

District of Columbia Public Charter School Board FY2016

Agency District of Columbia Public Charter School Board

Mission The D.C. Public Charter School Board's (PCSB) mission is to provide quality public school options for DC students, families, and communities by conducting a comprehensive application review process, providing effective oversight of and meaningful support to DC public charter schools, and by actively engaging key stakeholders.

Summary of Services The PCSB carries out four key functions. 1) ensure that only the highest quality organizations are approved to open charter schools which is accomplished through our comprehensive application review process, 2) make effective oversight decisions in the interest of students and hold charter schools to high standards with respect to results, 3) provide clear feedback to charter schools and maintain a system of rewards and consequences to manage progress towards desired outcomes, 4) actively engage key stakeholders to ensure transparency and accountability through an exchange process that facilitates the sharing of critical information and feedback regarding community impact and preferences.

2016 Objectives

FY16 Objectives

Objective Number	Objective Description
(empty) (4 Objectives)	
1	Promote increased school academic quality through oversight reviews and our Performance Management Framework (PMF)
2	Ensure charter schools fulfill their roles as public schools serving all students
3	Improve fiscal and compliance oversight
4	Increase community engagement and parent education about school quality

2016 Key Performance Indicators

Measure	Division	Frequency of Reporting	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2015 Target	FY 2016 Target
1 - Promote increased school academic quality through oversight reviews and our Performance Management Framework (PMF) (4 Measures)							
Number of charter LEAs receiving 5, 10, or 15 year review		Annually	10	11	13	13	10
Number of Tier 1 charter LEAs with announced plans to expand or replicate		Annually	5	6	2	5	2
Successful completion of Early Childhood/Adult Ed PMFs		Annually	100	100	100	100	100
Number of qualitative site review reports		Annually	41	42	42	40	14
2 - Ensure charter schools fulfill their roles as public schools serving all students (3 Measures)							
Number of PCS Campuses receiving an out-of-compliance warning from our Board for violating our Data Submission Policy		Quarterly	2	2	1	10	10
Reduction in the rate of expulsions for "other charter reasons"		Quarterly	1	1	3	20	10

Number of schools participating in our Special Education self-study	Annually	10	10	10	10	6
3 - Improve fiscal and compliance oversight (4 Measures)						
Reduction in number of campuses with a Mystery Shopper Violation	Quarterly	20	20	1	20	1
Number of Audit Management Unit (AMU) reports issued	Annually	1	1	1	1	1
Number of schools with weak financials receiving enhanced fiscal oversight from PCSB	Annually	5	5	7	7	5
Number of schools whose fiscal health improved as a result of oversight efforts	Annually	4	4	7	2	5
4 - Increase community engagement and parent education about school quality (5 Measures)						
Number of PMF parent guides distributed	Annually	4,000	4,000	27,000	4,000	5000
Number of Twitter followers	Annually	1,000	1,000	1,300	1,500	500
Number of community meetings participated in	Annually	11	11	20	10	15
Number of PCSB Board meetings televised	Annually	2	2	12	10	12
Increase in charter school data available on www.dcpcsb.org, compared to SY2013-2014	Annually	10	10	15	10	10

2016 Workload Measures

Measure	Frequency of Reporting	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Workload Measure (7 Measures)				
Number of Public Charter School Applications	Annually	11	10	8
Number of Qualitative Site Reviews (formerly PDRs)	Annually	54	42	42
Number of Compliance Reviews	Annually	102	109	112
Number of Financial Reviews	Annually	285	285	285
Number of workshops	Annually	35	32	33
Number of School Openings (New Charters and New Campuses)	Annually	4	4	4
Number of School Closings	Annually	0	5	4

2016 Initiatives

Objective Number	Objective Title	Initiative Number	Initiative Title	Initiative Description
(empty) - 1 (4 Initiatives)				

1		1.1	Conduct rigorous 5, 10 and 15-year reviews of DC charter schools	PCSB will complete rigorous reviews of schools in their 5th, 10th or 15th year of operation, ensuring that low-performing schools, according to our PMF, take one or more actions to improve performance or close. Rigorous reviews will include Qualitative Site Reviews (QSRs); review of academic and non-academic performance, finance, and compliance indicators; as well as assessment of performance against the goals and academic achievement expectations of a school's charter.
1		1.2	Address low-performing schools in any year of their charter	PCSB will continue to effectively monitor the performance of each school in its portfolio. School leadership will be required to meet with PCSB staff and board to discuss the school's performance if it is found to be lacking.
1		1.3	Encourage Tier 1 schools to expand or replicate	PCSB will continue to promote the expansion of Tier 1 schools. Schools that are high achievers will be given help to promote their expansions.
1		1.4	Complete successful releases of our Early Childhood and Adult Education PMFs and release the newly tiered PMFs for SY15-16	PCSB released updated guidelines this summer to consolidate the Early Childhood, Elementary and Middle School (EC/ES/MS) PMFs into one comprehensive framework. The results of this framework will be published in Spring 2016, inclusive of the hold-harmless results from the first PARCC assessment in Washington, DC. These results will be scored, but not tiered during this release. The 2015-16 framework guidelines will include plans to tier the new EC/ES/MS framework in the 2015-16 school year. The adult education PMF will be tiered for the first time this school year with a release date of December 2015.

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2		2.1	Use data transparency to reduce incidences of expulsion, long-term suspension, and truancy	In FY16 PCSB will continue to collect data from schools to inform policy, provide schools with sector-level trends, and ensure compliance of applicable law. PCSB will also provide transparency to the public and stakeholders, and identify schools that may be outliers in regards to truancy, discipline, student populations served, and disparities in performance of subgroups within a school. These data are currently being shared with schools via PCSB's dashboards.
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2		2.2	<p>Develop and share discipline and attendance data for schools with similar populations to help reduce incidences of expulsion, long-term suspensions, and truancy</p>	<p>PCSB uses, and will continue to use, facilitate file and data sharing amongst PCSB staff and with each charter local education agency (LEA). The PCSB SharePoint program has an internal and external interface. The internal interface is what PCSB uses to store important documents, keep track of organizational goals, and test real-time discipline data reports before releasing them to LEAs. The external interface allows schools to view their enrollment, attendance, and discipline data in customized reports. For example, schools are able to view reports that display their suspension rate and how it compares to the suspension rate averages of charter schools that serve the same grade levels.</p> <p>During FY16, PCSB will develop attendance reports using OSSE's dynamic Qlik dashboard. The reports will allow schools to view their attendance submission rates, attendance rates, and truancy rates.</p> <p>PCSB will continue to create summary reports in SharePoint and Qlik meant to encourage schools to check that the data they submit are accurate and use these data to compare how they are performing in these areas relative to the sector average and schools that serve similar grade levels.</p>
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2	2.3	<p>Improve service oversight for students with special needs by continuing to conduct a detailed self-study to help schools improve education delivery through reflective practice and implementing audit policies to address issues.</p> <p>PCSB will also continue the mystery shopper program of contacting schools posing as parents of special needs children seeking to apply</p>	<p>PCSB will continue to conduct Special Education audits using data housed in ProActive in efforts to assess potential discriminatory practices against students with disabilities through the analysis of varying indicators, such as suspensions, expulsions, or mid-year withdrawal rates of students with disabilities relative to their non-disabled peers. PCSB has in place a number of resources and tools to ensure that LEAs are effectively meeting the needs of special education students. The Quality Assurance Review (QAR) component of the Special Education Performance Monitoring Tool is a direct way for charters to reflect on their special education performance and practices and set goals to improve identified areas of challenge. The outcome for schools is to improve their practice as it relates to serving students with disabilities through implementing best practices. For PCSB, the QAR tool offers great insight into where schools are struggling the most around serving students with disabilities.</p> <p>A specially designed Audit Form is utilized to document when PCSB determines that an audit on a school is necessary through the Special Education Trigger Policy. One of the key reasons (“triggers”) for a school audit is having a disproportionate discipline rate for students with disabilities as compared to their general education peers. All of the schools that were audited for Special Education suspension rates in SY 2013-14 currently have a lower suspension rate for students with disabilities YTD SY 2014-15 when compared to SY 2013-14. This policy aims to identify and address discriminatory practices against students with disabilities that could potentially occur.</p> <p>On an annual basis, PCSB conducts Compliance Reviews, which include reading each LEA’s Charter Application Form. PCSB staff specifically checks that the form does not request information related to Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), 504 Plans, or Special Education needs. Additionally, PCSB conducts “Mystery Shopper” calls to charter schools randomly during the year. PCSB staff calls schools posed as parents and keeps a record of what schools say that could potentially be interpreted as counseling out parents of a special education student. These mechanisms are in place to ensure every LEA is accessible and does not discriminate against students with special needs.</p>
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3		3.1	<p>Continue efforts to improve fiscal monitoring of charter schools, publishing a Finance Audit Review report for Fiscal Year 2015 that provides clear indicators of charter school financial health.</p>	<p>Public charter schools are required to submit annual financial audits performed by PCSB-approved independent auditors. PCSB reviews each school audit. Additionally, PCSB reviews key financial ratios of all schools it oversees, comparing these ratios with industry standards of health. In January 2011, PCSB established the Audit Management Unit (AMU) to enhance its charter school financial oversight. The AMU consists of three District agencies with responsibility for aspects of charter school finances: PCSB, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), and the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE) Office of Charter School Financing and Support.</p> <p>The AMU engaged bearsolutions LLC, to create and deploy CHARM (Charter Audit Resource Management), a fiscal oversight model and supporting database tool, which was renamed Finance and Audit Review (FAR) in 2014. FAR analyzes data from schools' financial audits to measure the fiscal performance of DC charter schools. Pilot reports were issued for FY10 and FY11; since then, the FY12, FY13, and FY14 have been made available to schools and the public.</p>
3		3.2	<p>Use the Financial Audit Review Score to work with financially struggling charter schools on steps to improve their health.</p>	<p>An essential component of each annual financial review is to identify schools potentially in danger of insolvency. Since FY11, PCSB has used the FAR score to provide a standard measure of financial health. However, the score is not published on the FAR Report Cards because school leaders expressed concern about the score being used as a financial rating tool or risk measure by commercial lenders and investors.</p> <p>PCSB will continue to rely on the FAR score for internal guidance in identifying low-performing schools for more in-depth financial oversight, including but not limited to collections of monthly financial statements and regular meetings with school leaders and business managers. School leaders have reported that these meetings are helpful in improving their understanding of financial performance standards, clarifying results of the individual school reports, and developing plans to address agreed-upon issues. In some cases, schools may be asked to create formal, milestone-based plans for financial improvement.</p>

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4		4.1	<p>Increase awareness about public charter schools by enhancing PCSB website (dcpcsb.org), and distributing the PMF Parent Guide in multiple languages.</p>	<p>PCSB's stakeholder engagement plan includes community outreach activities, including community forums, information provided through publications, refreshing the PCSB website and newsletters to email subscribers, hosting or participating in community events (e.g. EduFest), active engagement with the Parent and Alumni Leadership Council and encouraging community member participation and feedback in our charter application process and PCSB hearings. PCSB will also make a concerted effort to widely disseminate PMF parent guides in multiple languages. PCSB will also continue to increase Twitter and Facebook activity including tweeting and posting information on each monthly Board meeting and other positive news about public charter schools. PCSB will also live stream public hearings and board meetings.</p>
4		4.2	<p>Improve transparency around PCSB's authorizer work, making board meetings and other materials available to the public and publishing increased amounts of data on public charter school performance, equity, and finances.</p>	<p>PCSB will continue to live stream monthly public hearings and Board meetings. PCSB also will post all Board agendas and materials to its website 48 hours prior to Board meetings. PCSB also plans to post increasing levels of data relating to public charter school performance on its OpenData portal (www.data.dcpcsb.org), including comprehensive discipline and attendance data, test score data, our performance management framework and the results of our annual FAR.</p>
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