SUNY **Charter Schools Institute**
The State University of **New York**

Albany Leadership Charter High School for Girls

School Evaluation Report
2011-2012

Visit Date: November 9-10, 2011

Final Report Issued: April 11, 2012

Charter Schools Institute
State University of New York
41 State Street, Suite 700
Albany, New York 12207
518/433-8277, 518/427-6510 (fax)
http://www.newyorkcharters.org

INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report includes three components. The first section, titled School Overview, provides descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. The second section provides background information on the conduct of the evaluation visit, including the date of the visit and information about the evaluation team, and puts the visit in the context of the school's current charter cycle. Finally, in a third section entitled School Evaluation Visit, the report presents overall benchmark conclusions (in italics) and an analysis of evidence collected for each of the respective benchmarks.

The Qualitative Educational Benchmarks (a component of the Renewal Benchmarks) address the academic success of the school, focusing on teaching and learning (i.e., curriculum, instruction, and assessment), and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization, including board oversight and organizational capacity. The Institute uses the established criteria on a regular and ongoing basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

The report below provides more detailed conclusions, and evidence to support these conclusions, for some benchmarks than others to highlight areas of concern and provide additional feedback. In contrast to the format of reports issued in previous years and in an effort to issue reports in a timelier manner, the Institute now approaches the presentation as an exception report and deliberately emphasizes areas of concern. As such, limited detail and evidence about positive aspects of the program are not an indication that the Institute does not fully recognize evidence of program effectiveness.

Because of the inherent complexity of an organization such as a school, this School Evaluation Report does not contain a single rating or comprehensive indicator that would specify at a glance the school's prospects for renewal. It does, however, summarize the various strengths of the school and note areas in need of improvement in terms of the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks. To the extent appropriate and useful, we encourage school boards to use this evaluation report for ongoing planning and school improvement efforts.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	May 21, 2009
Date Initial Charter Approved by Operation of Law	June 23, 2009
School Opening Date	August 2010

Location

School Year(s)	Location(s)	Grades	District
2010-Present	19 Hackett Blvd, Albany NY	All	Albany City Schools

Current Mission Statement

The mission of Albany Leadership Charter High School for Girls is to prepare young women to graduate from high school with the academic and leadership skills necessary to succeed in college and the career of their choosing.

Current Key Design Elements

- Single-sex education;
- College preparatory curriculum;
- Safe and disciplined environment;
- Small school size; and
- Dedicated teachers.

School Characteristics

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Revised Chartered Enrollment	Actual Enrollment[1]	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades	Days of Instruction
2010-11	125	N/A	150	9-10	9-10	204
2011-12	225	N/A	-	9-11	9-11	204

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[1] Source: SUNY Charter School Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

Current Board of Trustees[2]

Board Member Name	Position/Committees
Margarita Mayo	Chair
Thomas Carroll	Treasurer
Margaret Moree	Secretary
Alexander Ma	Member
Elizabeth Robertson	Member
James Vallee	Member

School Leader(s)

School Year	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2010-Present	Melissa Jarvis-Cedano

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2010-11	First Year	Institute	February 17, 2011
2011-12	Second Year	Institute	November 9-10, 2011

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[2] Source: Institute board information.

CONDUCT OF VISIT

Specifications

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
November 9-10, 2011	Sean Fitzsimons	Program Analyst
	Danielle Keen	Analyst for School Evaluation

Context of the Visit

Charter Cycle[3]	
Charter Period	2nd Year of 1st Charter Term
Accountability Period	2nd Year of 4 Year Accountability Period
Impending Renewal Visit	Fall 2014

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[3] Because a renewal decision is made in the last year of a Charter Period, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of the Charter Period. For initial renewals, the Accountability Period is the first four years of the Charter Period. For subsequent renewals, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous Charter Period through the next to last year of the current Charter Period.

Benchmark Conclusions and Evidence

1. B Use of Assessment
Albany Leadership has a system to gather assessment and evaluation data, though it has not yet been determined whether this system results in student achievement.

The school uses diagnostic assessments, such as the Terra Nova, Student Reading Inventory (SRI) and a school-developed writing diagnostic, as well as formative school-developed interval assessments and summative assessments, including re-administration of Terra Nova and Regents exams. The school's academic dean provides results of interval assessments and Regents examinations to teachers; however, not all teachers are aware of Terra Nova and the SRI results. The school uses protocols and procedures to ensure that school-created assessments are valid and reliable. Specifically, the school uses multiple graders on writing assessments, and the academic dean develops all interval exams for the school ensuring alignment with previous Regents exams and standardization among multiple sections of the same class. Administrators use assessment results to target teachers whose students score continually low for increased instructional support, modify guiding curriculum documents and target students for academic interventions. In response to lower than expected Regents scores last year, the school has introduced interval assessments and diagnostic tests that aim to both inform and improve instruction and predict performance on high stakes exams. While these structures are promising, their effectiveness remains to be seen.

1. C Curriculum
Albany Leadership has a well-defined curriculum that supports teachers in their instructional planning.

Teachers, under the guidance of the school's academic dean, develop curriculum maps that align to state standards and provide an overarching structure to guide more detailed unit and lesson planning. The school vertically aligned its curriculum map during summer professional development. Teachers know what to teach and when to teach it on a daily basis. Relying on the curriculum map as a guide, teachers create unit plans using the Understanding by Design model and further derive lessons from these units. School leaders provide oversight of the development of unit and lesson plans, as well as of the selection of materials to support the curriculum; however, they give teachers a great deal of flexibility in developing the plans. Teachers have opportunities throughout the year to modify the curriculum in response to assessment results and as otherwise needed with guidance from the academic dean and literacy coordinator.

1. D Pedagogy
With a few exceptions, at the time of the visit, instruction was not yet sufficiently effective.

Instruction at Albany Leadership ranges from quality in a limited number of classes, to lacking purpose and any meaningful learning activities in an equally limited number of classes. Most classes fall between these extremes and include purposeful instruction focused on clear learning objectives. Well designed lesson plans aligned to state standards guide instruction. Teachers use multiple modes of instruction to engage students, such as

direct teaching, group and independent activities.

Despite these strong foundations, however, significant problems with lesson implementation were observed in many classes, where a sizable minority of students are off-task, working on assignments from other classes, attending to personal hygiene and engaging in side conversations. While teachers may deliver a strong and rigorous lesson, they frequently make no modifications for low-level students, allowing these students to opt out of learning rather than participate at their own level. Teachers do not plan and implement their lessons strategically. For example, they base small group instruction on student choice instead of need and allow students to choose their own partners for group work in many classes, creating further opportunities for distraction.

Some teachers hold students accountable for their learning by following up on students' incorrect answers and effectively checking for understanding through questioning techniques and informal assessments, such as do-nows; nevertheless, others were observed calling only on students who raised their hands to answer.

1. E Instructional Leadership
Albany Leadership has recently created a well functioning instructional leadership structure.

The school recently created full-time positions for an academic dean and literacy coordinator, strengthening instructional leadership at the school. The school's leadership establishes high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance. For example, teachers have the ability to earn merit pay as a result of excellent performance. The leadership is well-coordinated, with weekly leadership meetings, as well as nightly written check-ins. The school's principal, academic dean, literacy coordinator and assistant principal conduct on-going monitoring of teacher performance through frequent classroom observations. They provide feedback following these observations, which gives teachers actionable objectives and strategies for improvement. There is a clear intervention process to address the needs of teachers who are struggling, including lesson modeling, increased observation and feedback and the use of videotaped lessons to enable teachers to reflect on their own practice. Teachers in most subject areas participate in department planning meetings twice a week, which school leaders monitor. Due to different instructional requirements, the English language arts department meets less frequently with fewer formal opportunities for co-planning, limiting its leadership and collegial support. Leaders evaluate teachers using a well-defined rubric; however, not all teachers understand who is ultimately responsible for their formal evaluations. The school's instructional leaders monitor and evaluate the implementation of the school's academic program and make changes when necessary, such as creating a tutoring program to support struggling students.

1. F At-risk students
Albany Leadership has sufficient resources to serve at-risk students and is beginning to develop systems and structures to support students at risk of academic failure.

The school's student support team discusses students identified by assessments and teacher observations as potentially at-risk of academic failure and provides teachers with

intervention suggestions. This team is in the process of refining a Response to Intervention (RTI) program, which school leaders report implementing, though teachers have difficulty articulating the process. The school has a comprehensive tutoring system and has developed a schedule that provides teachers with time to support struggling students. However, tutoring is optional, and students must take the initiative to receive extra help.

The school meets the needs of special education students through one full-time special education teacher who also coordinates the overall special education program. The school also contracts with outside providers to serve a limited number of students. The school sufficiently addresses the needs of English language learners through an English-as-a-second-language (ESL) program, as well as through specialized daily scheduling that accommodates the needs of these students. Both the special education and ESL teachers formally meet with general education teachers at least once every two weeks to provide them with instructional strategies and to monitor student progress.

1. G Student Order and Discipline
Albany Leadership strives to promote a culture of learning and scholarship, though misbehavior detracts from the classroom environment throughout the school.

The school has a documented discipline policy that requires teachers to respond to student misbehavior with a warning and then to send students to the "meditation room" after a second offense, where the school requires students to reflect on their actions. While the discipline system is well developed, it is inconsistently applied; some teachers do not give warnings, others do not follow through with disciplinary action in response to misbehavior. Additionally, some teachers believe that administrators discourage sending students out of the classroom, and thus, are reluctant to enforce the policy. Nevertheless, the discipline policy, when implemented, encourages students to reflect on their actions and to discuss the incident with the referring teacher, as well as the dean of discipline. Teachers and students report that this structure instills a culture of caring and support and strengthens teacher-to-student relationships through a focus on building communication and collaboration skills rather than through punishment. Transitions between classes are generally orderly with limited evidence of student misbehavior in the halls. Staff and students report that the school is safe.

1. H Professional Development
Albany Leadership's professional development program generally assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals.

The school has a comprehensive two-week summer professional development program that addresses school priorities and provides time for leadership-supported curriculum planning. Professional development continues throughout the year and addresses leader and staff-identified school priorities. Staff may seek to attend external professional development to improve pedagogical skills and content area expertise; however, teachers are largely responsible for seeking out these opportunities. School leaders provide on-going instructional support through individualized professional development activities for teachers. Despite the various interventions in place, school leaders recognize that, given the number of new and inexperienced teachers, these interventions will need to be sustained for a significant period before many staff have fully developed their pedagogical skills.

2. C Organizational Capacity
In its second year, Albany Leadership has established an organizational structure with staff, systems and procedures that, given time, will likely allow the school to carry out its academic program and lead to student achievement; though, at the time of the visit, the success of recent changes had yet to be verified by student performance results.

The school's business manager demonstrates effective management of the school's day-to-day operations, freeing up the principal to focus on instructional leadership and building school culture. The school has sufficient resources to support teaching and learning and is committing more resources to enriching the academic environment, with initiatives such as the creation of a book room and fully functioning chemistry lab. School leaders are reflective and make frequent changes to the academic program and organizational structure, based on observations and Regent's scores, which were lower than expected last year. For example, the addition of a full-time literacy coordinator and a reinvigoration of the dean's role, are two changes to the organizational structure that provide teachers with systematic support for improving classroom instruction and culture. There are clear lines of reporting and accountability, and teachers know who to turn to for their various needs. School leaders continue to adjust the schedule in order to allow both adequate time for academic intervention, as well as common planning time among departments. They have not yet found a balance that allows them to realize the academic program they envision and that gives all teachers ample time for collaborative planning and support. The school maintains adequate enrollment.

While overall systems and structures continue to develop and support teachers already on staff, the school has limited effectiveness in recruiting and retaining quality teachers. The principal has created an environment of extremely high expectations, and consequently is still working to build a team invested in the mission of the school and ready to perform in a high stakes environment. The school continues to develop rigorous hiring practices in order to build an effective teaching staff.

2. D Board Oversight
Albany Leadership's board works effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.

The board possesses significant school oversight experience and participates in regular, monthly meetings allowing for rigorous oversight of the school. Though they had recruited an individual with high school experience to join the board, he was not yet onboard at the time of the visit. It receives regular reports from the school's principal, including information about assessment results, attendance, school culture and leadership-to-staff interactions, as well as other data, and uses them to drive decision-making and set goals. Based on this information, the board evaluates the principal, holding her accountable for results, including effective teacher interaction and recruitment strategies. The board is aware that the school's prospects for renewal ultimately depend on its record of academic success but is realistic in understanding the school's challenges and is working to support the principal in tackling these challenges. The board conducts regular self-evaluations and reflects on ways to improve its performance, including recognizing the need for, and recruiting members with, high school and financial expertise.

An excerpt of the State University Charter Renewal Benchmarks follows.
Visit the Institute's website at: http://www.newyorkcharters.org/
documents/renewalBenchmarks.doc to see the complete listing of Benchmarks.

Benchmarks 1B – 1H, and Benchmarks 2A – 2E were using in conducting this evaluation visit.

	Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?
Evidence Category	**State University Renewal Benchmarks**
State University Renewal Benchmark 1B **Use of Assessment Data**	**The school has a system to gather assessment and evaluation data and uses it to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school regularly uses standardized and other assessments that are aligned to the school's curriculum framework and state performance standards; • the school systematically collects and analyzes data from diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments, and makes it accessible to teachers, school leaders and the school board; • the school uses protocols, procedures and rubrics that ensure that the scoring of assessments and evaluation of student work is reliable and trustworthy; • the school uses assessment data to predict whether the school's Accountability Plan goals are being achieved; • the school's leaders use assessment data to monitor, change and improve the school's academic program, including curriculum and instruction, professional development, staffing and intervention services; • the school's teachers use assessment data to adjust and improve instruction to meet the identified needs of students; • a common understanding exists between and among teachers and administrators of the meaning and consequences of assessment results, e.g., changes to the instructional program, access to remediation, promotion to the next grade; • the school regularly communicates each student's progress and growth to his or her parents/guardians; and • the school regularly communicates to the school community overall academic performance as well as the school's progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.
State University	**The school has a clearly defined curriculum and uses it to prepare students to**

Renewal Benchmark 1C **Curriculum**	**meet state performance standards.** Elements that are generally present include: - the school has a well-defined curriculum framework for each grade and core academic subject, which includes the knowledge and skills that all students are expected to achieve as specified by New York State standards and performance indicators; - the school has carefully analyzed all curriculum resources (including commercial materials) currently in use in relation to the school's curriculum framework, identified areas of deficiency and/or misalignment, and addressed them in the instructional program; - the curriculum *as implemented* is organized, cohesive, and aligned from grade to grade; - teachers are fully aware of the curricula that they are responsible to teach and have access to curricular documents such as scope and sequence documents, pacing charts, and/or curriculum maps that guide the development of their lesson plans; - teachers develop and use lesson plans with objectives that are in alignment with the school's curriculum; - the school has defined a procedure, allocated time and resources, and included teachers in ongoing review and revision of the curriculum; and - the curriculum supports the school's stated mission.
State University Renewal Benchmark 1D **Pedagogy**	**High quality instruction is evident in all classes throughout the school.** Elements that are generally present include: - teachers demonstrate subject-matter and grade-level competency in the subjects and grades they teach; - instruction is rigorous and focused on learning objectives that specify clear expectations for what students must know and be able to do in each lesson; - lesson plans and instruction are aligned to the school's curriculum framework and New York State standards and performance indicators; - instruction is differentiated to meet the range of learning needs represented in the school's student population, e.g. flexible student grouping, differentiated materials, pedagogical techniques, and/or assessments; - all students are cognitively engaged in focused, purposeful learning activities during instructional time; - learning time is maximized (e.g., appropriate pacing, high on-task student behavior, clear lesson focus and clear directions to students), transitions are efficient, and there is day-to-day instructional continuity; and - teachers challenge students with questions and assignments that promote academic rigor, depth of understanding, and development of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.
State University Renewal	**The school has strong instructional leadership.**

Benchmark 1E	Elements that are generally present include:
Instructional Leadership	• the school's leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for student achievement; • the school's leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge, pedagogical skills and student achievement); • the school's instructional leaders have in place a comprehensive and on-going system for evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness; • the school's instructional leaders, based on classroom visits and other available data, provide direct ongoing support, such as critical feedback, coaching and/or modeling, to teachers in their classrooms; • the school's leadership provides structured opportunities, resources and guidance for teachers to plan the delivery of the instructional program within and across grade levels as well as within disciplines or content areas; • the school's instructional leaders organize a coherent and sustained professional development program that meets the needs of both the school and individual teachers; • the school's leadership ensures that the school is responding to the needs of at-risk students and maximizing their achievement to the greatest extent possible in the regular education program using in-class resources and/or pull-out services and programs where necessary ; and • the school's leadership conducts regular reviews and evaluations of the school's academic program and makes necessary changes to ensure that the school is effectively working to achieve academic standards defined by the State University Renewal Benchmarks in the areas of assessment, curriculum, pedagogy, student order and discipline, and professional development.
State University Renewal Benchmark 1F **At-Risk Students**	**The school is demonstrably effective in helping students who are struggling academically.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school deploys sufficient resources to provide academic interventions that address the range of students' needs; • all regular education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the regular education program; • the school provides sufficient training, resources, and support to all teachers and specialists with regard to meeting the needs of at-risk students; • the school has clearly defined screening procedures for identifying at-risk students and providing them with the appropriate interventions, and a common understanding among all teachers of these procedures; • all regular education teachers demonstrate a working knowledge of students' Individualized Education Program goals and instructional strategies for meeting those goals; • the school provides sufficient time and support for on-going coordination between regular and special education teachers, as well as other program specialists and service providers; and • the school monitors the performance of student participation in support services using well-defined school-wide criteria, and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its intervention programs.
State University	**The school promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.**

Renewal Benchmark 1G **Student Order & Discipline**	Elements that are generally present include: • the school has a documented discipline policy that is consistently applied; • classroom management techniques and daily routines have established a culture in which learning is valued and clearly evident; • low-level misbehavior is not being tolerated, e.g., students are not being allowed to disrupt or opt-out of learning during class time; and • throughout the school, a safe and orderly environment has been established.
State University Renewal Benchmark 1H **Professional Development**	**The school's professional development program assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals by addressing identified shortcomings in teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school provides sufficient time, personnel, materials and funding to support a comprehensive and sustained professional development program; • the content of the professional development program dovetails with the school's mission, curriculum, and instructional programs; • annual professional development plans derive from a data-driven needs-assessment and staff interests; • professional development places a high priority on achieving the State University Renewal Benchmarks and the school's Accountability Plan goals; • teachers are involved in setting short-term and long-term goals for their own professional development activities; • the school provides effective, ongoing support and training tailored to teachers' varying levels of expertise and instructional responsibilities; • the school provides training to assist all teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities, English language learners and other students at-risk of academic failure; and • the professional development program is systematically evaluated to determine its effectiveness at meeting stated goals.

	Renewal Question 2 **Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?**
Evidence Category	**State University Renewal Benchmarks**
State University Renewal Benchmark 2A **Mission & Key Design Elements**	**The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.** Elements that are generally present include: • stakeholders are aware of the mission;

	• the school has implemented its key design elements in pursuit of its mission; and • the school meets or comes close to meeting any non-academic goals contained in its Accountability Plan.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2B **Parents & Students**	**Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school has a process and procedures for evaluation of parent satisfaction with the school; • the great majority of parents with students enrolled at the school have strong positive attitudes about it; • few parents pursue grievances at the school board level or outside the school; • a large number of parents seek entrance to the school; • parents with students enrolled keep their children enrolled year-to-year; and • the school maintains a high rate of daily student attendance.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2C **Organizational Capacity**	**The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.** Elements that are generally present include: • the school demonstrates effective management of day-to-day operations; • staff scheduling is internally consistent and supportive of the school's mission; • the school has established clear priorities, objectives and benchmarks for achieving its mission and Accountability Plan goals, and a process for their regular review and revision; • the school has allocated sufficient resources in support of achieving its goals; • the roles and responsibilities of the school's leadership and staff members are clearly defined; • the school has an organizational structure that provides clear lines for accountability; • the school's management has successfully recruited, hired and retained key personnel, and made appropriate decisions about removing ineffective staff members when warranted; • the school maintains an adequate student enrollment and has effective procedures for recruiting new students to the school; and • the school's management and board have demonstrated effective communication practices with the school community including school staff, parents/guardians and students.
State University Renewal	**The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.**

Benchmark 2D	
Board Oversight	Elements that are generally present include:
	• the school board has adequate skills and expertise, as well as adequate meeting time to provide rigorous oversight of the school;
	• the school board (or a committee thereof) understands the core business of the school—student achievement—in sufficient depth to permit the board to provide effective oversight;
	• the school board has set clear long-term and short-term goals and expectations for meeting those goals, and communicates them to the school's management and leaders;
	• the school board has received regular written reports from the school leadership on academic performance and progress, financial stability and organizational capacity;
	• the school board has conducted regular evaluations of the school's management (including school leaders who report to the board, supervisors from management organization(s), and/or partner organizations that provide services to the school), and has acted on the results where such evaluations demonstrated shortcomings in performance;
	• where there have been demonstrable deficiencies in the school's academic, organizational or fiscal performance, the school board has taken effective action to correct those deficiencies and put in place benchmarks for determining if the deficiencies are being corrected in a timely fashion;
	• the school board has not made financial or organizational decisions that have materially impeded the school in fulfilling its mission; and
	• the school board conducts on-going assessment and evaluation of its own effectiveness in providing adequate school oversight, and pursues opportunities for further governance training and development.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2E **Governance**	**The board has implemented and maintained appropriate policies, systems and processes, and has abided by them.**
	Elements that are generally present include:
	• the school board has established a set of priorities that are in line with the school's goals and mission and has effectively worked to design and implement a system to achieve those priorities;
	• the school board has in place a process for recruiting and selecting new members in order to maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity;
	• the school board has implemented a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with those set forth in the charter—and consistently abided by them through the term of the charter;
	• the school board has generally avoided creating conflicts of interest where possible; where not possible, the school has managed those conflicts of interest in a clear and transparent manner;
	• the school board has instituted a process for dealing with complaints (and such policy is consistent with that set forth in the charter), has made that policy clear to all stakeholders, and has followed that policy including acting in a timely fashion on any such complaints;
	• the school board has abided by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee elections, removals and filling of vacancies;
	• the school board and its committees hold meetings in accordance with the Open

	Meetings Law, and minutes are recorded for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings; and • the school board has in place a set of board and school policies that are reviewed regularly and updated as needed.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2F **Legal Requirements**	**The school has substantially complied with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.** Elements that are generally present include: • during its charter period, the school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations including, but not limited to, submitting items to the Institute in a timely manner, and meeting teacher certification (including NCLB highly qualified status) and background check requirements, FOIL, and Open Meetings Law; • at the time of renewal, the school is in substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable laws, rules and regulations; • over the charter period, the school has abided by the terms of its monitoring plan; • the school has designed and put in place effective systems and controls to ensure that legal and charter requirements were and are met; and • the school has an active and ongoing relationship with in-house or independent legal counsel that reviews relevant policies, documents, transactions and incidents and makes recommendations and handles other legal matters as needed.