who improved in spring to fall, 2) the number of students who improved in fall to spring, and 3) calculate the improvement percentage by dividing the sum of those two numbers by all students eligible to improve.

Revision to the graduation rate criteria for alternative schools. Currently, the criteria is identified as “earned the graduation points in the A-F Alternative Letter Grade calculation.” ADE recently changed its method of awarding graduation points in the A-F Alternative Letter Grade calculation. The Board’s 2014 calculations retained the old method; proposed revisions reflect the actual methodology used for making that calculation.

Board Options

Option 1: The Board may adopt revisions to the processes by which the Board implements its oversight and administrative responsibilities regarding the academic performance expectations of the charter school and the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations established by the Board, as reflected in the materials provided for consideration. Staff recommends the following language: I move that the board adopt revisions to the processes by which the Board implements its oversight and administrative responsibilities regarding the academic performance expectations of the charter school and the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations established by the Board including: Academic Intervention (PMP and DSP) Process Revisions; Revisions to Renewal Application Requirements and Eligibility for Expansion Requests; and Revisions to Academic Performance

Framework Guidance Document and Methodology, as presented to the Board today and found in the materials for today's Board meeting.

Option 2: The Board may adopt revisions to the processes by which the Board implements its oversight and administrative responsibilities regarding the academic performance expectations of the charter school and the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations established by the Board, by adopting the materials for today's Board meeting with modifications. Staff recommends the following language: I move that the board adopt revisions to the processes by which the Board implements its oversight and administrative responsibilities regarding the academic performance expectations of the charter school and the measurement of sufficient progress toward the academic performance expectations established by the Board including: Academic Intervention (PMP and DSP) Process Revisions; Revisions to Renewal Application Requirements and Eligibility for Expansion Requests; and Revisions to Academic Performance Framework Guidance Document and Methodology presented to the Board today and found in the materials for today's Board meeting with the modifications discussed (may require specific references depending upon whether clarification of discussion is needed).

Appendix

**DSP
with
Site Visit**

Reports to the Board at
January and April
meetings and as
Renewals/Expansions
require

- Renewal - DNM/FFB Overall Rating in Current Year
- Interval Review - DNM/FFB Rating in Current Year and previously completed PMP
- Academic Monitoring with FFB Overall Rating in Current Year
- Academic Monitoring with DNM Overall Rating and D Letter Grade in Current Year
- F Letter Grade in Current Year
- Expansion Request - per Board policy

DSP with Desk Audit

Charter Holders submit by March 4,
2015
Reports to the Board at June
meeting

- Academic Monitoring with DNM Overall Rating and Letter Grade C or better

DSP – Template Only

Charter Holders submit by March 4, 2015
Reports to the Board at June meeting

PMP

Charter Holders submit by November 14, 2014
Reports to the Board at February meeting

- First Annual Academic Monitoring with DNM/FFB Overall Rating
- Interval Review - Does not meet Academic Performance Expectations and has not previously been assigned a PMP