



Charter Schools Institute
State University of New York

CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
THIRD YEAR INSPECTION REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION

The third year inspection is part of a comprehensive accountability system for New York State charter schools sponsored by the State University of New York Charter Schools Institute (CSI). The visit during the school's third year of operation provides an independent assessment of the school's progress toward its academic and organizational goals as defined in its accountability plan.

The third year inspection complements the yearly reviews conducted by CSI staff and corroborates the school's own annual reports of progress toward the targets defined in its accountability plan. The visit provides an independent assessment of the school's progress and provides recommendations to the school as it prepares to apply for charter renewal in the fifth year of operation. The recommendations represent the experienced opinions of the inspection team and are intended to offer the school guidance for enhancing the evidence base for its renewal application.

II. CONDUCT OF THE VISIT

The third year site visit to the Charter School of Science and Technology, Rochester, was conducted on March 3-4, 2003 by an independent team of experienced educators organized by SchoolWorks, Beverly, MA.

- Dr. Karen Laba, Project Manager, SchoolWorks: former middle and high school science teacher, preservice science teacher educator and supervisor, and consultant in accountability system design and implementation for SchoolWorks.
- Ledyard McFadden, President, SchoolWorks: former elementary middle and high school teacher, Director of Operations for the City on a Hill Charter School in Boston, Massachusetts and Regional Manager for Beacon Education Management.
- William Wibel, Consultant, SchoolWorks: retired principal in K-12 settings currently a Visiting Practitioner at the Principals' Center, Harvard Graduate School of Education.
- Harrington Gibson, Consultant, SchoolWorks: former fourth grade classroom teacher in Chicago; currently a doctoral student at Harvard Graduate School of Education in Learning and Teaching; consultant with Boston Public Schools
- Dr. Mary Flamer, Consultant; SchoolWorks: program coordinator of Title I for the New Jersey Department of Education; consultant with New Jersey public schools.
- Brenda Artwell, ATLAS Communities Site Developer; Consultant, SchoolWorks: elementary teacher, principal, district curriculum and instruction supervisor in the Philadelphia School District.

The team used the school's accountability plan goals as the guide for the examination along with the set of framework questions included in the inspection protocol to assess the school's academic and organizational effectiveness. Prior to the one-and-a-half-day visit, the team reviewed the school's documents including the annual *Accountability Progress Report*, the original charter application, and reports from previous informal site visits by the Charter Schools Institute. At the school, the team interviewed school administrators, Board representatives, staff, parents, students, and visited classes to understand the efforts the school is making to achieve its academic and organizational goals. The team offered a brief oral summary of its findings and recommendations to school leaders and invited them to ask for clarification as needed.

This report is organized into two parts. *Part I: School Progress Report*, offers the team's judgments about the school's effectiveness at meeting the broad goals defined in the charter school law (Education Law §2850(2) (a-f)):

- improving student learning and achievement;
- increasing learning opportunities for all students (particularly students at risk of academic failure);
- encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- creating new professional opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other school personnel;
- expanding parental choice in public schools; and
- moving from a rule-based to performance-based accountability system by holding schools accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.

The judgments of the team are organized into the same three categories as the school's other documents: academic program, organizational viability, and unique programmatic areas. The framework for the progress report discussion is shown in **Appendix A**.

The second part of the report, *School Accountability Plan: Assessment and Recommendations*, reports the team's assessment of the quality of the school's own measures of its progress, and offers suggestions for enhancing the evidence base on which renewal decisions will be made at the school's fifth year of operation. A brief rationale for the inspection team's recommendations is presented in narrative form along with a summary table in **Appendix B**.

III. SCHOOL DESCRIPTION

The Charter School of Science and Technology (CSST) opened in August 2000, welcoming 922 students in grades K-8 to its five-story renovated research building just north of downtown Rochester, NY. The school is now in its third year of operation and serves 992 students in grades K-8. The original design of the school was to grow a grade each year to become a K-12 institution, but challenges in staffing and discipline led the Board of Trustees to request a modification of its charter to allow a K-8 structure for one additional year. Enrollment has been fairly steady, with some loss of students the first year, ending in June 2001 with an enrollment of 731, but recovering to enroll 916 at the end of the following year, and, as of the date of the inspection, March 4, 2003, hosting a population of 992 students in grades K-8. The school's population is classified as 87% Black, 76% Hispanic, 2% mixed race, 2% white, and 1% other, representative of the underserved central Rochester student population.

The school is governed by an active six member Board of Trustees. The chair and vice-chair of the Board were the primary authors of the school's application and charter design. To manage day-to-day operations of the academic program, the Board has entered a management contract with Edison Schools, Inc. The structure of the school follows a standard Edison design, with teachers and students at CSST grouped into multi-grade houses (except for House 6, which includes only sixth grade), and each two houses further organized into academies by grade level. The Primary Academy includes grades K-2; the Elementary Academy covers grades 3, 4 and 5; and the Junior Academy serves grades 6, 7, and 8. At CSST, one Academy Director oversees the work of the primary and elementary academies and another manages the Junior Academy. Each house is coordinated by a lead teacher, who serves as liaison between the school's leadership and the teachers in the house.

Fifty eight classroom teachers, six special education teachers, two counselors, a social worker, psychologist, student support manager, and three student intervention specialists serve the 992 students at CSST. Additional staff includes five kindergarten paraprofessionals and assorted tutors. A limited profile of the current teaching staff shows that 32 of the teachers are novice teachers (new to two years experience); 11 have at least two years experience; five are designated "Senior" teachers with more than four years' experience; and the ten lead teachers have at least five years' teaching experience.

The academic program includes the core subjects of reading/ELA, mathematics, science and social studies, with special subjects including art, music, dance, sign language, science exploratories and physical education. To provide more instruction time in core areas, the school has adjusted its plan to offer foreign language instruction in the early grades. The school's literacy program is Success For All (SFA), and its mathematics core resource is *Everyday Mathematics*. BSCS TRACS is the designated science program, and various materials are used in the social studies program. The Edison curriculum is comprehensive and detailed, linked with the core content resources, and the school provides teachers with documents demonstrating the alignment between the Edison standards and the New York State learning standards.

PART I: SCHOOL PROGRESS REPORT

I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

QUESTION 1: To what extent have the students attained expected skills and knowledge?

- 1. On external measures including the Stanford 9/ Terra Nova and the New York Statewide Testing Program (NYSTP), students at the Charter School of Science and Technology demonstrate attainment well below national and state norms.**

Stanford 9 and Terra Nova: On the most recent administration of the Stanford 9, students ranked between the 24th and 37th percentile in reading, and between the 24th and 54th percentile in mathematics. As Table 1 indicates, on the 2002 baseline administration of the Terra Nova, CSST students ranged from the 27.3 to 48.8 NCE rank in reading, 28.0 to 45.7 NCE rank in language, and 21.0 to 34.5 NCE rank in mathematics. Note that the number of students tested was not reported by the school.

TABLE 1: Stanford 9 and Terra Nova, 2002 (NCE)

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Stanford 9 Reading		37	32	24	33	32	34	30	
Stanford 9 Math		54	29	25	33	39	29	24	
Terra Nova Reading	34.3	36.7	27.3	35.9	37.9	38.0	35.7	42.0	48.8
Terra Nova Language	38.0	30.0	28.0	33.3	34.8	36.0	38.7	39.3	45.7
Terra Nova Math	21.0	34.2	26.0	21.6	28.0	33.4	34.5	30.0	31.0

The national norm on tests such as the Stanford 9 and Terra Nova is represented by the 50th percentile. Many students at CSST score twenty to thirty percentiles below the national average, indicating a population that is in serious need of accelerated support in order to meet expected achievement levels.

Students in grades 4 and 8 at CSST participate in the New York Statewide Testing Program to measure achievement in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

TABLE 2: 2002 NYSTP by Percent of CSST Continuing Students (enrolled 2+ years)

Performance Level *Number not provided.	ELA*		Mathematics*	
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8
IV	0%	1%	0%	0%
III	16%	6%	17%	7%
II	48%	78%	36%	28%
I	36%	15%	47%	65%

In the NYST program, students are judged 'proficient' if they perform at level III or IV. Fewer than 17 percent of students at the Charter School of Science and Technology meet that target. The large percentage (84 percent of grade 4, 93 percent of grade 8 students) failed to meet the minimum performance standards on the 2002 administration of the state assessments in both subject areas.

CSST students in grade 5 participated in the NYSTP Social Studies assessment in Fall, 2001. Results for this group of 65 continuing students are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3: NYSTP Social by Studies Percent of Continuing Students

Performance Level	Grade 5, 2001, % of Students (n)	Grade 8, 2002, % of Students
IV	3% (2)	0%
III	78% (51)	19%
II	11% (7)	74%
I	8% (5)	7%

On the Social Studies assessment, 81 percent of the fifth grade students at CSST for two or more years achieved the proficiency standard for this subject. Only 19 percent of continuing eighth graders were able to meet the state expectation.

Fourth graders were also tested in 2002 in science, a focus of the CSST charter. Results for the science assessment were not reported in the school's progress report and were not available through web access.

In general, a significant proportion of students enrolled at the Charter School of Science and Technology fail to meet minimum performance standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics as measured by the state assessment system at grades 4 and 8. Attainment of proficiency in social studies is stronger among fifth graders (current 6th graders), but eighth graders showed weak achievement. Science scores for 2002 have not been reported in the school's documents available during the inspection.

2. Results on one of the school's internal measures of student achievement, the Edison "Benchmark" assessments, reveal that a significant number of students are not meeting mastery as of the January 2003 administration.

The Edison Benchmark assessments are administered regularly throughout the year to students in grades 2 through 8. The Benchmark tests assess students' progress toward mastery of content and skills expected for the end of the school year. As designed, students should show incremental progress toward mastery over the course of the school year as new content and skills are covered in class and mastery is demonstrated when the next Benchmark is taken.

At the time of the third year inspection, the school had gathered data on student achievement as of January 2003 in mathematics, reading, and language Benchmark tests. According to the results, progress has varied dramatically, showing wide swings of improvement and decline throughout the year at different grade levels. Seventy percent is defined as 'mastery' in the Benchmark system. The school asserts that the 70 percent score is equivalent to Levels III and IV on the NYSTP As of the January tests, many students at all grades levels have not approached mastery of required content and skills in reading, language arts, and mathematics. In mathematics particularly, the level of mastery is dramatically low in grades 4, 6 and 8.

TABLE 4: Percent of Students At or Above 70%* on January 2003 Benchmarks

Grade	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Reading	17%	13%	18%	4%	19%	2%	57%
Language	not tested	8%	17%	9%	34%	1%	21%
Math	54%	17%	6%	11%	8%	21%	10%

3. On a second internal measure of student performance in reading, student performance shows similar, though not as dramatic, weakness on the Success For All (SFA) periodic assessments.

SFA reading performance is assessed approximately every quarter, and student progress is recorded to show both absolute and longitudinal changes. As of the last assessment at the end of the second quarter, a majority of students in grades 1, 2, and 6 scored at or above grade level. A majority of students in the other grades were performing below grade level according to this measure.

TABLE 5: SFA (Success for All) Second Quarter Results,

Percent of Students Below Grade Level						
Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6
2 nd Quarter	41%	34%	76%	52%	57%	41%

Summarizing across all measures, both external and internal, student performance at the Charter School of Science and Technology is well below expected achievement levels. Weak performance on the Edison Benchmark assessments parallels the low proficiency levels demonstrated on the New York State tests, which in turn are reflective of the low rank of CSST students on the norm referenced measures, the Stanford 9 and the Terra Nova. SFA measures appear to rank students at higher levels than the other measures in place at CSST. Students at this school are in need of significant accelerated improvement if the school is to reach its stated targets.

QUESTION 2: What progress have students made over time in attaining expected skills and knowledge?

1. On external assessments, CSST students demonstrated no overall pattern of improvement or decline on the two years of Stanford 9 results.

By reading diagonally downward over the two years of Stanford 9 results, the reader can track the performance of the same group of students over two years. For example, students in grade 2 in 2001 ranked at the 34th percentile in reading. As third graders, they ranked at the 32nd percentile. In general, CSST students maintained their rank compared to the national norm, with minor increases and declines in different grade level groups. Table 6 represents the change in the NCE ranks over time for continuing students only enrolled at CSST for two or more years. The number of students at each grade level was not reported.

TABLE 6: Stanford 9 Change over Time (NCE ranks)

Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Stanford 9 Reading 2001	No test	34	19	35	30	30	34	34	No test
Stanford 9 Reading 2002		37	32	24	33	32	34	30	
Stanford 9 Math 2001		39	26	35	30	27	24	26	
Stanford 9 Math 2002		54	29	25	33	39	29	24	

2. On state assessments, the most recent groups of both CSST fourth and eighth graders students fell far below their predecessors in English Language Arts performance.

Scores for students in grades 4 and 8 tested in English Language Arts in 2002 show significantly fewer students achieving proficiency than reached that minimum level in the 2001 groups. The decline from 2001-2002 does not offer much confidence that CSST has made effective adjustments in its academic program to prepare students to achieve the school’s defined target of 60 percent proficient as stated in its accountability plan. Table 7 compares the percentage of continuing students at each proficiency level. (The number of students in each group was not reported.)

TABLE 7: NYSTP English Language Arts by Percent of Continuing Students

Performance Level	Grade 4		Grade 8	
	Spring 01	Spring 02	Spring 01	Spring 02
Levels III & IV	27%	16%	12%	7%
IV	2%	0%	2%	1%
III	25%	16%	10%	6%
II	54%	48%	59%	78%
I	18%	36%	28%	15%

(Data for both years of the state mathematics, science and social studies assessments were not reported in the school’s accountability plan or in the supplementary information provided during the inspection. The team is unable to make a judgment on the school’s progress over time in those subject areas.)

3. Results on the school’s two internal measures, the Edison Benchmarks and the SFA assessments, show no strong pattern of progress toward grade level standards. Benchmark scores vary widely over the course of the school year, while SFA progress shows slightly more consistent positive movement.

According to school leaders, the school relies heavily on the results of the Edison Benchmark tests to track student progress. As indicated on Table 8, the performance of CSST students in reading is well below mastery level, even after half the school year has been completed. Similarly, results on the language Benchmark show very few students achieving above 70 percent. Grades 4, 5, 7 and 8 are particularly weak in mathematics, while the second grade class has more than half its students achieving mastery on the math tests in January 2003. Overall, change in student performance over time as measured by the school’s structured internal measure, the Edison Benchmarks, fluctuates widely, with a general trend toward weakening achievement as the year continues.

TABLE 8: Benchmark Assessments for October 2002 to January 2003,

Percent of Students over 70 Percent Per Quarter												
Grade	Reading				Language				Mathematics			
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
2	4	19	10	17	No test				22	34	20	54
3	15	20	18	13	7	6	9	8	10	14	10	17
4	17	18	30	18	12	14	4	17	6	8	10	6
5	39	21	31	4	20	4	11	9	5	8	1	6
6	3	22	43	19	16	21	12	34	2	1	9	11
7	10	25	10	2	35	22	8	1	2	5	5	8
8	34	15	37	57	59	21	21	0	4	7	16	10

4. On the periodic SFA assessments, student performance appears to demonstrate modest progress over time in reading using the embedded program measures.

In general, the SFA results show fewer students performing below grade level over time, with the exception of a slight increase in grade 3. The changes, while generally positive, don't reflect a rate of improvement that is likely to bring the majority of students to grade level skills by the end of the school year. Given the weak performance of students on other measures of knowledge and skill, CSST students are in need of serious acceleration in order to meet even minimum levels of acceptable performance.

TABLE 9: SFA Assessments by Quarter, Number of Students BELOW Grade Level

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6
Baseline	na	66	86	95	na	39
Quarter 1	49	51	80	72	71	38
Quarter 2	47	38	83	47	65	35

QUESTION 3: Does the school's instructional program meet the needs of diverse students?

1. The academic program at the Charter School of Science and Technology is designed to allow flexible grouping in reading to assure students are being challenged at an appropriate level. Less systematic differentiation was observed in mathematics classes.

By design, the reading program chosen by Edison Schools managers, *Success For All* (SFA), assigns students to small groups for instructional sessions based on regular and frequent assessments. Students who lag behind are grouped homogeneously by attainment, as are students who excel or have mastered fundamental skills. The design of the SFA program offers opportunities for the school to support diverse student needs.

Everyday Math is the program selected by Edison for mathematics instruction. There is no built-in design for grouping students of similar ability and achievement levels in similar classes. Instead, the program is designed to be offered to heterogeneous classes. Differentiation of instruction is left to the teacher, with resources provided for use with students of varying abilities. In the few classes observed during the inspection, there were few instances of teachers conducting other than whole class/ large group lessons where

all students were exposed to the same instructional approach and expected to complete tasks at the same pace. Some teachers did explain that they sometimes modify assignments for struggling students, and often slow down the class when there is evidence of confusion. Based on the classes sampled during the inspection, there were no indications that teachers use different teaching strategies within a class period to address variations in student aptitudes or abilities.

2. The Edison ‘responsible inclusion’ model is in place at the Charter School of Science and Technology, with support for special needs students offered in a variety of settings.

According to the “Special Edison” Coordinator, approximately eight percent of CSST students are identified with special needs, requiring particular interventions. The school’s staff of five special education teachers combine ‘push in’ (SpEd teachers sit in class with students and offer assistance) and ‘pull out’ (students taken out of their classes to a separate setting for remediation) strategies. Twice monthly professional development sessions focus on alternative strategies for special needs students, and special education teachers sit in on house meetings at least once per week to support teachers of specific students.

Assessment information for special needs students was not available in the school’s documents so the inspection team was unable to determine whether this subgroup of students is making progress similar to or different from the whole group performance described in the first section of this report.

3. In general, instruction at the Charter School of Science and Technology did not offer a wide variation in strategies to accommodate the needs of diverse students.

Of the twenty-one classes visited by the inspection team, most non-SFA instruction was whole class, teacher led with little differentiation in style or strategies. In a number of classes, even one class in the computer lab, students were completing worksheets asking for information directly from a source – web page, reading book, reference handout. Worksheet questions required primarily low level recall / fact based responses. In a review of student folders and notebooks where available, there were few assignments with teacher corrections or quality criteria which defined for students what standards they had to meet.

In a few classes, some in the early grades and some in the intermediate classes, skillful teachers probed for understanding when students responded to questions, redirected questions to expand students’ explanations, and challenged students to provide evidence for their conclusions. In these classes, time on task was high and little distraction or disruptive behavior was observed. In contrast, in many of the worksheet-focused lessons, students who were confused or bored tended to begin off task conversations and/or engage in disruptive activities. The pattern in the classes at CSST showed a clear correlation between the rigor of the lesson, the engagement of the students, and the amount of time dedicated to learning. Students who were off task were not deriving the benefit from the learning activity, and not being well served by the school.

QUESTION 4: Do the school's standards reflect implementation of high academic expectations?**1. The written curriculum standards at the Charter School of Science and Technology are based on rigorous and challenging frameworks and aligned with the New York State Learning Standards.**

As an Edison managed school, CSST adopted the Edison curriculum standards which have been correlated with the New York State Learning Standards by the management company. Each teacher has a large binder containing the alignment tables for each subject and grade level to show where the Edison Standard and the NYS Standards intersect. On their lesson plans, teachers indicate which New York State standard(s) is (are) being addressed by the activity. Standards are posted in most classrooms, in some cases both the NY and the Edison standards. In interviews with members of the inspection team, teachers were clear about the central role of the standards in their planning, and expressed strong familiarity with them. Some teachers explained that students, too, are becoming more familiar with the standards and their meaning. One commented, "Students understand [that] the standards are the teacher's responsibility and the Benchmarks [monthly assessments] are the students' responsibility." This view was confirmed in the student focus group when several youngsters clearly explained what 'standards' meant and how the Benchmarks measure their achievement of the standards.

Overall, the written curriculum for the Charter School of Science and Technology sets rigorous standards for student achievement and high expectations for learning.

2. In the classrooms, the CSST curriculum standards are not being implemented in a consistently challenging way across the school. Wide variations exist in the expectations teachers hold for student mastery of essential content and skills.

As noted in previous sections of this report, the inspection team saw a sample of 21 lessons during their visit to the school. The variation in expectations for students followed a grade level pattern, with upper grade students generally not being offered demanding work that engaged their attention and involvement to a great extent. In the primary and intermediate grades, class instruction more frequently required students to repeat or expand their responses and to revise their work to demonstrate mastery. The few samples of student work available in notebooks and folders in the classroom did not contain meaningful feedback from teachers, challenges to revise and improve the work, or grading criteria for assessing the piece. Many objective tests were included in the sample folders and few contained 'corrections' of errors or re-tests indicating additional instruction to remedy misunderstandings.

Academic standards in the classrooms visited by the inspection team did not generally demonstrate consistently high expectations for student performance.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY

QUESTION 1: Are students and parents satisfied with the work of the school?

1. Students in both focus groups expressed pride and genuine satisfaction with the Charter School of Science and Technology.

Overall, the fifteen students in two focus groups described their appreciation for the opportunities offered at CSST that make the school a better alternative than the district schools they've known. Students claimed that teachers and counselors listen to them and take the time to help them. In different words, students expressed a sense of belonging to the school, despite its size. Their favorite subjects are math, gym, music, and science. They would prefer not to wear uniforms (or to have a 'dress down' day once in a while), and the school lunch leaves much to be desired. Several students mentioned wanting more music time during the day.

Students confirmed team member's observations that technology is not yet a pervasive feature of academic instruction. One student claimed they use the computer lab once per week, others said it was more like once or twice a month. It was not clear what types of tasks students complete on the computers.

When asked whether they felt 'safe' at the school, students hesitated though eventually agreed that yes, they feel safe within the school. When probed, students mentioned a couple of 'legends' that appeared to hold strong interest among the group. The tales were compelling as they were told in the focus group, but the team was unable to corroborate their accuracy.

Several students mentioned more concrete safety concerns, in most cases events that occur in the buses while traveling to and from school. One youngster reported that she feels safe "inside" the school but not outside. She explained that letters have been sent home reporting to parents that convicted felons have located near the school. The student had been appropriately warned to take care but was left with a sense of fear about the neighborhood around the school. Two students commented that there is fighting at the school that makes them feel unsafe. Younger students complained about the big kids pushing in the halls sometimes. Overall, the students did not appear to have major fears within the building. Despite the occasional fights, they did agree that teachers and counselors are available to listen to their worries and help them deal with their concerns.

The Charter School of Science and Technology distributes the Harris Survey each year to parents, students and teachers to gauge satisfaction with the school's efforts. Results were not reported in the *2002 Accountability Progress Report* in a way that allowed the team to disaggregate student satisfaction results. The team did not have time to summarize the original documents provided during the day of the visit. A larger sample of student perceptions would be available from the Harris results to confirm or refute the comments of the small sample of students participating in the focus group.

2. Parents in the focus group expressed sincere appreciation for the opportunity provided by the Charter School of Science and Technology for them and for their children.

The six parents attending the focus group at CSST offered common reasons for sending their children to the school. Namely, the school offered an alternative to the district and parochial schools that parents didn't feel provided a sufficiently challenging education. To describe the mission of CSST, parents mentioned phrases such as "world class education;" "[students] prepared for the work force;" "the same quality education that private schools offered." The parents in the sample hold high hopes for their children's futures, and expect the Charter School of Science and Technology to help their children achieve their dreams.

Among the focus group parents, the school's strengths include its attention to parents as critical components of the child's educational success. A couple of the parents offered high praise for the Student Support Manager for her ability to bring families and the school together over sometimes difficult challenges and for her energy in monitoring that all the commitments made to and for the child are kept. Parents also contrasted the safety at CSST with the reverse situation in regular schools. They expressed strong confidence in the school's attention to children's care, both physically and psychologically.

Focus group parents described several challenges still facing the school from their perspective. Communication with parents over both minor and major issues remains inconsistent. One parent complained about not being notified that her child was failing a subject until late in the term. Another cited a discipline situation in which she was not notified of her child's continued misbehavior until major consequences were imposed. With such a small sample of parents, it is impossible to judge whether or not these instances are symptomatic of larger communication problems.

As noted in response to question 2.1, above, CSST distributed the Harris Survey to parents each year, but has not reported the results of the last administration in a way that would allow the inspection team to disaggregate parent satisfaction responses. As noted before, the team did not have the time in the one day visit to summarize the original data provided by the school for our review. A comprehensive summary of the survey results could be helpful in determining areas of strength and concern across a more representative sample than that of the focus group.

QUESTION 2: Are systems in place to promote the efficient operation of school functions?

1. The organizational structure of the Charter School of Science and Technology is well suited to distributing leadership and management tasks across all the staff members at the school. Coordination of the work of all levels of responsibility is a challenge for school-wide leaders.

As with all Edison partnership schools, the primary unit of organization at CSST is the 'house.' With the exception of house 6, which includes only sixth grade teachers and students, CSST houses are cross grade level units. Each house is led by a lead teacher. Clusters of houses are organized into academies. At CSST, there are three academies –

the primary academy for houses 1, 2,, the elementary academy for houses 3, 4 and 5; and the junior academy for houses 6 and 7. The primary and elementary academies are led by a single academy director, while the junior academy has its own director.

Lead teachers carry responsibility for many duties for their house. They plan and facilitate the agenda for daily common planning time meetings, serve as liaison between the house and the school on the Leadership Team, coordinate purchase requests, solicit help from consultants and special education staff, and function as the second line of discipline for students and teachers in their group. As reported in teacher interviews, lead teachers support instruction at CSST by visiting the classes of their colleagues and coaching or modeling as needed. As the inspection team learned from it interviews, lead teachers have a full teaching load and are rarely able to find the time to visit colleagues as regularly as suggested in the design of the school's structure. While academy directors are available to 'cover' when leads are asked to help, coordinating their availability is a challenge, since academy directors are 'on call' to serve many roles.

Academy directors are the designated instructional leaders of their groups. They review teachers' lesson plans and visit classes informally as well as for formal evaluation visits to monitor the quality of the instructional practices at CSST.

Academy directors, lead teachers, the Special Edison Coordinator, Student Support Manager, SFA Coordinator, Student Achievement Coordinator, Student Intervention Specialist, Information Manager, Technology Coordinator, two employees of the Board of Trustees, and the Principal constitute the CSST Leadership Team (LT). Weekly LT meetings cover information topics for exchange with all teachers at the next house meeting, topics related to school-wide problems/ issues, updates on student performance results, and planning and coordination of events at the classroom, house, academy and building levels. The frequent meetings of the LT are critical to the efficient operations of school functions across the nine grades and seven floors occupied by the school. Teachers reported they felt well informed of school events through their lead teacher's participation on the team.

In addition to house and LT meetings, monthly meetings are held for teachers in subject areas (science, social studies, mathematics) led by the curriculum coordinators, as well as grade level meetings facilitated by the academy directors. Each 'slice' of the CSST organization offers critical opportunities to support instruction across all components of the school – subject area content knowledge, developmental issues, curriculum articulation and special supports.

While the organizational structure at CSST provides an efficient means of sharing information throughout the school and distributing responsibility for important tasks across a number of staff members, coordination of these multiple layers and responsibilities remains a challenge for school leaders. CSST has its third principal in three years, perhaps an indication of the challenge involved in this role. According to interviews and documents examined during the inspection, the principal currently serves a management role, responsible for carrying out the policy of the Board of Trustees, overseeing the appropriate implementation of the Edison academic program, and responding to the needs of parents and the community. As will be discussed in the following section, each of these roles brings significant challenges to the principal's

skills. While the inspection team did not conduct a full-fledged administrative 'audit,' the smooth conduct of the visit is at least one indication of the current principal's effective coordination of school operations.

2. The Charter School of Science and Technology is attempting to function under three guiding documents which are not always directed toward concurrent goals. Contradictions between the objectives of the Board of Trustees, Edison managers, and the staff dilute the effectiveness of the school's efforts toward academic success.

During interviews with school leaders and the Board of Trustees, three distinct documents were mentioned in defining the school's purposes and vision. For Board members, the *Strategic Plan*, currently in the early stages of development, offers the clearest statement of the original board initiatives which it holds to be the guiding focus of the school. Following a template defined by Edison, the school has created a *Student Achievement Plan*, an outline of steps to be taken to improve student performance. As a requirement of its charter, the school has also defined targets against which it will be measured when renewal decisions are made at its fifth year of operation, collected in its *Accountability Plan*. Each of these documents lists goals and objectives that are worthy and respectable. Each of these documents also lists tasks that require extensive time, energy, and expertise to accomplish.

Given the evidence of the school's poor academic performance to date, along with its designation as a School Under Registry Review (SURR) by the New York State Education Department, the inspection team concluded that the school has not been effective when distributing its personnel and time across all three focal areas. As a SURR school, CSST faces closure or other state sanctions if student achievement does not improve over the short term.

Despite this serious situation, board members insisted that their strategic plan would provide sufficient guidance to make the necessary changes in academic performance to avoid state penalties. Few of the board members interviewed during the inspection clearly articulated an appreciation that the school has not met its targets in the *Accountability Plan*, the measures that will be used, in part, to determine renewal of the school's charter. Board members described serious conflicts with the Edison management team over the past years, and deferred responsibility for the academic program to Edison. They explained that the earlier conflicts have been resolved to some degree, and accepted responsibility for not insisting that the Edison model be implemented fully across the school. Despite their confidence that the Edison program would be effective in the end, they persisted in promoting their "Five Initiatives" only one of which contains direct reference to the development of a quality academic program. Staff members are expected to serve on various committees developing the *Strategic Plan* to bring the initiatives into existence, further diluting the energy and time available to address academic concerns.

In the judgment of the inspectors, the school faces serious consequences on a number of fronts if the focus of energy of all stakeholders – staff, administrators, Edison personnel, as well as the Board of Trustees – is not directed toward a common interest in improving student's academic achievement. While long term strategic planning is beneficial to an organization, its demands of time and expertise may dilute the school's ability to focus

intently on areas of critical need, namely accelerating academic progress toward proficiency.

3. The school has put into place a student discipline system that appears to have promoted improved classroom management and a calmer, more orderly overall climate.

After a stressful first year of operation during which large numbers of students were suspended and many parents withdrew their children from CSST, the school implemented a 'three tier' discipline system which has led to reported improvements in student behavior and school climate. Fully implemented this year, the plan offers a structure to be used across the school that provides different levels of consequences for student infractions. The new system included the hiring of a Student Intervention Specialist who works with teachers and administrators to implement the system. One of the consequences for seriously disruptive students includes placement in a restrictive setting, where teachers come to provide one-on-one instruction but which isolates students for a thirty day period from the school population. Gradual re-entry to the regular classroom comes at the end of the restriction period, including frequent meetings with the counselor and/ or Intervention Specialist. Students in the focus group offered strong support for this system, which gets the 'troublemakers' out of the classroom and calms the overall climate of the school.

The effectiveness of the new discipline system is evident in the apparent reduction in the number of suspensions since last year. Data is still in an unsorted state, but a quick overview suggests that the system has promoted improved order. Students and some teachers complained that the system is not consistently implemented by all teachers across the school, and school leaders recognized the need for continual monitoring and follow-up support for all staff members.

QUESTION 3: Are systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of the academic program and modify as needed?

1. The Charter School of Science and Technology has numerous sources of student performance data from which to draw inferences about the effectiveness of the academic program. While early steps are being taken to make use of this data to modify the academic program, the school is only just beginning to move in this direction.

The Student Achievement Coordinator at CSST is responsible for gathering all assessment results on the Edison Benchmarks, the standardized assessments (Stanford 9/ Terra Nova), and the NYSTP results. The coordinator sorts the results in various ways and distributes them at Leadership Team meetings to all the lead teachers. He also meets with grade level teams and attends subject area meetings to disseminate the results of particular interest to those groups. As a result of this broad distribution, teachers and staff members generally felt well informed of student performance. In fact, most classrooms had their most recent Benchmark assessment results posted at their door alongside a graph showing performance changes for the homeroom across the year.

The achievement coordinator has done an admirable job collecting the large quantity of student performance information and enabling staff members to access it quickly. However, teachers spoke only of performance at the whole group level, not at the individual level. Although the Benchmark is described as a diagnostic tool, particular questions that challenged students are not identified in the reports, and individual progress is not tracked to allow teachers to focus attention on specific needs within their class. Further, while results showing strengths and weaknesses are shared with teachers, there is no system in place to monitor whether the information is being put to use by teachers to modify their instruction.

2. As noted earlier in discussing the school's organizational structure, lead teachers are responsible for providing coaching and instructional assistance to their House colleagues. While this system is highly praised by teachers as an ideal professional practice, there is no system in place to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the lead teachers' guidance.

Teachers uniformly praised the House system in supporting their teaching. Access to an experienced lead teacher for guidance and support every day of the school year was cited as the most significant type of support offered by the school for teaching. Academy directors, curriculum coordinators, and the SFA coordinator are all available for assistance as needed, but the immediacy of the lead teachers' presence and advice appeared to be the support most valued by teachers in general. Over 40 percent of the CSST teachers are new to the school, and many are new to teaching. Teachers experience a one week orientation before school opens, but explained that that is insufficient to become proficient in all the elements of the Edison program.

Some lead teachers reported that they receive additional training throughout the year to become more skilled at coaching their peers, but in multi-grade houses, lead teachers may not teach the same grade as their colleagues. As far as could be determined, lead teachers have few supports of their own on an ongoing basis to guide their work. While the structure is well regarded by faculty members, particularly novice teachers, there appears to be a gap in the monitoring of the quality of lead teachers' guidance.

3. Past student performance suggests that data was not being used to change classroom practice in a meaningful way. A new more structured data analysis system is in its early stages, thus it is too soon to predict whether it will have a positive impact on student achievement.

As described under response #1, above, the school collects impressive data about student performance. The system in place to gather, sort, and report student achievement information is well designed to be fully responsive to all the needs teachers and program managers might have. Based on responses to interview questions and review of the schools documents, the data has not been used to its fullest to guide instructional practices and to modify instructional programs as needed. As reported above, teachers and staff members discuss student results at the group level rather than at the individual student or individual test item level. With the exception of fourth and eighth grade teachers who reported they engaged in an item analysis of the NYS assessments, teachers generally don't access individual or subgroup results from the state and standardized

assessments on a regular basis. Teachers in the early grades praised the information gathered from their regular one on one meetings with the SFA coordinator to review student results on periodic reading assessments.

While the structural systems are in place to provide rich insight into individual student or subgroup strengths and areas needing improvement, the school has yet to make use of the data to extract the full range of information available to guide instruction and planning. From information gathered during the inspection, it appears that teachers and staff members have little experience in the analysis of data at the refined level needed to make useful planning decisions.

III. UNIQUE PROGRAMMATIC AREAS

QUESTION 1: Are the school's mission and vision clear to all stakeholders?

1. While some common phrases and themes describing the mission and vision of CSST emerged in conversations with stakeholders, there was an array of dramatically different focal points offered by key participants.

The inspection team heard the phrase, "world class education," in conversations with administrators, parents, and teachers as a distinctive feature of the Charter School of Science and Technology. Parents and Board members repeated the written mission's emphasis on science and technology, an ideal captured in the school's name. Parents specifically emphasized that the attraction to CSST for them was its role as an alternative to the district school system. Board members, administrators, and teachers reiterated parents' views of CSST as offering a meaningful choice.

The school's written mission statement includes phrases committing to "meet[ing] the unique educational needs of Rochester children," provide[ing] for "improved educational gains each year" and offering a "greater focus on science and technology." Among all the groups interviewed for the inspection, only teachers offered the educational targets as central elements of CSST. While other participants may have implied the academic focus in their phrase 'world-class education,' no other group made it as explicit as did teachers. Also, only teachers mentioned the use of the Edison model as a distinctive feature of CSST.

Members of the Board of Trustees offered the broadest range of commitments when asked to describe the school's mission. They repeatedly referenced their 'five initiatives' as the guiding focus for the school's origin and for its continuing operation. The initiatives include (a) a focus on health and physical well-being; (b) development of prosocialization skills to discourage violent solutions to interpersonal problems; (c) initiation of a family wellness center; (d) enhanced focus on science and technology; and (e) engagement in research for continual improvement. Extensive effort has been undertaken this year to develop a *Strategic Plan* to bring these initiatives into existence using many of the tools of the Baldrige Quality Review process. Board members expressed the belief that the *Strategic Plan* will eventually integrate the academic improvement strategies identified in the *Student Achievement Plan* created by the school

in response to poor student performance over the first two years of operation. However, the pace of work on the Board's strategic planning process does not appear to provide for completion of the guiding document in time to make it a useful tool for the extensive short term remediation needed at the school. As noted earlier in this report, board members seemed less than fully articulate about the school's lack of progress toward the performance targets identified in its *Accountability Plan*, the measures that will play a critical role in charter renewal decisions.

Statements describing the mission and vision of the Charter School of Science and Technology encapsulated some of the school's written commitments, but the broad array of efforts defined by the board as part of its five initiatives are not reflective of the school's essential academic focus. While the initiatives are worthy and respectable goals, they are not likely to have a direct impact on the academic deficiencies demonstrated by CSST students.

QUESTION 2: Are the school's special programs meeting expected targets?

1. The school's intention to emphasize science and technology within its academic program has yet to be realized.

Administrators and Board members recognize that their original commitment to focus on science and technology has not yet been realized. Renewed attention to science has been implemented this year with monthly student visits to the Rochester Museum of Science. Administrators described an adventurous project planned for May 2003 in partnership with the museum to turn the school into a 'living' museum, with displays distributed throughout the building. Further plans to promote teachers' skills in integrating science into the curriculum were not described.

Technology has been a distinctive focus of the Edison program. At the Charter School of Science and Technology, school personnel described their efforts to provide training for all teachers during weekly common planning team meetings. Teachers reported that technology assistance is "always" available. The team could not determine with certainty the level of challenge and rigors of the tasks students perform using the computer lab.

2. Several of the Board initiatives identified in the original charter application are beginning to operate.

The board's health and fitness initiative received a boost with a grant to purchase equipment to monitor and track student fitness levels over the year. The physical education staff measure student endurance and strength and track improvement over time using the state of the art machines purchased with the grant.

In November, 2002, the board hired one of its former members to serve as the Community Partnership Coordinator to bring the family wellness center on line. The coordinator has begun to bring the resources together to provide the services envisioned in the initiative.

The hiring of a Student Intervention Specialist, the Student Support Manager and the implementation of a structured discipline system contribute to the "prosocialization

initiative” described by the Board in its original design. Students are exposed to anti-bullying sessions conducted by the counselor and the Intervention Specialist. Families are involved in resolving student academic and behavioral issues by the Support Manager. While not fully developed into a coherent system, the “prosocialization initiative” is becoming an important element of the school.

The other initiatives, focus on science and technology (discussed above), and participating in research for continual improvement, are in their early stages.

**PART II: SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN:
ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

I. ACADEMIC PROGRAM GOALS

Goal 1: “Students at the charter school will demonstrate their proficiency as readers each year.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: 60 percent of the students at CSST for 2 or more years will score at level 3 or 4 on NYS ELA test.

measure 2: The mean percentile scores for grades 2-8 on Stanford 9 reading subtests will increase by 3 NCEs each year.

measure 3: (Beginning 2002-2003 the school will use Terra Nova in place of the Stanford 9) the mean percentile scores for grades 2-8 will increase 3 NCEs each year.

measure 4: CSST students in grades 4 and 8 will perform equal to or better than similar Rochester Schools on NYS ELA test.

Goal 2: “Students at the Charter School will demonstrate their mathematical proficiency each year.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: Sixty percent of the students at CSST for 2 or more years will score at level 3 or 4 on NYS math test.

measure 2: The mean percentile scores for grades 2-8 on Stanford 9 reading subtests will increase by 3 NCEs each year.

measure 3: (Beginning 2002-2003 the school will use Terra Nova in place of the Stanford 9) the mean percentile scores for grades 2-8 will increase 3 NCEs each year.

measure 4: CSST students in grades 4 and 8 will perform equal to or better than similar Rochester Schools on NYS mathematics assessment.

Goal 3: “Students at the Charter School of Science and Technology will demonstrate their proficiency in science each year.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: At end of charter term, 60 percent of the students at CSST for 2 or more years will score at level 3 or 4 on the NYS science test.

Goal 4: “Students at the Charter School of Science and Technology will demonstrate their proficiency in social studies each year.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: At end of charter term, 60 percent of the students at CSST for 2 or more years will score at level 3 or 4 on the NYS Social Studies assessment, grades 5 and 8.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM GOALS—RECOMMENDATIONS

The school might consider the following recommendations to enhance the quality of evidence to be used to assess its progress toward its own goals.

For Goals 1 (Reading), 2 (Math), and 3 (Science):

1. On each table and chart, record the number of students “n” in each tested group.
2. Consider disaggregating student results by relevant subgroups and reporting each subgroup separately (including the ‘n’ for each group).
3. Report each year’s test results in separate columns, not aggregated over several years. Reporting several years as one measure makes it difficult to distinguish the impact of potentially ‘confounding’ factors on the overall results.
4. Label each table or chart clearly, indicating whether true cohorts are being reported or whole group results. Again, identify the date and title of the assessment and the ‘n’ for each category of results.
5. Report the results for all students in a class group as well as for continuing students (cohorts). This allows the evaluator to develop a richer appreciation for your overall student population.
6. For state and standardized test results, follow the recommendations for clearly identifying which test or subtests and which grades are being reported, including the number for each group. Explain your analysis of the changes for each student group based upon the evidence and make hypotheses to be addressed.
7. When transfer to the Terra Nova is complete, continue to include the Stanford 9 scores for the school’s early years to provide evaluators with a complete picture of student performance. Also, when reporting the progress of continuing students, clearly identify the results from the Stanford 9 and those from the Terra Nova.
8. Explain to the reader, who may not be familiar with the NYS comparative analysis of similar public schools process, why the particular schools were selected for comparison. A brief chart showing comparable demographics, socioeconomic status (SES), special education population percentages, and limited English proficient (LEP) percentages would be helpful.

IN ADDITION to the measures included in the approved accountability plan, the school might want to consider –

- a) Reporting progress on SFA assessments. Simple, clear charts were available to the inspection team showing gradual movement over the year for all grades, and their inclusion in the Accountability Progress Report could enrich the school’s evidence base.
- b) Benchmark assessment data is comprehensive and informative. Consider reporting in a table or chart (similar to the SFA charts, perhaps) that could easily and clearly support the school’s claims of progress on its internal assessments. If possible, demonstrate a correlation between the Benchmarks assessment results and the results on standardized or state tests.

For Goal 4 (Social Studies):

1. If using a percentage in defining the measure in your Accountability Plan, report the results as a percentage in the annual progress report (along with the number for each performance level).
2. As above, clarify table headers showing grade tested, date of test and whether the results reflect the performance of the whole group or of only the true cohort.
3. Report the results of both the whole class as well as the cohort in separate charts or tables.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY GOALS

Goal 1: “The Charter School of Science and Technology will maintain a high level of stakeholder satisfaction.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: On a yearly Harris Interactive survey, CSST will report acceptable (7.5 of 10) levels of satisfaction.

indicators for parents: equipment and facilities, busing, communication, involvement, teacher strength, principal/admin strength, curriculum, teacher feed back.

indicators for students: school atmosphere, equipment and facilities, busing; quality of teachers.

indicators for staff: school atmosphere, equipment and facilities, parental support, principal strength, leadership team, house team, lead teacher, tech program, staff involvement, students.

Goal 2: “The Charter School of Science and Technology will maintain a quality program resulting in retention of students.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: Eighty percent of the students who start each fall will remain until the end of the school year.

measure 2: Eighty percent of the student population will choose to continue for the subsequent year (excluding students moving out of Rochester).

Goal 3: “The Charter School of Science and Technology will maintain high student attendance rates.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: Daily attendance will equal or surpass Rochester City School district and the average state rate of attendance.

Goal 4: “The Charter School of Science and Technology will demonstrate fiscal responsibility.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: Demonstrate appropriate use of resources as reflected in the documentation presented in an independent audit.

ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY GOALS—RECOMMENDATIONS

The school might consider the following recommendations to enhance the quality of evidence to be used to assess its progress toward its own goals.

For Goal 1 (satisfaction surveys):

1. Report the measure listed in the accountability plan. The *2002 Accountability Progress Report* included only areas for improvement, not the results for the survey items listed as ‘indicators’ in the measure. Report a tally for each survey item showing the range of responses as well as the overall ‘average’ response.
2. In all survey reports, include the number of surveys distributed, the number returned, and the percentage of the entire population represented by the responses.

For Goal 2 (student retention):

1. Construct a chart and label clearly to show persistence of the same students, not just enrollment, as it appears in the *2002 Progress Report*. The measure refers to continuing students, not just overall enrollment and progress should be reported on that measure as defined.
2. For within-year persistence, indicate enrollment in September/ October and the number and percentage of the same students still enrolled in June.
3. For re-enrollment, indicate (perhaps by grade level) the number of students enrolled in June and those appearing for re-enrollment in September/ October. Clearly label the chart as reporting continuing/ re-enrolling students, as declared in your measure.

For Goal 3 (attendance):

1. Enhance the detail in the attendance chart by showing monthly attendance rates.
2. Consider doing the comparison against the same similar public schools used for the achievement comparisons in the academic program goals, as well as for the Rochester City Schools overall.

For Goal 4 (fiscal responsibility):

(The Charter Schools Institute will conduct a thorough review of the school’s financial responsibility at a later date.)

1. Consider defining the appropriate use of resources from your own perspective. For example, some schools define what they mean by ‘appropriate’ by declaring a target percentage of resources allocated to classroom instruction or a maximum level for management costs.

III. UNIQUE PROGRAMMATIC AREA GOALS

Goal 1: “Staff will consistently gather and use data on student learning to better tailor instruction to the specific needs of CSST students.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: (Teachers use diagnostic assessment to inform daily instruction) One hundred percent of students will participate in monthly Benchmark assessments.

measure 2: One hundred percent of teachers will participate in monthly diagnostic discussions in house meetings as indicated by logs of House meetings.

Sub-Goal 2: “CSST will communicate effectively with families about student performance.”

Measures proposed by the school:

measure 1: Eighty percent of families will participate in Quarterly Learning Conferences.

subgoal: Teachers in grades 4, 5, and 8 will analyze data from NYS tests to determine strengths and weaknesses.

subgoal: Teachers of all grades will analyze Terra Nova data to determine areas of need.

measure 3: One hundred percent participation in data analysis by staff and documentation of implications for instruction submitted to the Achievement Coordinator and to the Achievement Committee.

UNIQUE PROGRAMMATIC AREA GOALS—RECOMMENDATIONS

For Goal 1 (data gathering and use):

1. If participation in the Benchmarks assessments falls below the 100 percent target, explain why for the reader of the Progress Report.
2. Indicate the period of time over which the participation rate is calculated; (e.g., monthly? quarterly? yearly?)
3. If available, show year to year information sufficient to reveal trends over time in the participation rates on these assessments.
4. Assure that the “house logs” mentioned in the measure do, in fact, include record of the data analysis that was conducted in the House meetings. As currently presented, the logs indicate meeting agendas only, not minutes or summaries of the content of the meeting. As presently gathered, the logs are an insufficient measure of progress toward this target.

For Goal 2 (QLC participation, teacher analysis):

(original data was not available for corroboration)

1. Gather original data (parent attendance sign-in sheets) and retain/ archive for corroboration by the evaluation team. Report historical results to show trends (increases, decreases) in participation over time.
2. Demonstrate that the school has gathered ‘documentation of implications’ from teacher analysis discussions by including an overall summary or excerpts from a representative sample of these documents.

APPENDIX A: FRAMEWORK FOR THE ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL PROGRESS

Category	Criteria	Evidence Sources
Academic Program	To what extent have students attained expected skills and knowledge?	School's Accountability Plan and Progress Report(s)
	What progress have students made over time in attaining expected skills and knowledge?	School's Accountability Plan and Progress Report(s)
	Does the school's instructional program meet the needs of diverse students?	Class visits, interviews, data review, Accountability Plan Progress Report
	Do the school's standards reflect implementation of high academic expectations?	Review of curriculum documents; confirmation of implementation by class visits
Organizational Viability	Are students and parents satisfied with the work of the school?	Interviews, survey review
	Are systems in place to promote the efficient operation of school functions?	Interviews, observations Staffing history
	Are systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of the academic program and to modify it as needed?	Personnel evaluation policies, minutes and agendas of board, staff meetings
Unique Aspects	Are the school's mission and vision clear to all stakeholders?	Interviews, document reviews
	Are the school's special programs meeting expected targets?	Accountability Plan, Progress Reports, other docs unique to each school
Financial Accountability**	Is enrollment stable and sufficient to provide the financial foundation of the school?	
	Does the school's financial management serve the needs of students?	
Legal Compliance	Is the school in essential compliance with legal and regulatory requirements?	

**** Sections assessing Financial Accountability and Legal Compliance will be provided by the Charter Schools Institute and amended to this report as available.**

**APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR
THE CHARTER SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ROCHESTER**

I. Academic Program Goals

Goal 1: CSST students will demonstrate proficiency as readers each year .	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- 60% at CSST >=2 years at level 3 or 4 on NYSELA test	-- report the 'n' for each category of students -- consider disaggregating by subgroup -- report each year's test results in separate columns, not aggregated over several years -- specify whether true cohorts are being reported -- include the results for the entire class as well as for the continuing (veteran?) students
-- mean %ile scores for grades 2-8 on Stanford 9 reading subtests increase by 3 NCEs each year	-- clarify the chart to show grade/ test year and explain to reader changes in each unique group of students
-- beginning 2002-2003, use Terra Nova, increase 3 NCEs	-- continue reporting Stanford 9 history along with new information from Terra Nova on each year's progress report
-- CSST students in grades 4 and 8 = or + similar Rochester Schools on NYS ELA test	-- explain to the reader how the similar schools were selected (what criteria used) -- (graph in updated Acc. Plan Progress Report is clear, helpful to reader)
In addition:	-- SFA tracking sheet showing class lesson levels over time -- Benchmarks summaries by class/ grade level (show correlation between Benchmark scores and NYS proficiency levels)
Goal 2: CSST students will demonstrate mathematical proficiency each year .	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- 60% at CSST >=2 years at level 3 or 4 on NYS math test	-- report the 'n' for each category of students -- consider disaggregating by subgroup -- report each year's test results in separate columns, not aggregated over several years -- specify whether true cohorts are being reported -- include the results for the entire class as well as for the continuing students
-- mean %ile scores for grades 2-8 on Stanford 9 mathematics subtests increase by 3 NCEs each year	-- clarify the chart to show grade/ test year and explain to reader changes in each unique group of students
-- beginning 2002-2003, use Terra Nova, increase 3 NCEs	-- continue reporting Stanford 9 history along with new information from Terra Nova on each year's progress report
-- CSST students in grades 4 and 8 = or + similar Rochester Schools on NYS mathematics assessment	-- explain to the reader how the similar schools were selected (what criteria used) (graph in updated Acc. Progress Report is clear, helpful to reader)
In addition:	-- if used and scored consistently, consider using <i>Everyday Math</i> assessments

Goal 3: CSST students will demonstrate proficiency in science each year .	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- at end of charter term, 60% at CSST >=2 years at level 3 or 4 on NYS science test	-- report the 'n' for each category of students -- consider disaggregating by subgroup -- report each year's test results in separate columns, not aggregated over several years -- specify whether true cohorts are being reported -- include the results for the entire class as well as for the continuing students
Goal 4: CSST students will demonstrate proficiency in social studies each year .	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- 60% at CSST >=2 years at level 3 or 4 on NYS Social Studies assessment in grades 5 and 8	-- if using percentage in defining measure, report percentage in chart/ table (as well as 'n' for each performance level) -- clarify tables with headers showing grade, date of test, whether whole group or cohort only -- report the results of the whole class group as well as the results of the continuing cohort of students

II. Organizational Viability Goals

Goal 1: CSST will maintain a high level of stakeholder satisfaction.	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- yearly Harris Interactive survey, achieve 7.5 (of 10) <u>parents</u> : equipment and facilities, busing, communication, involvement, teacher, strength, principal/admin strength, curriculum, teacher feedback <u>students</u> : school atmosphere, equipment and facilities, teacher feedback <u>staff</u> : school atmosphere, equipment and facilities, parental support, principal strength, leadership team, house team, lead teacher, tech program, staff involvement, students	-- report the measure as defined in the Accountability Plan approved by CSI (July, 02) (e.g., for each 'indicator' for each group of stakeholders, report the results of the Harris Survey – 'score' on scale of 1-10) -- report the number of surveys distributed, the number of responses returned, and the percentage of the population represented by the sample received
Goal 2: CSST will maintain a quality program resulting in retention of students.	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- 80% who start will remain until end of year	(as presented, the chart appears to show enrollment, not the persistence of the same students over the school year) -- provide the information as defined in the measure, counting only the same students registered in September (Oct. 1?) and remaining enrolled on June (?)
-- 80% will choose to continue for the subsequent year (excluding moving out of Roch.)	(as presented, chart appears to provide enrollment and registration information, without identifying the re-enrollees) -- report the information as defined in the measure; e.g., number of students in June, number of those same students re-enrolling as of Oct. 1 BEDS report
Goal 3: CSST will maintain a high student attendance rates.	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- daily attendance surpass Rochester City School district and average state rate	-- consider elaborating by including monthly attendance rates -- consider comparing to 'similar schools' as well as Rochester district wide percentages.

Goal 4: CSST will demonstrate fiscal responsibility.	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- appropriate use of resources (independent audit)	-- define what you mean by “appropriate” use of resources, for example, particular percentage goals for allocation to professional development, curriculum materials, and other broad categories of school operations

III. Unique Areas Goals

Goal 1: Staff will consistently gather and use data on student learning to better tailor instruction to the specific needs of CSST students.	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- (teachers use diagnostic assessment to inform daily instruction) -- 100% students participate in monthly Benchmark assessments	-- explain why participation is NOT 100% on these assessments -- note the period of time over which the participation rate is calculated (e.g., monthly, quarterly, yearly?) -- include year to year information sufficient to show trends over time in participation rates (increasing, decreasing)
-- 100% teachers participate in monthly diagnostic discussions in house meetings (logs of House meetings)	--“house logs” available show meeting agendas, but not minutes or descriptions of discussions of benchmark findings, beyond reporting of results; ‘logs’ are not at present a sufficient measure of progress toward this goal
Sub-Goal 2: CSST will communicate effectively with families about student performance.	
<i>Proposed Measures</i>	<i>Recommendations for the school to consider:</i>
-- 80% families participate in Quarterly Learning Conferences	(original data was not available for corroboration) -- capture parent attendance/ sign in sheets, summarize for reporting, retain for corroboration by evaluation team
<i>sub goal:</i> teachers in grades 4, 5, and 8 analyze data from NYS tests to determine strengths and weaknesses <i>sub-goal:</i> teachers of all grades analyze Terra Nova data to determine areas of need	provide meeting minutes/ agendas that describe these activities, the conclusions or implications derived from the analysis process
-- 100% participation in data analysis by staff and documentation of implications for instruction submitted to Achievement Coordinator and Achievement Committee.	(original data was not available for corroboration; ‘documentation’ of implications not provided) -- include summary of ‘implications’ by grade level teachers with links to instructional clearly described