

REGION III

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CENTER

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THE PARTNERSHIP

The Center coordinates its work with other research and development centers, resource organizations, technical assistance providers, and the U.S. Department of Education.

The Center is operated by the George Washington University Center for Equity and Excellence in Education in partnership with RMC Research Corporation. Both organizations provide quality technical assistance and have extensive experience in research, evaluation, and professional development.

For More Information:

Region III Comprehensive Center

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The Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) and operated by George Washington University's Center for Equity and Excellence in Education under Grant No. 283A50040.

ABOUT COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS

In 1994, the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), created 15 comprehensive regional assistance centers to help implement the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The comprehensive centers replaced 48 technical assistance centers serving ESEA programs, including Chapter I, Safe and Drug-Free Schools, Title VII (Bilingual Education) and Indian Education.

Under IASA, the centers form part of a national technical assistance system that will help states implement ESEA programs. The centers work with educators on school reform and improvement initiatives based on local needs.



REGION III COMPREHENSIVE CENTER

Center for Equity
and Excellence
in Education

REGION III

COMPREHENSIVE CENTER

MISSION

Our mission is to provide high quality technical assistance and service to states, districts, and schools to promote the success of education reform and school improvement initiatives.

We accomplish our mission to improve teaching and learning opportunities for all students by working in partnership with schools, districts, and state departments of education.

We are committed to building strong working partnerships with other service providers and educators to bring coordinated assistance to educational systems throughout the region.

SERVICES

We provide assistance to support schoolwide programs and districts with a high percentage of children in poverty. Services include:

- on-site consultation
- convening special events
- developing resource materials
- disseminating information

We focus our services in four key areas:

- School improvement
- Standards and assessment
- Parent involvement and extending school boundaries
- Safe and drug-free environments for teaching and learning

Our services are designed to improve educational programs that benefit all children, with a focus on helping schools support students often at risk of academic failure.

SERVICE AREA

Our services are available to state departments of education, local school districts, schools, tribes, and other programs responsible for implementing provisions of the Improving America's Schools Act.

The Center serves educators, school districts and schools in:



Delaware
New Jersey
District of Columbia

Maryland
Pennsylvania
Ohio

Three Comprehensive Center State Teams provide assistance:

Delaware/Maryland
District of Columbia/New Jersey
Ohio/Pennsylvania

State team work is planned through consultations with state, district, and school staff. Our focus is on providing assistance that adds significant value to education programs that benefit all children.

***Promising Practices:
A Technical Assistance Session
for D.C. Charter Schools***

The Old Executive Office Building
Indian Treaty Room
10:00 am to 2:00 pm, Tuesday, August 4, 1998

Purpose:

Using an interactive format, this forum is designed to share information on promising strategies from successful charter schools and timely technical information from the District.

10:00 - 10:10 Welcome

Mike Smith, Acting Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Education

10:10 - 10:30 Remarks by the First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton

10:30 - 10:45 Overview and Introductions

Judith Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
U.S. Department of Education

10:45 - 12:15 A Discussion With Charter School Leaders -- "What I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before I Started My Charter School." In this interactive session, panelists can share their experiences with important issues such as:

- accountability and assessments
- relationships with sponsors
- special education
- responsibilities of charter schools as Local Education Agencies (LEAs)

Moderator: Arthur Cole, Director
School Improvement Programs
U.S. Department of Education

Presenters: Milo Cutter
City Academy
St. Paul, Minnesota

Richard Farias
Raul Yzaguirre School For Success
Houston, Texas

Joe Lucente & Irene Sumida	Mike Munier
Fenton Avenue Charter School	Jefferson Academy Charter School
Lake View Terrace, California	Broomfield, Colorado

Katrina Wilson-Davis
Liberty City Charter School
Miami, Florida

12:15 - 12:30 Break and Gather Box Lunches

12:30 - 1:45 Working Lunch -- Discussion with representatives from the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). DCPS representatives will provide updates and answer questions on timely topics, including:

- Parental involvement
- Title I Application Process
- Funding Updates
- General amendments to budgets or applications

Moderator:

Judith Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary

Presentors:

Eloise Brooks, Deputy Superintendent: Greetings from DCPS

Mitzi Beach, Director for Categorical Programs and Development

Gloria Browner, Program Coordinator for Categorical Programs for Development

1:45 - 2:00 Closing Remarks

Judith Johnson, Deputy Assistant Secretary

2:00 Adjourn

2:00 - 2:30 Informal Networking with Speakers

District of Columbia Charter School Meeting
Old Executive Office Building, Indian Treaty Room
Washington, DC
Tuesday, August 4, 1998

1. Was the information shared by the panel of charter school experts useful to you?
If yes, why?

2. Was the information shared by the District of Columbia Public Schools panel useful to you? If yes, why?

3. Which issue addressed today was most useful to you?

4. What other resource materials are you interested in receiving in the future?

(Over)

5. As a result of today's meeting, would you be interested in keeping in touch with participants regularly? If so what are your suggestions for doing so?
6. What follow up activities would be most useful to you?
7. What other comments or suggestions would you like to make about the meeting?

**District of Columbia Charter Schools Meeting
Panelists' Schools and Biographical Sketches**

City Academy/Milo Cutter

City Academy is the nation's first charter school, located in the Wilder Recreation Center near the east side of St. Paul, Minnesota. The east side of the city has a high school drop out rate and unemployment rate for teenage youth. The school was established in 1992 to meet the growing need to positively re-connect alienated youth with their community. City Academy students range 13-21 years of age and include a diverse ethnic population that includes African-American, Native American, Hispanic, Asian American, and Americans of European origin. The Learning for Life school curriculum covers mathematics science, language arts, social studies, fine arts, music, health, fitness, vocational preparation and communication. The school also integrates strategies that address the social and emotional needs of students and expands learning experiences for students by developing partnerships within the community that include Habitat for Humanity, the YWCA, St. Paul Parks and Recreation, among others. Students help maintain the building before and after program hours. Enrollment at any given time is limited to 80 students. There is a student-teacher ratio of (8:1). The teaching staff are licensed Minnesota teachers.

Milo Jane Cutter is co-founder, co-director of the City Academy and is a member of the National Education Association School Initiative Advisory Committee and the Mayor's Education Advisory Task Force, as well a board member of the Minnesota Charter School Association. She has also served on other boards and commissions, including the Clay County Charter Commission, the Moorehead Parks and Recreation Board, Mn-Dak Health Systems Agency, the Minnesota League of Women Voters State Board. She is the past president of the Clay County Cancer Society and is the former chair of the Woodlawn Redevelopment Committee and the Buffalo River State Park Long Range Planning Committee. Ms. Cutter holds a B.S. in History Education from Mankato State College and an M.A. in Education from the College of St. Catherine in Minnesota.

Fenton Avenue Charter School/Joe Lucente & Irene Sumida

Fenton Avenue Charter School is the largest public Pre-K through fifth grade elementary charter school in the nation, serving nearly 1,300 students. It is was one of the first 30 public charter schools to open in California by 1993. The school is located in the northeast San Fernando Valley in Lake View Terrace, California. Sixty-two percent of students are limited English proficient and participate in a bilingual education program. The teaching staff for the fall of 1998 will include 65 people, nearly half of whom are bilingual and are credentialed. The school's six goals focus on improved pupil learning; increased learning opportunities for all students with special emphasis on academically low-achieving students; use of different and innovative teaching methods; creation of new professional opportunities for teachers; providing parents and students with expanded choices in educational opportunities; and meeting measurable student outcomes, as well as establishing performance-based accountability systems. The school's charter has been renewed by the Los Angeles Unified School District for five-years, following a favorable evaluation.

Joe Lucente is the executive director and chief financial officer of the Fenton Avenue Charter School. Mr. Lucente has taught at the elementary level for the Los Angeles Unified School District and the U.S. Department of Defense Overseas Dependents Schools. He is the recipient of the California Distinguished School Award, the California Senator Gary Hart Vision Award for Charter School Leadership and the Los Angeles City Council Award for Educational Leadership, among others. Mr. Lucente has served on a host of advisory panels and governing bodies, some of which include the U.S. Department of Education's Charter Schools National Conference Committee, the California State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Charter School Advisory Board and the California Network of Educational Charters Board of Directors. He holds a degree in Business Administration from Loyola University and an M.S. in Educational Administration from California State University.

Irene Shigeko Sumida is director of instruction at the Fenton Avenue Charter School in Lake View Terrace, California. A veteran educator, Ms. Sumida has taught and served as assistant principal at the elementary level in the Los Angeles Unified School District. She has received numerous honors including the Hart Vision Award, Who's Who of America's Teachers and the California Congress of Parents, Teachers and Students Honorary Service Award. Ms. Sumida is the former Environmental Affairs Commissioner for the City of Los Angeles. She is a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Phi Delta Kappa, Alliance of Asian Pacific Administrators and the Associated Administrators of Los Angeles. She is a successful grant writer and has received grants from the Riordan Foundation, and Mattel Foundation. Among other credentials, she is a reading specialist and holds a B.A. in English from San Fernando Valley State College and an M.A. in Elementary Education from California State University at Northridge.

Jefferson Academy Charter School/Mike Munier

Jefferson Academy Charter School is one of nine charter schools in the Jefferson County Public School District in the State of Colorado. The school is located in Broomfield, Colorado. The mission of the Jefferson Academy is to establish an environment where students attain their highest academic and character potential through an academically rigorous, content rich education program. The vision of the school is that through the cooperation of parents, teachers, students, and educational and business communities, Jefferson Academy will create a learning environment that engenders growth and character, academic achievement, and the love learning, resulting in responsible, productive citizens. The school program emphasizes fundamental academic education using the Core Knowledge and Open Court curricula. Since 1994, student achievement gains ranging from 20% to 200% have been recorded for vocabulary, reading, language work/study and mathematics on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills Test. The Jefferson Academy is the 1997 and 1998 recipient of the Colorado School of Excellence Award. The school has been recognized as a model and Core Knowledge school by several organizations, including the Core Knowledge Foundation. During the fall of 1998, school enrollment will be 310 with a waiting list of more than 1,000. The school which serves K-6, was started by a group of parents desiring a more academically rigorous program in 1994.

Mike Munier is the principal of Jefferson Academy Charter School and has more than twenty years of experience as an administrator and principal in California and Colorado schools ranging from 190 to 1,200 students. He has also taught at the elementary level. A member of the Colorado League of Charter Schools, Mr. Munier also is active on several Jefferson County Public School councils, including the Option Council, Research Council, and Strategic Planning and Budget Council. A chief administrator of two non-for-profit organizations, he is also active in the Boy Scouts. Favorite pastime activities include snow skiing and baseball, reading and woodcarving. Mr. Munier holds a bachelor's degree in Psychology from California State University in Fullerton and master's degree in Educational and Business Administration from the University of California at Riverside.

The Liberty City Charter School/Katrina Wilson-Davis

The Liberty City Charter School is Florida's first charter school, which opened on August 26, 1996 with an enrollment of 60 students in K-2. The school is located in the Liberty City area of Miami where 60% of households are headed by single mothers, the mean income is less than half of Dade County. The mission and purpose of the school is to demonstrate that students can learn at high levels, through an academically rigorous and innovative curriculum that incorporates the development of good character. The school accomplishes its mission by establishing a community of learning that builds on a foundation of academic integrity and personal responsibility. The Liberty City Charter School goals focus on (1) high academic and behavioral expectations; (2) a school environment that fosters academic achievement and a dedicated and professionally competent staff; (3) creatively involving parents/guardians in all phases of the school's operations so that they assume a contractual obligation with their children's education. The school is designed to serve low-income students.

Katrina Wilson-Davis is the principal of the Liberty City Charter School. Ms. Wilson-Davis has taught social studies at Miami Killian Senior High School and served as summer curriculum writer and special advisor to the principal. She was also the member of several committees and councils, including the Blue Ribbon Committee, the Faculty Council, Southern Accreditation Committee and Black History Committee. As chair of the Black History Committee she authored plays that toured the Miami-Dade County Public Schools District. Ms. Wilson-Davis has also served as consultant to the 500 Role Models of Excellence Project, a mentoring program that pairs troubled male youth with male role models in the community and was appointed Teacher on Special Assignment to improve minority enrollment in advanced academic programs. A member of the Florida Association of Charter Schools, she holds a B.S. degree from Florida Memorial College.

The Raul Yzaguirre Charter School for Success/Richard Farias

The Raul Yzaguirre Charter School for Success is one of the first 20 charter schools in Texas and is located in inner City of Houston. The school began operations on August 17, 1996, serving high-risk, low-income and primarily Hispanic youth in grades 7-8. During the 1998-99 school year, student enrollment will reach 300 in grades 6-8. The State Board of Education has also approved a Pre-K through 5th grade program for 200 additional students in 1999. Among other features, the school includes personalized education plans for all students, a 20:1 student-teacher ratio, a parent component requiring a parent contract for involvement, school uniforms, a staff bilingual in English and Spanish, and a Core Knowledge curriculum coupled with the Accelerated Learning system. During the first two years of operation, 95% of parents met their contractual obligations and performed a minimum of 36 hours of school service and other school related activities; average daily attendance was maintained at 97.5%; scores on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills improved by 18% to 20% in math, science, history and writing skills by the end of the second year; and 100% of students participated in the school's leadership and character development program.

Richard Farias is the founder and chief operating officer of the Raul Yzaguirre Charter School for Success which is committed to improving education for primarily Hispanic children in Houston, Texas. Mr. Farias is also the founder and current president of the Tejano for Community Concerns, a 501(c) 3 organization dedicated to improving opportunities for children and families by providing educational, social, social and health services, as well as through housing and economic development initiatives. A member of the Texas Association of Charter Schools, Mr. Farias serves on the board of the Inter-Ethnic Forum, Houston Drug Free Business Initiative, the Consumer Credit Counseling Services and the City of Houston's Enhanced Community Governance Board. He is the National Chairman of the National Council of La Raza Affiliate Council and holds a B.A. in Social Rehabilitation and Social Services and an M.A. in Criminology and Corrections from Sam Houston State University.

*District of Columbia Public Schools
Office of Categorical Programs and Development (CPD)*

**District of Columbia Public Charter Schools
Federal Grant Programs**

TIMELINE*

June 12, 1998	CPD disseminates 1998-99 IASA Application to eligible DC Public Charter Schools. <i>(The IASA application includes the following grant programs: Title I, II, IV, VI, VII, and Goals 2000. Title X guidelines are also included in the application; however, Title X is a discretionary grant program and funds are awarded through an RFA process.)</i>
June 30, 1998	Charter schools submit quarterly financial and activity performance reports. <i>(Report expended funds and activities performed during FY1998 for applicable Title programs.)</i>
July 15, 1998	Eligible charter schools submit 1998-99 IASA Application to the Office of Categorical Programs and Development (CPD).
July 29, 1998	DCPS CPD submits Title X continuation application to USDE.
July 15 – August 13, 1998	CPD reviews IASA Applications. <i>(During this timeframe, applications will be returned to schools for revisions, if necessary; each will be accompanied by an application assessment checklist.)</i>
August 5, 1998	CPD requests new vendor and tax identification numbers for established DC public charter schools. <i>(Established DC public charter schools must submit this information on official public charter school letterhead.)</i>
August 15, 1998	Disseminate Federal Grant Program to Support Public Charter Schools Application Guidelines for Title X start-up funds to continuing public charter schools.
August 21, 1998	Eligible public charter schools submit Request for Applications (RFAs) for Title X continuation sub-grants to CPD.
September 1, 1998	DC public charter schools receive funds. <i>(Charter schools that operated during the 1998 fiscal year, will receive 25% of Title I, II, IV, VI, VII and Goals 2000 funds based on reported actual student counts. Public charter schools slated to open in September 1998, will receive 25% of the grant funds from Title II, IV, VI, VII and Goals 2000 based on projected enrollments. Actual student counts are reported on October 9, 1998.)</i>
September 5 – November 18, 1998	DCPS CPD issues Title X start-up funds to newly approved schools (conditional, provisional or full status) 1999 DC public charter schools, based on chartering authorities' first-stage approval timeline.
September 28 - October 2, 1998	Charter schools administer Stanford-9 Test. <i>(Tentative date)</i>

Page 2
DCPS CPD Timeline

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| October 1, 1998 | Charter schools submit final FY1998 financial expenditure and performance activity reports to CPD. |
| October 9, 1998 | Charter schools opening in September 1998 submit the following to CPD in order to determine the level of Title I funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• an <u>actual</u> student enrollment count• the number of enrolled low-income students residing in the District• a roster of students enrolled (include name, address, age, sex and grade) <i>(A detailed process for acquiring Title I funds will be disseminated to schools via memorandum.</i> |
| October 16, 1998 | Charter schools amend 1998-99 IASA Applications by including appropriate Title I activities. |
| January 29, 1999 | Charter schools submit FY1999 interim performance and financial expenditure reports to CPD. |
| July 30, 1999 | Charter schools submit final FY1999 performance and financial expenditure reports to CPD. |

**This timeline depicts key dates to remember. Meetings and workshops will be scheduled throughout the year in order to provide all schools with continued support and assistance.*

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (ESEA)
as amended by the
IMPROVING AMERICA'S SCHOOLS ACT OF 1994 (IASA)



"SEC. 1118. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.

"(a) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY POLICY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—A local educational agency may receive funds under this part only if such agency implements programs, activities, and procedures for the involvement of parents in programs assisted under this part consistent with the provisions of this section. Such activities shall be planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.

"(2) WRITTEN POLICY.—Each local educational agency that receives funds under this part shall develop jointly with, agree upon with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy that is incorporated into the local educational agency's plan developed under section 1112, establishes the expectations for parent involvement, and describes how the local educational agency will—

PUBLIC LAW 103-382—OCT. 20, 1994

"(A) involve parents in the joint development of the plan under section 1112, and the process of school review and improvement under section 1116;

"(B) provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parent involvement;

"(C) build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parent involvement as described in subsection (e);

"(D) coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies under this part with parental involvement strategies under other programs, such as Head Start, Even Start, the Parents as Teachers Program, the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, and State-run preschool programs;

"(E) conduct, with the involvement of parents; an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parental involvement policy developed under this section—

"(i) to determine the effectiveness of the policy in increasing the participation of parents; and

"(ii) to identify barriers to greater participation by parents in activities authorized by this section, giving particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background; and

"(F) use the findings of the evaluations described in subparagraph (E) in designing strategies for school improvement and revising, if necessary, the parental involvement policies described in this subsection and subsection (b)(1).

"(3) RESERVATION.—(A) Each local educational agency shall reserve not less than 1 percent of such agency's allocation under this part to carry out this section, including family literacy and parenting skills, except that this paragraph shall not apply if 1 percent of such agency's allocation under this part (other than funds allocated under section 1002(e)) for the fiscal year for which the determination is made is \$5,000 or less.

"(B) Parents of children receiving services under this part shall be involved in the decisions regarding how funds reserved under subparagraph (A) are allotted for parental involvement activities.

"(b) SCHOOL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Each school served under this part shall jointly develop with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parental involvement policy, agreed upon by such parents, that shall describe the means for carrying out the requirements of subsections (c) through (f). Such policy shall be updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the school.

"(2) SPECIAL RULE.—If the school has a parental involvement policy that applies to all parents, such school may amend that policy, if necessary, to meet the requirements of this subsection.

"(3) AMENDMENT.—If the local educational agency has a school district-level parental involvement policy that applies

elementary, middle, and secondary schools and local businesses that include a role for parents;

"(6) shall conduct other activities, as appropriate and feasible, such as parent resource centers and providing opportunities for parents to learn about child development and child rearing issues beginning at the birth of a child, that are designed to help parents become full partners in the education of their children;

"(7) shall ensure, to the extent possible, that information related to school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities is sent to the homes of participating children in the language used in such homes;

"(8) may involve parents in the development of training for teachers, principals, and other educators to improve the effectiveness of such training in improving instruction and services to the children of such parents;

"(9) may provide necessary literacy training from funds received under this part if the local educational agency has exhausted all other reasonably available sources of funding for such activities;

"(10) may pay reasonable and necessary expenses associated with local parental involvement activities, including transportation and child care costs, to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions;

"(11) may train and support parents to enhance the involvement of other parents;

"(12) may arrange meetings at a variety of times, such as in the mornings and evenings, in order to maximize the opportunities for parents to participate in school related activities;

"(13) may arrange for teachers or other educators, who work directly with participating children, to conduct in-home conferences with parents who are unable to attend such conferences at school;

"(14) may adopt and implement model approaches to improving parental involvement, such as Even Start; and

"(15) shall provide such other reasonable support for parental involvement activities under this section as parents may request.

"(f) ACCESSIBILITY.—In carrying out the parental involvement requirements of this part, local educational agencies and schools, to the extent practicable, shall provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency or with disabilities, including providing information and school profiles in a language and form such parents understand.

"(g) PARENTAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCE CENTERS.—In States where parental information and resource centers have been established pursuant to section 401 of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994 (to provide training, information, and support to parents and individuals who work with parents), local educational agencies and schools receiving assistance under this part shall assist parents and parent organizations by informing such parents and organizations of the existence and purpose of such centers, providing such parents and organizations with a description of the services and programs provided by such centers, advising parents on how to use such centers, and helping parents to contact such centers.

TIPS FROM THE RESEARCH ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

While parental involvement can take many forms, here are some basic tips from research on creating parental involvement programs that work (Rioux and Berla, 1994; Flaxman and Inger, 1991)

- Good family involvement programs do not always require new or additional money.
- All parents and families want the best for their children and can help them succeed.
- The benefits of parent involvement are not confined to early childhood or the elementary grades; parental involvement provides strong benefits to children through high school.
- Leaders among parents must be recognized as special, and schools should take care to nurture their continued involvement; schools should continuously nurture new parent leaders.
- People and organizations will stretch to meet the needs of the program in creative and innovative ways.
- Children do best when parents are enabled to play four key roles in their children's learning: teachers (helping children at home), supporters (contributing their skills to the school), advocates (helping children receive fair treatment), and decision-makers (participating joint problem-solving with the school at every level). [Henderson and Berla, 1994]

Source: *Policy Guidance for Title I Part A -Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies*

POVERTY SURVEY FORM**Income Guidelines to Determine Poverty Eligibility
(July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999)**

(To be completed for students who reside in the District of Columbia only)

Eligibility to receive Title I services is determined by family size and annual gross income. In order for a child to receive these services, his/her family income must be less than or equal to the amount stated in the chart below:

Family Size	Annually	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$14,893	\$1,242	\$287
2	\$20,073	\$1,673	\$387
3	\$25,253	\$2,105	\$486
4	\$30,433	\$2,537	\$586
5	\$35,613	\$2,968	\$685
6	\$40,793	\$3,400	\$785
7	\$45,973	\$3,832	\$885
8	\$51,153	\$4,263	\$984
For each additional family member add:	\$5,180	\$432	\$100

Directions: Using the chart above, identify the income limit for a family the same size as yours and respond to the item below.

Is your annual income less than or equal to the amount listed for the number of persons in your family?

Yes _____ No _____

INFORMATIONAL DIRECTORY FOR PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

D.C. Public Schools Contact Persons:

Name/Office/Telephone Number/Responsibility

Mr. Joseph Carrillo
Office of the Superintendent
724-4222
Superintendent's point of contact for D.C. Public Charter Schools

Dr. Mary-Elizabeth Beach
Director
Categorical Programs and Development
724-4980

Ms. Gloria Kinzer Browner
Categorical Programs and Development
Grant Independence Team
724-4980
To provide technical assistance related to guidelines and respond to questions regarding federal entitlements: Titles I, II, IV, VI, X, Goals 2000, and other grants

Ms. Karen B. Carpenter
Categorical Programs and Development
Grant Independence Team
724-4980
To provide technical assistance related to guidelines and respond to questions regarding federal entitlements: Titles II and VI

Ms. Sharon Dunmore
Categorical Programs and Development
Grant Independence Team
724-4980
To provide technical assistance related to guidelines and respond to questions regarding Title I and Census Reporting

Ms. Dorothy McDowell
Categorical Programs and Development
Grant Independence Team
724-4980
To provide administrative assistance to the Grant Independence Team and disseminate pertinent information/literature to public charter schools

Ms. Lola Johnson-Singletary
Categorical Programs and Development
School Grant Support Team
724-7896
To provide technical assistance related to Title VII: Bilingual Education, Part C: Emergency Immigrant Education Program

Page 2

Dr. Muhammad Shahab
Categorical Programs and Development
Grants Production Team
724-7853
To provide assistance related to adult education programs/operations

Ms. Suzanne Conrad
Real Estate Office
724-5643
To provide information and assistance related to leasing D.C. public school buildings and facility maintenance

Ms. Joyce Armstrong
Special Education
724-8641
To respond to special education questions/concerns and provide needed services

Mr. Kevin L. West
Transportation Branch
576-6305
To provide special education transportation services

Mr. Donald Rickford
Chief Financial Officer
724-4256
To respond to questions related to federal funds

Mr. Eugene P. Smith
Deputy Chief Financial Officer
724-4256
To respond to questions related to federal funds

Ms. Sam Johnson
Budget Services
724-4268
To respond to questions related to federal funds

Ms. Catherine Lynch
Food and Nutrition Services
576-7400
To provide assistance related to food services contracts

Mr. Victor Westbrook
Acquisitions and Contracts Management
727-2495
To provide vendor related information

Ms. Patricia Anderson
Student Assessment
576-6288
To respond to questions related to the administration of the Stanford-9 test

Page 3

Dr. Cynthia Bell
Vocational Education
576-6308
To provide assistance related to vocational education

Mr. Mark Robertson
Auxiliary Programs
724-4400
To oversee the operations of the School-To-Career Program

Ms. Yvonne Holt
Certification for Teachers
724-4249
To respond to questions related to teacher certification and provide needed services

Ms. Patricia Darneille
Work Permits (Students)
724-4266
To issue work permits to students

Dr. Beverly Wallace
Transitory Students
724-3933
To provide needed services for transitory (homeless) youth and families

District Government Contact Persons:
Name/Office/Telephone Number/Responsibility

Ms. Mirita Kizzie
Grants Management and Development
727-6537
To provide information related to adult education Requests for Application (RFA)

Ms. Allison Farris
D.C. Office of Budget and Planning
727-1091
To respond to questions related to appropriated funds

Ms. Joyce White
D.C. Office of Budget and Planning
727-1091
To respond to questions related to appropriated funds

Mr. Jim Giandelia
Department of Health
Division of Immunization
576-7127
To provide immunization and related services

Ms. Carolyn French
D.C. Health and Hospital Public Benefit Corporation
D.C. General Hospital
675-7519
To provide nurses for schools and conduct training related to the administering of medication

Charter School Resources

Accountability for Student Performance: An Annotated Resource Guide for Shaping an Accountability Plan for Your Charter School. Charter Friends National Network, June 1998.

The Massachusetts Charter School Initiative: Evaluation & Accountability Policy. Prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Useful Charter School Websites. A compilation prepared by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL), for their Charter Schools Leadership Training Academy, July 1998.

An Educator's Guide to School Networks: Solving the Networking Puzzle. A print out from a website created by the Florida Center for Instructional Technology. This website is designed to lead educators through the key questions that should be addressed by schools that are considering implementing computer networks in their school, (see <http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/network/>).

Charter School Legal and Financial Issues. Tom Pickrell, Legal Counsel, Arizona School Boards Association.

Sources of Funding, and Improving Your Chances of Winning A Grant. By Elizabeth Byrom, prepared for the SERVE Leaders Institute, July 1998.

USCharterschools Website Factsheet. This one-page brochure describes the resources available through this U.S. Department of Education-sponsored website. Prepared and maintained by WestED.

List of Federal Technical Assistance Resources.



Accountability for Student Performance

An Annotated Resource Guide for Shaping an Accountability Plan for Your Charter School

June 1998

About this Guide...

The origins of this resource guide lie in informal conversations over the past year among the directors of a number of state charter school resource centers and others on the need to strengthen accountability systems in charter schools. An informal survey of resource center directors by Charter Friends National Network in early 1998 also found this issue to be the top priority concern of the centers and the schools they represent.

To begin to focus this conversation, the Friends Network helped convene about thirty "Friends Group" leaders, chartering authority officials, school leaders, and other national experts on assessment and accountability for a two-day meeting in early February. Out of this meeting, a smaller working group developed and circulated a six-point framework for schools to help them design and implement their own accountability programs. This resource guide is an extension of that frame-work and is intended to be the first in a series of assessment and accountability tools that will be developed and made available to schools through the resource centers.

Among the resource center leaders who helped draft and circulate the six-point framework were Robin Steans, Leadership for Quality Education in Chicago, Eric Premack and Laurie Gardener, California Charter School Development Center and Sarah Tantillo, New Jersey Charter School Resource Center. A complete list of individuals who participated in the February meeting may be found at the end of this resource guide.

This resource guide is being distributed through a number of charter school resource centers and other state-based charter support organizations. Individual copies are also available at no charge to charter school operators and planners by contacting Charter Friends National Network, 1355 Pierce Butler Route, Suite 100, St. Paul, MN 55104; 612-644-5270; 612-645-0240 (fax) or via e-mail at info@charterfriends.org

INTRODUCTION

At some point, every charter school undertakes the important, but somewhat daunting, task of developing a student performance accountability plan -- a plan for determining what its students should know and be able to do, how the school will determine whether they have achieved these goals and how student performance will relate to the charter granting and renewal process.

What follows is an outline of six critical questions charter school developers need to consider as they develop a student accountability plan for their school. In addition, we have tried to pull together and list some of the existing resources (human and written) that are available as you consider these questions.

The six key questions - and related resources - are:

- I. What is our school's mission?
- II. What do we want our students to know and be able to do?
- III. How will we know whether our students are achieving or attaining the goals and standards we specified in our charter?
- IV. How will we gather and monitor the necessary student performance information?
- V. How will we set and measure progress toward school performance goals?
- VI. How will we use the student and school performance information we have gathered?

There are, of course, many more sources of advice and assistance than we could detail in this brief Guide. There are also additional needs for "assessment tools" that we've identified during the course of our work on this resource guide. A number of charter school resource center centers are now working together to develop many of these tools in ways that are specifically geared to charters.

As those tools are developed, they will be made available to schools through the resource center in each state. In the meantime, this guide should give you a place to start in thinking through the development of a student performance and school accountability for your school.

QUESTION #1:

What is our school's mission?

Before you can meaningfully delve into what you want your students to know and be able to do when they graduate and how you will monitor progress against these goals, you will need to establish a clear mission for the school as a whole. A mission statement is usually only a brief statement of purpose; however, a well-developed statement forces stakeholders to clarify exactly what it is they are about. This process ensures that relevant parties share a common vision and helps shape future decisions. Typically, mission statements answer three key questions: who you seek to serve, what you seek to accomplish, and how you will proceed (i.e., what methods you will use).

Currently Available Reference Materials:

For other examples of mission statements, more background on what constitutes a good mission statement, and how they can be effectively developed, you may want to refer to the following:

- "Managing the Nonprofit Organization," pages 3-8, by Peter Drucker
- The federal charter schools web site

(www.uscharterschools.org/tech_assist/ta_mission.htm)

- Chapter 2 of the "Charter School Handbook," Pioneer Institute/Charter School Resource Center (www.pioneerinstitute.org/csrc/ch2.html)
- Pages 10-12 of the "Charter School Development Guide," by Eric Premack

QUESTION #2:

What do we want our students to know and be able to do?

The next step in developing an accountability plan is to identify what it is you want your students to know and be able to do when they graduate. This typically involves establishing a set of student performance standards, goals, and outcomes. Many are able to accelerate the standards-setting process by referring to existing standards setting efforts at the local, state, and national level.

Some schools may be required to conform or adhere to local or state standards, depending on your state charter laws and processes. Developing a school's standards is a technically challenging task. It usually consists of several steps such as (1) articulating desired characteristics of "educated" students at a general level, (2) breaking these general qualities and goals into more concrete graduation or exit standards, and (3) benchmarking these exit standards down into specific and measurable grade-age-level content and performance standards.

Currently Available Reference Materials:

For suggestions on how to select and set student performance goals and standards as well as examples of some highly regarded standards, see:

- "Raising the Standard," by Doyle and Pimentel. This book provides concrete process suggestions on how to establish and implement a standards-setting effort at the school district level. It also contains some brief information on assessment and accountability matters, as well as a CD ROM disk containing examples of standards and standards setting. To order, call (800) 499-9774.
- The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation has published reviews and rankings of state-level standards documents in five "core subjects, including English, history, Geography, math, and science. The reports are available on the web at: (www.edexcellence.net, http://www.uscharterschools.org/tech_assist/ta_mission.htm) and single copies may be ordered for free by calling 1-888-TBF-1474.
- "Navigating the Standards Maze," by Laude Gardner/Charter Schools Development Center. This briefing paper provides specific process and technical guidance to charter developers in California. Many of the paper's general principles are helpful in other states. The paper is on the web at the following address: (www.csus.edu/ier/charter/standardsmaze.html).

- A Comprehensive Guide to Designing Standards-Based Districts, Schools, and Classrooms," by Marzano and Kendall, published by McREL" and ASCD (www.escd.org).
- "Content Knowledge, a Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education, by Marzano and Kendall. Some of this catalog-sized document is available on the web (www.mcrel.org). This large book contains nearly 250 standards and related benchmarks in 11 major disciplines (ranging from math, to language arts, to "life skills,). It seems to borrow heavily from, and provides brief descriptions of, the major national-level standards-setting efforts in many subject areas. It only briefly references state-level efforts.
- The New Standards Project sells its sets of performance standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, and applied learning. They also offer aligned assessment instruments including standardized tests (by Harcourt Brace) and portfolio systems. More information is available through the web (www.newstandards.org).
- "Charter School Development Guide." (pages 12-20) by Eric Premack
- Many states' standards and national standards documents are available on the web via the Putnam Valley School District's standards web (www.putwest.boces.org). This site also has a large number of standards-related links.

QUESTION #3:

How will we know whether our students are achieving or attaining the goals and standards we specified in our charter?

Put another way, how can your school ensure that students are making strong progress toward your school's standards or goals? Will you want to develop portfolios over the course of their time at the school? Will you develop some exit examinations or performance assessments to be administered just before graduation? Will you rely on standardized test scores? Or will you use some combination of these tools to determine when and if your students truly qualify for a diploma or to move on to a higher grade level?

Most schools find that it is necessary to assemble a mix of assessments and measurement practices. The school should select testing and measurement tools, each of which is an appropriate, valid, and reliable method for measuring progress toward achieving each of the school's major goals and standards.

A well-balanced set of assessments will likely include a range of methods, the familiar standardized basic academic skills tests or more sophisticated publisher developed tests, to less traditional "alternative" or "authentic" assessment and measurement practices such as systems for assembling and judging portfolios of student work, performance tasks or presentations judged by "Juries" and graduation committees.

Sometimes these measurement practices are as simple as monitoring and tracking student attendance and discipline data, data on student community service projects, college entrance, and the like.

As you try to answer these questions, you will want to consider (1) what form(s) of assessment are most appropriate for each of the individual skills and competencies you are trying to measure, and (2) who should administer each assessment (e.g., a teacher may be best suited to help compile a portfolio of student work, but you might want an outside party to evaluate pieces of the portfolio or to review a student's exit performance).

Currently Available Reference Materials:

Assessment in General:

- Chapter 5 of "Raising the Standard," by Doyle and Pimentel, contains a very *brief* overview of several major types of assessment tools and basic process tips on how to establish an assessment system.
- The ERIC clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation's web site contains an extensive array of links at: (<http://eric.ae2.edu.cua.edu>). Unfortunately many of these links are technical or theoretical in nature.
- Rummaging Through the Assessment Toolbox, by Laurie Gardner/Charter Schools Development Center. This California-oriented briefing paper provides an overview and process suggestion on how to assemble a student assessment system for charter school developers. (Currently in draft form.)

- **Beyond Testing: Toward a New Theory of Educational Attainment**, by Caroline Gipps (Falmer Press). This theory-oriented book provides a balanced overview of current thinking on the strengths, weaknesses, and appropriate uses of various assessment and measurement practices.
- There are a large number of college and university texts on student testing and assessment, many of which are accessible to a lay audience. "Educational Assessment of Students," by Anthony Nitko (Merrill/Prentice Hall) is one such text that provides a helpful overview.

Standardized Testing:

- "Understanding Achievement Tests: A Guide for School Administrators," edited by Larry Rudner. This brief book is currently available on a Gopher site on the ERIC web site listed above. This booklet provides a simple, jargon-free, overview of standardized achievement tests for the lay reader. Though nearly a decade old, it's still quite helpful.
- For a brief description of several standardized and non-standardized instruments suggested for use by charter schools, see the CAREI web site at <http://carei.coled.umn.edu/CharterSchools/apr97assessment/toc.htm>. These instruments include both basic academic skills tests as well as tests to measure affective variables that are central to many charter schools' missions.

"Alternative/Authentic" Assessment:

- Alternative assessment guru Grant Wiggins' CLASS web site contains order forms for several publications along with a rubric database at: www.classnj.org
- The Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) pioneered much of the work in alternative assessment. Visit their web site at: www.ces.brown.edu for lists of articles, books, and research papers on such topics as essential elements of exhibitions and how to get started with digital portfolios.
- The National Center for Fair and Open Testing publishes a guide on

alternative assessment and offers guidelines on the fair and ethical use of tests and assessments. Most are available for download or order via their web site: www.fairtest.org

Portfolios: (collections of student work over time and *exhibition* (public performances before panels of judges):

- See the Coalition's web site (above) for publications on creating digital portfolios, including tips for getting started, case studies of schools using digital portfolios, and lists of commercial portfolio software programs.
- Those wishing to visit schools that are currently using portfolios, exhibitions, and graduation performance assessment can call the Coalition of Essential Schools' main office at (401) 863-3384 to get the listing of their local CES office. These local CES offices can then provide lists of schools in the areas which are incorporating alternative assessments and which are open to visitation.
- In California, The Open School (K-8, Los Angeles) is using electronic portfolios for all of their students. Guajome Park Academy Charter School in Vista also utilizes digital and other portfolios and requires students to present exhibitions on a regular basis.
- CRESST, a federally funded assessment research consortium, maintains a database of alternative assessment tools (<http://cresst96.cse.ucla.edu/database.htm>).

Alternative graduation assessment:

- Central Park East Secondary School in New York City pioneered the concept of requiring prospective graduates to develop cumulative portfolios and present them in a series of exhibitions to a "graduation committee" which assesses which skills and graduation readiness according to staff and student-developed rubrics. Several other high schools, including Fenway Middle College High School in Boston, MA, have developed similar systems. To find out more about Fenway's work, contact Jennifer London at the Center for Collaborative Education, (617) 242-7730.
- The Corporation for Business, Work, and Learning in Boston has developed an alternative graduation program called "Diploma Plus"

which includes graduation portfolios and exhibitions, alignment of assessment with state and local standards, and a strong school-to career component. Their "Implementation Manual" includes standards documents rubrics, and relevant articles regarding alternative assessments. Contact Alex Hoffinger at (617) 727-8158. Many other high schools, including Central Park East and the City on a Hill Charter School in Boston have developed similar systems.

QUESTION #4:

How will we gather and monitor the necessary student performance information?

Once you know what information you will need to collect, the challenge becomes one of doing the actual collecting in a way that minimizes paperwork while maximizing the available useful data for multiple audiences. Different charter schools have approached this problem in distinct ways. Some have chosen to stick with paper and pencil record keeping. Others are using relatively sophisticated information systems that allow them to track student assignments, performance (both academic and behavioral), attendance, etc. on the computer.

Currently Available Reference Materials:

If this more "high-tech approach appeals to your school, you will want more information about what sort of software packages are available, the differences between them and what current users would recommend. Here are two available software options and the schools that are using them:

- The Academy of the Pacific Rim worked with a computer consultant to customize a Microsoft Access database (a popular piece of data management software) to suit their needs. What developed was a system that allows the school to both align and monitor teacher lesson plans, student performance data, and student behavior and skills taught with the school's student standards. For more details, call Stacey Boyd, Director (617) 361-0050.
- IMS - Community Day Charter School is using IMS, a proprietary database developed by the Modern Red Schoolhouse design team to track its student information. Call Joey Merrill at (508) 681-9910 for more information.

QUESTION #5:

How will we set and measure progress toward school performance goals?

Though student performance is perhaps the most important aspect of a charter school's mission, most also agree that it is critical for schools to be well-managed, fiscally solvent, and safe entices that are in compliance with all applicable laws and the terms of their charters. In addition to setting and monitoring student performance, charter schools need to be able to set school performance goals and monitor them in an appropriate fashion.

Currently Available Reference Materials:

- Charter School Technical Advisory 97-1, Massachusetts Department of Education. A "must read," containing an overview of Massachusetts' student performance and school accountability oversight practices (www.pioneerinstitute.org/csrc/appd2.htm).
- "Minding the Charter Store: Accountability for Sound School Operations," Eric Premack/Charter Schools Development Center. This briefing paper outlines how California charter schools can address school performance matters, with a focus on operational issues. (Currently in draft form.)
- The Colorado League of Charter Schools is piloting a charter school "visitation and review" process whereby a team of experts (including charter folks) visit charter schools, interview staff, students, parents, and board members, and perform a broad based review of the school's operations and alignment with their charter. Call Jim Griffin, the League's director, at 303-989-5356 for more information.
- The Annenberg Institute is currently working in collaboration with the Boston Pilot Schools Network in Boston, MA to develop a system of school performance accountability. They have created several documents, including questionnaires for outside and inside evaluators, rubrics to assess the school's teaching and learning program and other aspects of the school's operations. They have plans to create a "How to Create a School Portfolio" guide over the next year. Contact Frank Barnes at the Annenberg Institute for more information: (401) 863-7990, ext. 3642.

QUESTION #6: How will we use the student and school performance information we have gathered?

In answering this question, you will want to consider the different audiences you want to reach and inform -- and the reasons you need to inform them. These may include (1) parents and students, (2) the chartering agency, (3) the broader public, and (4) teachers and school board members.

Some possibilities include annual reports that you can send to authorizers, teachers and parents and informational brochures that you can use in recruiting and marketing. One school holds an annual "stakeholders meeting" that is structured much like a corporation's annual shareholders' meeting, where information regarding student and school performance is presented to the charter "community," including students, staff, parents, the media, and charter-granting agency staff.

In addition, schools and charter granting agencies need to develop mutually-agreeable processes for receiving, reviewing, monitoring, and discussing student and school performance data in a constructive and responsible fashion--and agree how this will relate to the charter monitoring, oversight, revocation, and renewal processes. This is especially important in states where charter-granting agencies have not been fully attentive to their monitoring responsibilities.

Currently Available Reference Materials:

- "Charter School Technical Advisory 97-1," Massachusetts Department of Education, and "Guidelines for Developing a Charter School Accountability Plan," Rosenblum Brigham Associates(www.pioneerinstitute.org/hcrc/appd3.htm).
- "Building Accountability Into the Charter Contract (including suggested annual report outline)," Eric Premack/Schools Development Center. (Currently in draft form.)
- Forthcoming policies from Washington D.C.'s independent charter granting board, Boston School District Pilot School accountabilities process, and forthcoming policies from the Chicago Public Schools.

- For examples of well-laid out and effective annual reports and brochures, see:
 - City on a Hill Charter School, Annual Report
 - Garfield Charter School, Annual Report

Acknowledgements

As noted above, a number of resource center directors and others made significant contributions to developing this resource guide. Those attending the two-day meeting convened by the Friends Network and other groups in February of 1998 were: Grace Arnold, Open Charter School, Los Angeles, CA; Stacy Boyd, Academy of the Pacific Rim, Hyde Park, MA; Ralph Brauer, Minnesota Association of Charter Schools, St. Paul, MN; Stella Cheung, Center for School Change, U of M, Minneapolis; Sharon Damore, consultant to the Chicago Public Schools, Chicago, IL; Cathy DeBoer and Bob DeBoer, New Visions School, Minneapolis, MN; Mary Gifford, Arizona Charter School Resource Center, Phoenix; Jim Goenner, Michigan Association of Public School Academies, Lansing, MI; Jim Griffin, Colorado League of Charter Schools; Bruce Hall, College of Education, USF, Tampa, FL; Connie Hines, College of Education, USF, Tampa, FL; Stephanie Jackson, Institute for At-Risk Children and Families, USF, Tampa, FL; Mark Kenney, Kauffman Foundation, Kansas City, MO; Ed Kirby, Massachusetts Department of Education, Boston, MA; Joan Lange, Challenge Foundation, Bonita Springs, FL; Carolyn Lavelly, Institute for At-Risk Children and Families, USF, Tampa; David Mack, DC Public Charter School Board, Washington, DC; Karen Mann, Florida Charter School Association, Tampa, FL; Bruno Manno, Hudson Institute, Washington, DC; Joey Morrill, Community Day Charter School, Lawrence, MA; Shirley Monastra, Committee on Public Education, Washington, DC; Jennifer Nahas, Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center, Boston, MA; Joe Nathan, Center for School Change, U of M, Minneapolis, MN; Cathy Nehf, Walton Family Foundation, Boulder, CO; Eric Premack, California Charter Schools Development Center, Sacramento, CA; Jeremy Resnick, Charter School Project, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA; Greg Richmond, Chicago School District, Chicago, IL; Jon Schroeder, Charter Friends National Network, St. Paul, MN; John Schultz, Minnesota New Country School, LeSueur, MN; Nancy Smith, New Twin Cities Charter School Project, Minneapolis, MN; Robin Steans, Leadership for Quality Education, Chicago, IL; Sarah Tantillo, New Jersey Charter School Resource Center, New Brunswick, NJ; Bill Windler, Colorado Department of Education, Denver, CO; Cathy Wooley-Brown, Institute for At-Risk Children and Families, USF, Tampa, FL; Cindy Zautcke, Wisconsin Charter School Resource Center, Milwaukee, WI.


[[Return to Home Page](#)]



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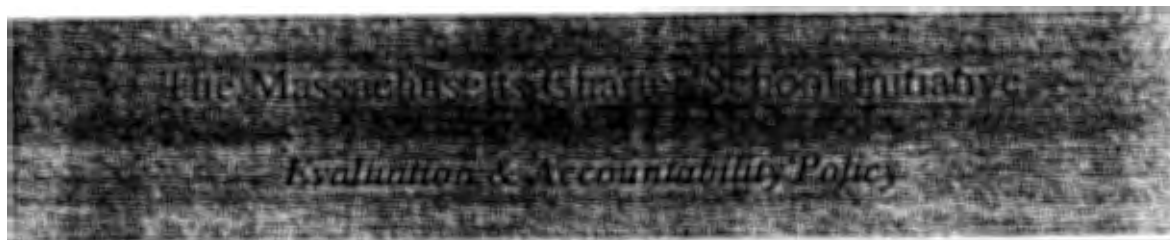


Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Charter School Evaluation Policy..... (Technical Advisory 97-1)	3
Guidelines for Preparing a Charter School..... Accountability Plan	9
Annual Site Visit Protocol.....	23

The Massachusetts Charter School Initiative

Evaluation & Accountability Policy

Introduction

Massachusetts charter schools are becoming the most accountable public schools in the Commonwealth. For the first time in the history of public education, public schools are being allowed to set their own high standards, demonstrate performance against those standards, and—here's the real difference—they will be closed down if they don't produce good results.

From the moment they open their doors to students, charter schools in the Bay State face virtually all of the same burdens and requirements as other public schools. They must, for instance, accept all students, including those with special needs. They also receive the same amount of money per pupil, administer the same tests, file the same reports, and are subject to most of the same regulations as regular public schools. And they must do all this without being given facilities or significant start-up funding. While these conditions ensure that charter schools operate under the same—if not even more challenging—circumstances as regular public schools, they are not what make charter schools accountable in the true sense of the word.

Real accountability can be recognized by looking for three necessary elements: worthy objectives, credible measures of progress toward those objectives, and consequences (both rewards and penalties) based on performance. Charter schools in Massachusetts have all three elements of accountability, although it is the possibility of real consequences that make charter schools the exception to the rule in public education, for they must prove themselves worthy of public money after five years or face extinction.

The question that follows, of course, is how does a school prove itself worthy of public money. While we are still working to refine the accountability process for Massachusetts charter schools, the decision of whether to renew a charter after five years will be based on a straightforward evaluation guided by three central questions:

- 1. Is the academic program a success?** An affirmative answer would be based on evidence that the school has made reasonable progress in meeting internally established goals over four years, and that student performance significantly improved and/or is persistently strong on internal and external academic assessments.
- 2. Is the school a viable organization?** Yes would mean that the school is financially solvent and stable, enrollment is stable and near capacity, school governance is sound, and professional staff are competent and resourceful.
- 3. Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?** If the school's program and operation are consistent with the terms of its charter, and if the school is within the bounds of essential statutory and regulatory requirements, then the answer will be yes.

Because we want to answer these standard questions without trampling on the unique character and mission of each school, the Commonwealth is working with charter schools to develop an accountability contract for each school. This contract will describe clear, concrete and measurable school performance objectives. These objectives will reflect an emphasis on student achievement, but may also pertain to student attendance, parental satisfaction and participation, safety and order, mobilization of private resources, school environment, staff development, facility improvement, or fiscal management. Once the state's new standards, curriculum frameworks, and corresponding assessments are developed and approved, charter schools will incorporate them into their performance objectives and measures.

This accountability contract will also describe the measures the school will use to document progress toward those objectives, including credible student assessment tools for annually tracking student performance (including, but not limited to, standardized tests). Charter schools must report their objectives and progress toward them in the annual report due August 1st of each year (to be followed with a financial audit several months later).

In addition, charter schools will be subject to an annual site visit conducted by a small group of Massachusetts citizens who are not involved in the school, including one parent, teacher, school leader, business person, and public official. Visitors will tour the school and meet with the board of trustees, school director, teachers, students and others. The purpose these visits is to augment and verify the information contained in the annual report. Site visits will also help educate the general public about the charter school initiative and provide a charter school with critical feedback from a jury of objective peers.

At the end of five years, the Commonwealth will use the accountability contract, the annual progress reports, financial audits, and site visit reports in deciding whether to renew a charter. Charters will be renewed only for schools that have demonstrated good results.

The most important duty of the entity holding charter schools accountable is to keep the focus of evaluation on educational *results* and to guard against the all-too-natural inclination of government to focus instead on school inputs. A charter school should be judged primarily on the academic progress of its students, not by how much it pays its teachers or how well it complies with conventional educational practices and procedures.

Charter school leaders, despite an occasional (and understandable) grumble about the time-consuming reports they must file and the higher level of scrutiny they face, welcome the opportunity to be held accountable. It's what attracted them to the charter school initiative in the first place: the chance to have greater freedom in exchange for greater accountability.

This freedom-for-accountability exchange has the potential to utterly transform public education. With charter schools leading the way, perhaps the day is not far off when all public schools will be given the freedom charter schools enjoy in exchange for real accountability for results.

Scott W. Hamilton
Associate Commissioner for Charter Schools
Massachusetts Department of Education



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Department of Education

350 Main Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-5023

Charter Schools Technical Advisory 97-1¹

DRAFT

FROM: Scott Hamilton, Associate Commissioner
TO: Charter Schools
DATE: February 12, 1997
SUBJECT: Charter School Evaluation

The Board of Education is obligated by Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 89, and attendant regulations to conduct an ongoing review of charter schools and, by the fifth year of a school's operation, decide whether its charter should be renewed. This memo is to clarify the means by which the Department of Education will meet those obligations.

A decision of whether to renew a charter will be based on a simple and straightforward evaluation that is guided by three central questions:

Is the academic program a success?

- Has the school made reasonable progress in meeting internally established goals over its first four years of operation?
- Is student performance significantly improved and/or persistently strong on internal and external academic assessments?

Is the school a viable organization?

- Is the school financially solvent and stable?
- Is enrollment stable and near capacity?
- Is school governance sound and are professional staff competent and resourceful?

Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?

- Are the school's program and operation consistent with the terms of its charter?
- Is the school within the bounds of essential statutory and regulatory requirements?

While we are interested in gauging the effectiveness of charter schools in relation to other public schools, when it comes to the evaluation and renewal of any one charter school, we are chiefly interested in its particular performance vis-à-vis its own stated goals and objectives.

¹ This technical advisory is a revised and updated version of previously issued technical advisories 96-1 and 96-3.

In order that the Board can fairly and accurately judge charter school performance against the evaluation criteria list above, each charter school must do four things:

1. Develop and pursue its own clear, concrete and measurable school performance objectives.
2. Measure and document progress toward those objectives.
3. Use credible student assessment tools for annually tracking student performance.
4. Report its objectives, progress toward them, and student assessment results, along with other required information, in its annual report.

What follows is a brief explanation of these requirements.

Clear, Concrete and Measurable School Performance Objectives

Because school success will be gauged by a school's progress over time in relation to its own goals and baseline measures, the Department is requiring each charter school to submit a plan that details the performance objectives it has set for itself and how its progress toward those objectives will be measured. Such objectives, which may already be in a school's charter but need elaboration, should reflect an emphasis on student achievement but may also pertain to student and staff attendance, parental participation, safety and order, mobilization of non-state resources, school environment, staff development, plant improvement, fiscal management, and the like.

This accountability plan must comprise the demonstrable indices of educational effectiveness by which a school wants to be held accountable by the Board of Education. The plan should spell out concrete, quantifiable and objective indicators for as many as possible of its performance objectives and supply baseline data against which progress can be tracked. Charter schools in their first year of operation should submit plans no later than six weeks before the due date of their first annual reports. A portion of a new school's federal charter school grant may be used for the purchase of consulting services to help them develop and refine such measures and objectives.

Credible Student Assessment

Students in charter schools must, according to M.G.L. c.71, s.89, "meet the same performance standards, testing, and portfolio requirements set by the board of education for students in other public schools." When public schools are required to administer the new Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System, currently scheduled for Spring of 1998, charter schools, which are public schools, also will be required to administer them. Charter schools serving third-graders will administer a reading test, starting this May, which the Board of Education is requiring of all public schools.

As listed previously, charter schools are also required to employ other credible student assessment tools for measuring student performance annually. Each school may determine for itself which kind of student assessment tools to use, but the Department will insist that every school be able to provide credible evidence of the academic progress of its students. At minimum, this means schools should establish baseline data in the first year of operation and use corresponding assessment tools every year thereafter during the life of the charter.

It is imperative that citizens, parents, taxpayers, and educators of the Commonwealth have evidence as to the comparative effectiveness of charter schools in academic achievement, and therefore it is desirable that some comparable achievement data be gathered. To this end, each charter school should, on a regular cycle, administer to its students some widely recognized, norm-referenced standardized test of academic achievement in core subjects—one that lends itself to the comparison of results. As a part of this assessment, charter schools should consider using whichever test the surrounding district uses.

The Annual Report

The evaluation described in this memo will be based primarily on information provided by charter schools in the annual report state law requires them to submit to "the Board, to each parent or guardian of its enrolled students and to each parent or guardian contemplating enrollment in that charter school."

This annual report should be the vehicle for conveying most if not all information by which a charter school is evaluated. State regulations (601 CMR 1.00) specify that the annual report should include:

- (a) a financial statement setting forth by appropriate categories the revenue and expenditures for the year just ended, and a balance sheet setting forth the charter school's assets, liabilities, and fund balances or equities;
- (b) projections of income and expenses for the upcoming school year;
- (c) discussion made toward the achievement of the goals of the charter;
- (d) such other information as the Board may require in guidelines.

As a part of these four required components, the annual report should provide relevant data the Board may need to evaluate a school's progress toward its own objectives, as well as all information needed to determine answers to the aforementioned questions: Is the academic program a success, is the school a viable organization, and is the school faithful to the terms of its charter? Attached is a list of specific elements that should be included in the annual report.

Financial Information

Charter schools are required to provide detailed financial information about their operation primarily because of their duty—and the Commonwealth's—to demonstrate that public funds have been devoted to uses that are faithful to the public trust. This information, as painstaking and time-consuming as it is to collect and report, will also put charter schools beyond reproach and will serve to instruct others on alternative means by which public funds can be spent in order to help students learn to high standards.

Three main financial reporting requirements befall charter schools:

1. Annual Report (due August 1). As described in the preceding section, charter schools must provide a financial statement called for by statute in the annual report. This report may be completed using the same categories described in the Pupil and Financial End of Year Report.
2. Pupil and Financial End of Year Report (due September 15). This report is submitted by all school districts in the Commonwealth. Not all sections and categories apply to charter schools.
3. Year-End Audit (due October 15). This audit should be conducted by a CPA for the preceding state fiscal year following generally accepted accounting procedures and those prescribed by federal rules (OMB Circular A-128).

Annual Site Visits

The purpose of annual site visits is to augment and verify the information contained in the annual report. Site visits, which begin in the second year of a charter school's operation, will also help educate the general public about the charter school initiative and provide a charter school with critical feedback from a jury of objective peers.

These day-long site visits will be led by the Department of Education and will be conducted by a small group of Massachusetts citizens who are not involved in the school, including one parent, teacher, school leader, business person, and public official. Visitors will tour the school and meet with the board of trustees, school director, parents, teachers, students, and others.

In advance of their visit, the group's members will receive the school's annual report, the school's accountability plan, and a profile of the school. They will also meet together—either in person or by conference-call—to discuss the visit. Upon conclusion of a site visit, Department will draft a report, reviewed by the team members, that will be sent to the school and will become a part of charter school's file.

At the end of five years, the Commonwealth will use the accountability contract, the annual progress reports, financial audits, and site visit reports in deciding whether to renew a charter. Charters will be renewed only for schools that have demonstrated good results.

Attachment: Charter School Annual Report Guidelines

Charter School Annual Report Guidelines

The report the Commonwealth requires charter schools to issue annually is an opportunity for each school to document its objectives and accomplishments for the year. It can also serve as a prospectus that illustrates the unique value the school offers its students and parents. Since no two charter schools are the same, the format of this annual report may vary by school.

The information listed below, however, must be included in the annual report, unless otherwise noted. It reflects the requirements stipulated in M.G.L. c.71, s.89, 601 CMR 1.00, and DOE Technical Advisory 976-1 regarding the evaluation of charter schools. Moreover, the annual report should convey additional information that would be useful to the Board when, by the fifth year of a school's operation, it must determine whether the academic program is a success, whether the school is a viable organization, and whether the school is faithful to the terms of its charter.

Please note, each charter school must submit its annual report to the Board of Education--and make it available to each parent or guardian of its enrolled students, and to those contemplating enrollment in that charter school--no later than August 1st of each year.

School Performance

- Description of measurable school performance objectives
- Documentation of progress toward those objectives
- Description of student assessment tools and process
- Summary of student assessment results (by grade and subject, including baseline test data for incoming students)
- Summary of mandated student assessment results
- Summary of alumni placements, if applicable
- Description of school accomplishments
- Summary of official complaints received by the Board of Trustees
- Number of applications received (by grade and residence)
- Number of students on waiting list (by grade and residence)

Factual Information

1. Mission Statement

2. School Program

- Grade and age levels served
- Description of eligibility requirements and admissions process (including deadline for submitting applications and contact for interested parents/students)
- Brief summary of curriculum design and teaching method (including approach to special and bilingual education.)
- Graduation/promotion requirements
- Student/teacher ratio
- School calendar and hours of operation

3. Finance

- A financial statement setting forth by appropriate categories the revenue and expenditures for the year just ended
- A balance sheet setting forth the charter school's assets, liabilities, and fund balances or equities
- Projections of income and expenses for the upcoming school year
- Average cost per student (total annual tuition revenue divided by FTE enrollment)

4. Governance

- Board of trustees (name and affiliations)
- Board committees and members
- Advisory committees and members (names and affiliations)
- Summary of recorded votes during past years
- Meeting schedule for upcoming year

5. Staff

- Name of headmaster/principal
- Name of business manager (if applicable)
- Number of teachers and aides (by category, if applicable)
- Summary of teacher qualifications (experience, degrees, etc.)
- Staff turnover data

6. Student Characteristics

- Number of students
- Demographics (by race, ethnicity, gender and residence)
- Percentage of LEP students
- Percentage of special needs students (those with IEPs and others)
- Percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced school-lunch program

Recommended but not required are descriptions of:

- Expectations for parent involvement
- After-school and extra-curricular programs
- Library resources
- Computer/technology resources
- Community/business/university partnerships
- Transportation and food service
- Professional development activities
- Staff evaluation procedures
- School ethos
- Use of non-state resources
- Volunteer participation/hours

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**GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING A
CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN**

**Prepared for:
The Massachusetts Department of Education
Charter School Office**

January 1997

GUIDELINES FOR PREPARING A CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

Why Accountability?

In granting charters to a number of schools, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts enabled these schools to pursue their missions free from several state regulations. However, along with deregulation, the Commonwealth also stated high expectations for accountability from its charter schools. The Secretary of Education mandated that each school submit an Accountability Plan at the end of its first year of operation and state progress annually thereafter in Annual Reports. The Accountability Plan, which constitutes a contract between the school and the state, establishes the criteria by which the state will hold the school accountable over the life of its charter. According to Technical Advisory 96-1, which lays out the terms of accountability, each charter school must do four things:

- Develop and pursue its own clear, concrete, and measurable school performance objectives;
- Measure and document progress toward these objectives;
- Use credible student assessment tools for annually tracking student performance; and
- Report its objectives, progress toward them, and student assessment results, along with other required information in its annual report.

Although the emphasis of the Accountability Plan tends to be on accountability to the state, the Plan can also have multiple uses for the school and community, such as: accountability to the school community; a tool for continuous improvement, based on information, data, and feedback; and a means of proving success. Developing the plan is an opportunity for the school to revisit its mission and its objectives with the school community. It may be helpful, although it is not necessary, to use an outside facilitator to guide the school through this process.

Structure of This Document

This document provides guidelines to help Charter Schools prepare their Accountability Plans, using a common format. The table below shows the contents.

Topic	See Page(s)
Accountability Plan Common Format	2
Accountability Questions and Operations	3
Accountability Plan Elements: Explanations, Clues, Examples	4-9
Accountability Work and Example Sheets	10-13

II. ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN COMMON FORMAT

The Accountability Plan Format is organized around Measurable Performance Objectives, including both Student Performance Objectives and School Performance Objectives. For each objective: there are expectations; strategies for attainment; progress indicators; measurement tools; and a description of current status. The format of the Plan looks like the outline below.

MEASURABLE STUDENT PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

STUDENT PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE #1

Expectation(s)¹

Strategy(ies) for Attainment

Progress Indicators

Measurement Tool

Current Status

STUDENT PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE #2

(Etc.)

MEASURABLE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE #1

Expectation(s)

Strategy(ies) for Attainment

Progress Indicators

Measurement Tool

Current Status

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE #2

(Etc.)

¹Expectations for student academic performance are often expressed as standards of what students should know and be able to do.

III. ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS AND OPERATIONS

The development of an Accountability Plan is part of an ongoing cycle of planning (what are we going to do?); action (doing it) and reflection (how well did we succeed and what do we need to change?), which takes place within a school. This cycle is perpetual; reflection leads to revising plans and actions as a school moves toward achieving its objectives. The Accountability Plan is a tool for planning, action and reflection, since each of the common format elements answers one of the key questions that guide the cycle. On the list below, the key questions are tied to the Accountability Plan operation that best answers it.

QUESTIONS FOR PLANNING, ACTION AND REFLECTION

ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN OPERATIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Where do we want to go? | Defining measurable performance objectives for students and school. |
| • What do we want to achieve? | Setting academic and non-academic expectations. |
| • How will we get there? | Identifying strategies for attainment of objectives. |
| • How will we know we are making progress? | Defining progress indicators. |
| • What will we use to measure our progress? | Identifying measurement tools. |
| • Where are we now? | Describing current status. |

After the first year's Accountability Plan is submitted and approved, "current status" will become part of a school's Annual Report, which is due to the state August 1 each year.. Thus, examining current status can become the basis for annual reflection on the school's progress towards its objectives. The following reflective questions may be appropriate: Have we come far enough this year? Can we demonstrate our progress in a credible way to those outside of the school? If not, do we need to reconsider the strategies we are using to reach the objectives? Have the strategies been adequately implemented? Do we need to revise the strategies, re-examine our progress indicators, or think again about how to measure results?

IV. PLAN ELEMENTS: EXPLANATIONS, CLUES, EXAMPLES

Performance Objectives for Students and Schools

Schools must include at least one objective for students and one performance objective for the school. Most schools have more. At least one student performance objective must be academic; there may be non-academic objectives as well if they are important to the mission of the school. Performance objectives answer the question: *Where do we want to go?*

Explanation of Performance Objectives

Performance objectives are the ultimate expectations for achievement and are always keyed to the unique elements of the school's charter. Each objective must be stated in measurable terms, but all performance objectives may not be achieved within the five year period of the charter. The state will consider progress over time in evaluating schools.

Developing performance objectives requires thinking about unique elements of its charter and mission. Think of setting student performance objectives in terms of, "If this school succeeds, then students will..."

Cues and Clues

- Student performance objectives are often phrased "All students will..."
- Comparisons of student achievement should be made in terms of student growth over time or in terms of national norms, rather than with students in the district in which the charter school is located. A statement such as "Graduating students will perform at the same level as students graduating from the other Jonestown public schools," is not a valid performance objective because the two student populations are not comparable."

The examples below are illustrative ideas.

Examples²

Student Academic Performance Objective: *Students will be prepared for college through proficiency of key subjects in a core curriculum, which is defined as mathematics, science, and English.*

Student Non-academic Performance Objective: *All students will learn citizenship through taking responsibility and working in teams.*

School Performance Objective: *The school will be a viable organization in terms of resources, enrollment, and parent perception.*

²This is the beginning of continuing examples that will be followed throughout the format elements. See pages 11 and 12 to see the examples in their entirety.

Expectations

Expectations are more specific expression of performance objectives, stated in measurable terms. Each objective must have at least one expectation attached to it, which is attainable during the five years of the charter. Expectations answer the question: *What do we want to achieve?*

Explanation of Expectations

Expectations of student academic performance state what students should know and be able to do in specific measurable terms. When referring to non-academic student performance objectives or school performance, the term expectations denotes what is reasonably anticipated.

Developing expectations requires "setting the bar at a high level," but one that is attainable. Think of setting expectations by asking questions such as "How many students can we really expect to reach our desired level of performance in the amount of time that they are attending this school?"

Cues and Clues

- Expectations should be measurable within the five year period of the charter.
- Expectations are often expressed quantitatively, such as "90 percent of students will achieve proficiency..." or "75 percent of graduating students..." or "By the year 2001, all students..."
- Expectations are stronger if they include a phrase that states how they will be achieved. For example, "Ninety percent of students will achieve a score of *excellent* on their exhibitions, using the rubric³ in Appendix A.

Expectations are always tied to specific performance objectives as in the examples below.

Continuing Examples

Student Academic Expectation: 100 percent of students are expected to meet both annual and exit objectives, determined in an individual education plan. An IEP example appears in Appendix A.

Student Non-Academic Expectation: All students will become academic or non-academic prefects (or role models).

School Expectation: The school will add a grade each year, meet enrollment projections, and maintain a waiting list.

³ Rubrics should state the rules for judgement. For example, in exhibitions, the rubrics would state the specific student competencies that the exhibitions demonstrate.

Strategies for Attainment

Strategies are means that a school uses to meet its objectives. Strategies answer the question: *How will we get there?*

Explanation of Strategies

Strategies are the means, methods, and approaches by which expectations and performance objectives are met. Many strategies are academic, but they may also be behavioral and some may involve parents and community.

Developing strategies entails examining the performance objectives and thinking about the ways that they will be achieved. Think in terms of, "In order to achieve this objective, we will use or develop these methods, instructional techniques, and/or materials."

Cues and Clues

- Performance objectives are ends; strategies are the means to the end.
- Several strategies may be needed to attain a single performance objective and strategies may serve more than one objective.
- The following is a list of frequently used strategies: specific curricula or texts; instructional approaches; student grouping; individualized learning plans; teacher professional development; outside experts in the classroom; student dress or behavior codes; periodic town meetings.

There are many strategies charter schools use to meet their objectives. The examples below are illustrative.

Continuing Examples

School Academic Performance Strategy: Use quality core curricula, such as Reading Recovery and University of Chicago School Mathematics Project.

Student Non-academic Performance Strategy: Students achieving proficiency serve as academic prefects who tutor other students. Students may also serve as non-academic prefects with responsibility for organizing certain projects or areas.

School Performance Strategy: The school will hold parent meetings in order to establish and reach consensus on expectations parents hold for student performance.

Progress Indicators

Progress Indicators are the signposts along the road toward meeting expectations and achieving performance objectives. Progress Indicators answer the question: *How do we know we're making progress?*

Explanation of Progress Indicators

Progress Indicators are measurable interim accomplishments that must be achieved in order to meet the expectations. For every student performance objective, it is necessary to have Progress Indicators; they are not always necessary for school objectives. Progress Indicators are annual verification that cumulative progress is being made toward objectives.

Developing progress indicators requires thinking about the educational process and how it can be measured. Think about issues such as "Where do we need students to be at the end of each grade to meet our expectations at graduation?"

Cues and Clues

- Progress indicators must be measurable. They are often stated quantitatively.
- Wherever possible, progress indicators should allow external validation.
- Progress indicators may use such words as "each year," or "at the end of two years," or they may refer to "increase" or "student progress after one year in the school"
- A single performance objective may have several progress indicators.

Progress indicators relate to expectations and performance objectives, as in the examples below.

Continuing Examples

Student Academic Performance Progress Indicators: *Annual increase in the number of students meeting expectations, according to standardized tests results and performance based measures.*

Student Non-academic Performance Progress Indicator: *Annual 5 percent increase in the number of students becoming academic and non-academic prefects each year.*

School Performance Progress Indicator: *Annual 10% increase in applications by students and teachers; annual increase or status quo in waiting list; 20% annual increase in parent activities.*

Measurement Tools

Measurement tools are the proof of success and answer the question: *How will we know we got there?*

Explanation of Measurement Tools

Measurement tools are the means used to evaluate progress toward performance objectives. Most schools use multiple tools for measuring student and school performance both for planning within the school and for demonstrating success to others. The key elements of any measurement tool are objectivity and credibility.

Describing measurement tools requires thinking about the best sources of evidence that are available to prove that the school is making progress toward its performance objectives. Think of including measurement tools that meet a criterion of "This tool will prove to insiders and reasonably informed outsiders that we are accomplishing our objectives."

Cues and Clues

- Subject all measurement tools to the questions: Is this credible? Is this objective?
- Any of the following are acceptable measurement tools: standardized tests; district tests; exhibitions of proficiency and/or portfolios, as long as they are accompanied by credible rubrics; outside juries or judges; changes in discipline referrals, school attendance, drop-out rates; rate of students attending two or four year colleges.
- Standardized tests are not the only measurement tool for judging student achievement, but the results are extremely credible to outsiders.

It is important that each performance objective be measured by some tool that indicates demonstrable progress. The examples below give some illustrative ideas.

Continuing Examples

Student Academic Performance Measurement: *Pre and Post Iowa tests for all students. Use of the MEAP in grades four and eight, report cards, final examinations in English and mathematics. Performance based assessments in science.*

Student Non-academic Performance Measurement: *Students will earn Student Life Points through serving as prefects. These points will be tallied at the end of the year to show student progress toward becoming prefects.*

School Performance Measurement: *Parent and teacher surveys, enrollment records, teacher applications, number of students on waiting list.*

Current Status

A report of current status is closely tied to progress indicators, which are described on an earlier page. The report of current status answers the question: *Where are we now?*

Explanation of Current Status

Current status tells where the school is, in measurable terms, at the end of each academic year in meeting its objectives. In the Accountability Plan, a school may report baseline data as the current status.

Appraising current status requires honestly facing up to success and failure and saying, "This is where we are."

Cues and Clues

- At the end of the first year current status is generally baseline, such as student scores on standardized tests at the time they enter the school. Baseline data means the status of performance before the charter school has had any effects. It says "We're starting here."
- After the first year, current status is tied to progress indicators. For example, If the progress indicator is that at the end of the fifth grade, all students will complete journals, then the current status report might say "90% of students completed journals; the others have signed contracts to complete them by September."

The examples below give some illustrative ideas for reporting current status.

Continuing Examples

Current Status of Student Academic Performance: (Baseline Data) As of Sept. 1996, 62 percent of students were below grade level in mathematics and 56 percent below grade level in reading.

Current Status of Student Non-academic Performance: All teachers are trained and are training students in the prefect system.

Current Status of School Performance: In 1995, we opened as a K-7 school; in 1996 we will open as a K-8 school. There were 150 teacher applications at the time the school opened. The number of students on the waiting list is currently 53.

V. WORK AND EXAMPLE SHEETS

The following pages are intended to help in the process of moving from understanding Accountability Plans to developing one. The first part of this section is an annotated worksheet, containing words and phrases that may be used to express the elements of the Plan. The second part of the section shows how an Accountability Plan really looks. Using the same basic examples that have been used in the previous pages and presents them in an integrated and sequential way. Like a real Accountability Plan, it contains multiple expectations, strategies, performance indicators, measurement tools, and expressions of current status. Note how brief the plan is. An Accountability Plan is expected to be no more than 10-12 pages, including a very brief introduction describing the mission and key features of the school. All supporting documentation, including rubrics, samples of tests and student work should appear in appendices.

Annotated Worksheet

The following worksheet is annotated to provide some guidance in developing an Accountability Plan.

Student Performance Objective. Students will (achieve, master, be successful at) (core curriculum subjects, basic skills, higher order thinking skills.)

Expectations

- ____ percent of students will attain ____ level of proficiency in ____ at (graduation.)
- ____ percent of graduating students will achieve ____ as shown by ____.

Strategy(ies) for Attainment

- A curriculum will be (developed, adopted) that _____

Progress Indicators

- (____ Number, percent) of (all, grade 6) students who are expected to perform at or above grade level (according to the _____)
- Increased achievement shown by (Report card or Individualized Education Plan or written reports by teachers) at the end of grades _____

Measurement Tools

- _____ standardized test administered at grade levels _____
- (Exhibitions, portfolios), scored by rubrics (developed, adopted) at grade levels _____

Current Status

Diagnostic Placement Tests) used with all students at admission show that ____ students are performing (above, below) grade level in ____ (core curriculum subjects).

Complete Examples by Performance Objectives

STUDENT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE *Students will be prepared for college through proficiency of key subjects in a core curriculum, which is defined as mathematics, science, and English.*

Expectations

- *100 percent of students are expected to meet both annual and exit objectives in core subjects, determined in an individual education plan. An IEP example appears in Appendix A.*
- *75 percent of students will score at the level of 750 or above on the PSATs.*

Strategies

- *Use of quality core curricula, such as Reading Recovery and University of Chicago School Mathematics Project.*
- *Special classes after school will offer students additional preparation for the PSATs.*
- *IEPs will be reviewed with parents, students, and teachers at least once a year.*

Progress Indicators

- *Annual increase in number of students meeting expectations, according to standardized tests results and performance based measures.*
- *The number of students who choose to take the SATs each year.*

Measurement Tools

- *Pre and Post Iowa tests for all students. Use of the MEAP in grades four and eight, report cards. Final examinations in mathematics and English at every grade level. Performance based assessments in science at grade six.*
- *Surveys will be sent to graduates who reach college asking them to rate their preparation.*

Current Status

- *(Baseline Data) As of Sept. 1996, 62 percent of students were below grade level in mathematics and 56 percent below grade level in reading. A baseline for science is being established.*
- *57 percent of students have signed up for the special after school SAT preparation classes at the time they enrolled in the school.*
- *IEPs have been completed with all entering students and reviewed with parents.*

STUDENT NON-ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE *All students will learn citizenship through taking responsibility and working in teams.*

Expectations

- *75% of students will become academic prefects during their years in this school.*
- *100% of students will become non-academic prefects during their years in the school.*

Strategies

- *Students will study in teams headed by an academic prefect who will provide academic leadership.*
- *Student government will include specific training in citizenship.*

Progress Indicators

- *Yearly increase in the percent of students becoming academic and non-academic prefects.*
- *10% annual increase in number of students engaged in student government.*

Measurement Tools

- *Students will earn Life Points, which will show progress by each student in citizenship.*
- *Annual student survey on aspects of citizenship and responsibility. See sample survey in Appendix A.*

Current Status

- *All teachers are trained and are teaching students the elements of the system.*
- *A student government handbook has been developed and is being incorporated into the social studies curriculum.*

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE *The school will be a viable organization in terms of resources, enrollment and parent perception.*

Expectations

- *The school will add a grade each year, meet enrollment projections, and maintain a waiting list.*
- *50% of funds needed for expansion will be raised by parents working with school administrators.*
- *80% of parents will be involved in some kind of parent activity.*

Strategies

- *The school will hold parent meetings in order to establish and come to consensus on parents' expectations for student achievement.*
- *A professional fund raiser will be brought in as a consultant to parent groups.*
- *New and additional parent activities will be added each year, based on the interests of parents.*

Progress Indicators

- *Annual 10% increase in applications by students and teachers; annual increase or status quo in waiting list.*
- *Annual 20 percent increase in number of parents taking part in parent activities.*

Measurement Tools

- *Parent and teacher surveys, teacher applications, number of students on waiting list.*
- *Amount of money raised by parents.*

Current Status

- *In 1995 we opened as a K-8 school. There were 150 teacher applications at the time school opened. The number of students on the waiting list is 53.*
- *We have held initial conversations with a fund raising consultant and some parent leaders.*

Annual Site Visit Protocol for Charter Schools

Charter schools are the most accountable public schools in the Commonwealth because they must demonstrate good results within five years or lose their charter. Annual site visits of charter schools are one of the means the Department of Education will use to document each school's accomplishments.

As with all other elements of the accountability process, site visits will be guided by three central questions:

1. **Is the academic program a success?** An affirmative answer would be based on evidence that the school has made reasonable progress in meeting internally established goals over four years, and that student performance significantly improved and/or is persistently strong on internal and external academic assessments.
2. **Is the school a viable organization?** Yes would mean that the school is financially solvent and stable, enrollment is stable and near capacity, school governance is sound, and professional staff are competent and resourceful.
3. **Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?** If the school's program and operation are consistent with the terms of its charter, and if the school is within the bounds of essential statutory and regulatory requirements, then the answer will be yes.

Because we want to answer these standard questions without trampling on the unique character and mission of each school, the Commonwealth is working with charter schools to develop an accountability contract for each school. This contract will describe clear, concrete and measurable school performance objectives. These objectives will reflect an emphasis on student achievement, but may also pertain to student attendance, parental satisfaction and participation, safety and order, mobilization of private resources, school environment, staff development, facility improvement, or fiscal management.

This accountability contract will also describe the measures the school will use to document progress toward those objectives, including credible student assessment tools for annually tracking student performance. Charter schools report their objectives and progress toward them in the annual report due August 1st of each year.

The purpose of annual site visits is to augment and verify the information contained in the annual report. Site visits will also help educate the general public about the charter school initiative and provide a charter school with critical feedback from a jury of objective peers.

These day-long site visits will be led by the Department's Charter School Office and will be conducted by a small group of Massachusetts citizens who are not involved in the school, including one parent, teacher, school leader, business person, and public official. Visitors will tour the school and meet with the board of trustees, school director, teachers, students and others.

In advance of their visit, the group's members will receive the school's annual report, the school's accountability plan, and a profile of the school. They will also meet together -- either in person or by conference-call -- to discuss the visit.

Annual Site Visit Protocol for Charter Schools Format

Time	Category	Duration	Notes
8-9:30	Board of Trustees	1 hour	A representative group is sufficient; all board members need not be present.
9:30-10:30	School Director and Tour of Facility (meet with library, media, health, finance personnel)	1 hour	Orientation and discussion, after which some team members may visit classrooms, with others talking with staff, e.g. library, health and finance personnel.
10:30-11:30	Students	1 hour	Six students with samples of their best work about which they are prepared to talk. (Younger students may be accompanied by a teacher.) Some team members may continue classroom visits.
11:30-12:30	Teachers & Staff* Parents*	1 hour	Three-to-six teachers from various grade levels and disciplines; Three-to-six parents.
12:30-2:00	Site Visit Team	1.5 hours	Conversation about the team's opinions, observations and conclusions.
2:00-3:00	School Director	1 hour	Wrap-up meeting to discuss the team's observations.
		Total = 6.5 hours	

The schedule will be coordinated by the school. The order is not critical and can be adapted to fit the needs of the school.

* These meetings may be held concurrently.

Annual Site Visit Protocol for Charter Schools Essential Questions

Is the academic program a success?

- Is the school's curriculum based on high academic standards, both in terms of content and performance?
- Has student performance improved or been persistently strong on internal and external assessments?

Is the school a viable organization?

- Are the school's purposes and objectives clear and thoroughly understood by those connected with the school--governing body, professional staff, students, and parents?
- Is the school safe?
- Are the physical facilities adequate for the program of the school?
- Does the school have appropriate controls and procedures for the management of financial resources?
- Professional staff members are qualified by training and/or experience in the areas to which they are assigned?
- Does the school have an effective governance structure and administrative organization for carrying out the purposes and objectives of the school?
- Are parents satisfied with the performance of the school?

Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?

- Do the school's curriculum, program, and activities seem consistent with essential legal and regulatory requirements?
- Is the school becoming the school it promised to become in its charter?

Annual Site Visit Protocol for Charter Schools

Interview Questions

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Describe the school's mission and purposes.
- Describe this school as you might at an informational session.
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of the board.
- How do you know your school's academic program is successful?
- Describe a recent policy decision made by the board. How was the matter initiated and by whom? What was the procedure used by the board? What was the decision? How was this action made known to those affected?
- How does the board evaluate the performance of the school leader? How are their conclusions transmitted to him and by whom?
- What is the policy of the board regarding possible conflict of interest between a board member in his role as a member of that body and in his business or professional role?
- What are the school's greatest accomplishments and challenges?
- What did you learn last year that you have been able to use to your advantage this year?
- Is there information not presented in the annual report that you think is of particular importance to the team?

SCHOOL DIRECTOR

- What is the mission of the school?
- Is the mission clear and understood by those connected with the school: trustees, staff, parents, and students?
- Describe the school as you might at an informational session.
- Describe the decision-making process in the school.
- Describe your relationship with the board of trustees.
- What are your school's budget and financial control procedures?
- Describe the school's curriculum, with examples of content and performance standards for key grade levels.
- How did students perform in your first year? Please refer to specific test scores, attendance records, etc.?
- How is the progress of each student evaluated?
- What are the school's greatest accomplishments and challenges?
- What did you learn last year that you have been able to use to your advantage this year?
- Is there information not presented in the annual report that you think is of particular importance to the team?

TEACHERS

- Describe the school's mission and purposes.
- Describe the school as you might at an informational session.
- What training and experience do you bring to your position?
- What do you value about teaching at this school?
- What is unique about this school's philosophy or approach?
- What are your goals for your students?
- How are this school's expectations communicated to teachers?
- How do you assess each student's needs, work, and progress?
- What kinds of curriculum planning and coordination occur at the school level?

STUDENTS

- How old are you and what grade are you in?
- How would you describe this school to a friend?
- Where did you go to school before you came to this school?
- Are you a better student than you were at your previous school?
- Do you have more or less homework than your previous school?
- How safe is your school?
- How are your teachers?
- Explain the assignment that you have brought with you?
 - How long did it take you?
 - What kind of help did you get?
 - What changes did you make?
 - What did you like about this assignment?
 - What did you learn by doing this project/assignment? Explain.

PARENTS

- How many children do you have at the school? How old are they?
- Why did you choose to send your child(ren) to this school?
- What do you understand the school's mission to be? How would you describe the school to a neighbor?
- Where did your child(ren) attend school previously? How active are you in this school as compared to your child(ren)'s previous school?
- How would you evaluate the safety of this school?
- How would you assess your child's interest in learning?
- What is this school's greatest strength and greatest weakness?
- What do you consider the most important knowledge and skills your child should acquire? How is the school meeting this challenge?
- Are your family's expectations of the school being met?

Note: This protocol was developed in consultation with the Hudson Institute, National Association of Independent Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., Performance Assessment Collaboratives for Education, and Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research.

Section (f)

Plan for Pupil Performance Evaluation, Types of Assessments, Timeline, and Procedures for Corrective Action

Pursuant to Colo. Rev. Stat. Section 22-30.5-106(1)(f) the Academy's board of directors submits the following description of its plan for evaluating pupil performance, the types of assessments that will be used to measure pupil progress towards achievement of the Academy's pupil performance standards, the timeline for achievement of such standards, and the procedures for taking corrective action in the event that pupil performance at the Academy falls below such standards.

I. Pupil Performance Evaluation, Types of Assessments and Procedures for Corrective Action

A. Evaluation Plan

As noted in section (b) each spring, all of the Academy's students will take a battery of standardized tests. The Academy has established a goal of a 5% annual increase in median scores in all subject areas. The Academy's goal is to achieve an average median attainment level of 80% in all subjects for all grade levels. The learning disabled would be exempted from the standards, and standards relevant to individual situations would be adopted in their place. Such exemptions would become part of the information exchange with the District and be included in all reports. Attainment may be demonstrated by oral examination, written examinations, writing samples, audio recordings, artistic renderings, or any combination of these examples.

Per the time line attached as Appendix D, annual evaluation reports of standardized tests will be submitted to the District as well as an initial baseline evaluation based on the standardized test methods currently in use by the District. A comparative analysis of goals established and goals achieved will be presented in the evaluation as well. The District will assume all costs associated with testing and retain individual copies of test results as is the practice with other public schools in the District.

B. Corrective Action

As a part of the ongoing instructional process, teachers will identify any student who begins to fall below accepted levels of achievement. If a student is identified as beginning to fail, then a three step process will be initiated to remedy the problem.

1. The classroom teacher will assess the problem and begin a remediation program that will include, but not limited to, additional instructional time with the teacher or an aid, labs, at-home or after-school work. If achievement has not improved, then the teacher will seek further assessment of the problem in step two.
2. If the classroom teacher has attempted to remediate the achievement of the student and little or no success has been gained, then the student will be referred to a Special Education Teacher. The Special Education Teacher will work in concert with the classroom teacher in identifying the learning problem and creating a remediation strategy for that student. If achievement has not improved, then the teaching team will refer to step three.
3. If the student continues at an unacceptable level of achievement, then the student will be referred to the County Assessment Team for assessment and diagnosis. The school will then follow the remediation plan set forth by the County. If the remediation requires a service that the Academy cannot provide, then it will be recommended that the student go to the place best able to provide the service needed. If the student has to leave the Academy, they will have the opportunity to return to the school when the special services are no longer required.

II. Timeline

A timeline for performance evaluations is set forth in Appendix D.

Appendix B

Useful Charter School Websites

Information and Technical Assistance

US Charter Schools (USCS)

<http://www.uscharterschools.org/>

Charter School Research (CSR)

<http://csr.syr.edu/>

Charter Schools Resource Center

<http://www.pioneerinstitute.org/csrc/index.html>

Center for Education Reform (CER)

<http://edreform.com/>

Center for School Change at the Humphrey Institute

<http://next.hhh.umn.edu/Centers/school-change/>

Center for Education Reform

<http://www.educenter.org/>

The Charter School Development Center: CSU Institute for Education Reform

<http://www.csus.edu/ier/charter/charter.html>

The Center for Market-Based Education

<http://www.cmbe.org/>

Comprehensive Centers

<http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/obemla/tan/ccregions.html>

National Conference of State Legislatures--Education Program: Charter Schools

<http://www.ncsl.org/programs/educ/c1schls.htm>

WestEd - Policy Support and Studies Program: Charter Schools Page

<http://www.wested.org/policy/charter/welcome.htm>

The Massachusetts Charter School Handbook

<http://www.pioneerinstitute.org/csrc/cshand.htm>

Michigan Resource Center for Charter Schools

<http://charter.ehhs.cmich.edu/html/us.html>

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory: Charter Schools - The Northwest Experience

<http://www.nwrel.org/charter/>

Education Week archives on charter schools

<http://www.edweek.org/context/topics/charter.htm>



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Charter School Associations

Arizona Charter School Association

<http://www.azcharters.org/>

California Network of Educational Charters (CANEC)

<http://www.wpusd.k12.ca.us/canec/canec.html>

Hawaii charter school resources

http://www.kalama.doe.hawaii.edu/~lanikai/charter_info.html

Research Publications

American Federation of Teachers (AFT): Charter School Laws: Do They Measure Up?

<http://www.aft.org/NS/>

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) Policy Planning Service (SPPS):

Charter Schools: Early Learnings

<http://www.sedl.org:80/policy/insights/charter9507.html>

Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE):

First Lessons: Charter Schools as Learning Communities

<http://www.upenn.edu/gse/cpre/docs/pubs/rb22.pdf>

Hudson Institute - Charter Schools in Action Project: Final Report, 1997

<http://www.csus.edu/ier/charter/charter.html>

Little Hoover Commission: Study of California Charter Schools

<http://www.lhc.ca.gov/lhcdir/138rp.html>

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory:

Choice Matters: Policy Alternatives and Implications for Charter Schools

<http://www.nwrel.org/charter/policy.html>

Massachusetts Department of Education: The Massachusetts Charter School Initiative

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/cs.www>

U.S. Department of Education: A Study of Charter School - First Year Report

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/charter/>

Morrison Institute for Public Policy: Charter Schools - The Research

<http://edreform.com/pubs/morrison.htm>

Public Broadcasting System (PBS): The Merrow Report

<http://www.pbs.org/merrow/>



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State departments of Education and other organizations

Alaska Department of Education: Information about Charter Schools in Alaska

http://www.educ.state.ak.us/Alaskan_Schools/Charter/home.html

Arizona Department of Education: Charter Schools

<http://www.ade.state.az.us/schools/charter-schools/>

California Department of Education: Charter School Home Page

<http://goldmine.cde.ca.gov/ftpbranch/retdiv/charter/index.html>

Colorado Charter Schools: Colorado Department of Education

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/charter.htm>

Hawaii Charter School Resources

http://kalama.doe.hawaii.edu/~lanikai/charter_info.html

Wyoming Alternative Education and Charter Schools

http://www.k12.wy.us/alt_ed.html

Charter Friends National Network

<http://www.charterfriends.org/>

NEA Charter Schools Initiative

<http://www.nea.org/info/csinit.html>

Program on Reinventing Public Education

University of Washington Graduate School of Public Affairs

<http://www.gspa.washington.edu/prpe/prpehome.html>

Choice in Education, including Charter Schools

<http://www.interlog.com/~klima/ed/charters.html>

National School Boards Association (NSBA): Charter School Review

<http://www.nsba.org/edissues/charter/index.html>



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School Management Links

Fundraising

Contact Center Network:

Fundraising guidelines online

<http://www.contact.org/tools/fundraising.htm>

Eisenhower National Consortium:

A clearinghouse for grants on math, science, and other projects

<http://www.enc.org/>

The Foundation Center:

<http://fdncenter.org/>

Links to Private and Public Foundations

<http://fdncenter.org/grantmaker/contents.html>

FAQ: "Where do I begin my foundation/grants research?"

<http://fdncenter.org/RefDesk/faq1.html>

The George Lucas Foundation:

The Lucas Foundation web site provides information on a number of school reform issues. If you go to the Grants page at the below location, you will find a list of corporate foundations which support education reform and technology integration.

<http://glef.org/glef/gframe.html>

Government Information Services/Education Funding Research Council (GIS/EFRC):

Publications by either GIS or EFRC which list different grant opportunities from federal, corporate and foundation sources can be purchased and ordered directly through this web site

<http://www.grantsandfunding.com/>

The Grants Web:

The society of research administrators' comprehensive list of funding links

<http://web.fie.com/cws/sra/resource.htm>

Technology in Education Program:

<http://www.wested.org/tie/welcome.html>

For detailed information on both applying for and winning grants for integrating technology into the classroom, see the Teaching and Learning Resources page which has a detailed listing of Grant Information Sources for Educators.



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Governance

American Association of School Administrators:

<http://www.aasa.org/>

Charter School Resources

<http://www.aasa.org/charters/charter.htm>

National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS):

<http://www.nais.org>

National Center for Nonprofit Boards (NCNB):

<http://www.ncnb.org>

Legal Issues

Institute for Education Reform at California State University:

<http://www.csus.edu/ier/>

Charter Schools

<http://www.csus.edu/ier/charter/charter.html>

State Legal Issues Regarding California Charter Schools

<http://www.csus.edu/ier/charter/CAlegal.html>

US Department of Education:

<http://www.ed.gov>

Office for Civil Rights

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/>

Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (IASA)

<http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA/toc.html>

Florida Department of Education:

Preventing Sexual Harassment: Resources for Training

<http://www.firn.edu/doe/eeop/SexualHarassmentList.html>

American Law Sources Online:

<http://www.lawsource.com/also/usa.htm>

US Charter Schools Web Site: Legal Issues

http://www.uscharterschools.org/tech_assist/ta_legal.htm



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Small Business Organizations & TQM Resources

Small Business Administration:

<http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/>

Small Business Resource Center:

<http://www.webcom.com/seaquest/sbrc/welcome.html>

The Nolo Press:

Index of legal publications

<http://www.nolo.com/ChunkSB/SB.index.html>

Quality Digest's Education Resource Directory:

Lists of associations, books, videos and other resources

<http://www.qualitydigest.com/sep/directry.html>

Clemson University's Public Sector Continuous Improvement Site: Library

<http://deming.eng.clemson.edu/pub/pcsi/library.html>

GOAL/QPC:

Publications for Non-Profits on Quality Management

<http://www.goalqpc.com/PRODUCT/Prodlist.html>



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Instructional Program Links

Curriculum Development

AskERIC:

<http://ericir.syr.edu>

Virtual Library

<http://ericir.syr.edu/Virtual>

Questions and Answer Service

<http://ericir.syr.edu/Qa>

ERIC Toolbox

<http://ericir.syr.edu/Qa/Toolbox>

Biology Place:

<http://www.biology.com/>

The Chemistry Place

<http://www.chemplace.com/>

Classroom Connect:

<http://www.classroom.net/>

Directory of Educational Sites

<http://www.classroom.net/cgi/rofm/eduFind.html>

Internet Search

<http://www.classroom.net/classroom/search.htm>

Teacher Contact Database

<http://www.classroom.net/contact/>

The Concord Review:

<http://www.tcr.org>

CSU at Northridge, Web Sites and Resources for Teachers:

<http://www.csun.edu/~vceed009/index.html>

Ed's Oasis:

<http://www.EDsOasis.org/>

The Treasure Zone

<http://www.EDsOasis.org/Treasure.html>

Spotlight on Success

<http://www.EDsOasis.org/Spotlight.html>

Education Week:

<http://www.edweek.org>

Web Connection

<http://www.edweek.org/ads/webconn1.shtml>

BookShelf

<http://www.edweek.org/bookshelf/bookshelf.htm>



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Eisenhower National Clearinghouse for Mathematics and Science Education:

<http://www.enc.org/index.htm>

Classroom Links, Lesson Links, and Newsletter

<http://www.enc.org/classroom/index.htm>

History/Social Studies Website for K-12 Teachers:

<http://www.execpc.com/~dboals/boals.html>

Houghton Mifflin Education Place:

<http://www.eduplace.com/>

Mathematics Center

<http://www.eduplace.com/math/index.html>

Reading/Language Arts Center

<http://www.eduplace.com/rdg/index.html>

Social Studies Center

<http://www.eduplace.com/ss/>

Social Studies Links

<http://www.eduplace.com/ss/links/index.html>

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE):

<http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/>

Foreign Language Teaching and Learning

<http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/links/langcult/foreign.html>

Natural Sciences for Educators:

http://ceres.ca.gov/education/educators/nat_sci.html

New Century Education Corporation:

<http://www.ncecorp.com/>

New Century Integrated Instructional System

<http://www.ncecorp.com/nceiis.html>

Newton's Apple:

<http://ericir.syr.edu/Projects/Newton/>

PCS Education Systems, Inc: PCS Edventures!

<http://www.edventures.com>

San Diego County Office of Education:

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/>

K-12 Education Resources

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/resources/resframe.html>



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Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE):

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/>

California Language Arts Teacher Resources

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/frontpage.html>

History/Social Science

<http://www.rims.k12.ca.us/SCORE/index.html>

Math

<http://www.kings.k12.ca.us/math/>

Science

<http://intergate.humboldt.k12.ca.us/score/>

Science Adventures:

<http://www.scienceadventures.org>

Social Studies School Service:

<http://socialstudies.com/>

Vose School Education Resources:

<http://www.teleport.com/~vincer/starter.html>



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Standards Development

Mid-Continent Regional Education Lab (McREL):

<http://www.mcrel.org>

Standards Resources

<http://www.mcrel.org/standard.html>

National Center on Education and the Economy:

<http://www.ncee.org>

New Standards Performance Standards

<http://www.ncee.org/ourproducts/perfstandards.html>

Putnam Valley Schools: Annotated list of Internet sites with K-12 educational standards and curriculum framework documents

<http://www.putwest.boces.org>

Middleweb:

A World Wide Web site-exploring the challenges of middle grades reform, with a special focus on urban middle schools.

<http://www.middleweb.com/>



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Assessment & Evaluation

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD):

<http://www.ascd.org>

New and Featured Products

<http://www.ascd.org/cgi-bin/newprod.cgi>

Buros Institute:

<http://www.unl.edu/buros>

Clear View Elementary Charter School:

Clear View's Alternative Assessment Guide, which explains how the school developed a broad-based holistic assessment package, can be ordered by phone: (619)498-3000.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation (ERIC/AE):

<http://ericae2.educ.cua.edu>

List of Online Resources

<http://ericae2.educ.cua.edu/intass.htm>

Spider Search

<http://ericae2.educ.cua.edu/sintbod.htm>

National Center For Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST):

<http://www.cse/ucla.edu>

Guidebook

<http://cresst96.cse.ucla.edu/guide.htm>

Sample Assessment

<http://cresst96.cse.ucla.edu/samples.htm>

Alternative Assessment

<http://cresst96.cse.ucla.edu/database.htm>

North Central Regional Education Laboratory (NCREL):

<http://www.ncrel.org>

Pathways to School Improvement

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/pathwayg.htm>

WestEd's Assessment and Standards Development Services:

http://www.wested.org/wested/work/p01_asds.html



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Professional Development

The National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT):

<http://www.nabt.org/>

NABT Excellent Web Sites

http://www.nabt.org/other_sites.html

National Council for Social Studies:

<http://www.ncss.org/online/educators.html>

Social Studies Websites

<http://www.ncss.org/online/links/webtech.html>

Teacher Resources

<http://www.ncss.org/online/resources/resources.html>

National Council of Teachers of English:

<http://www.ncte.org/>

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics:

<http://www.nctm.org/>

National Science Teachers Association:

<http://www.nsta.org/>

Regional Resources and Organizations

<http://www.nsta.org/onlineresources/links/cags/>

Science and Math Links

<http://www.nsta.org/onlineresources/links/>

Tales From the Electronic Frontier:

<http://www.wested.org/tales/>

Students with Special Needs

National Association of State Directors of Special Education:

Charter Schools and Special Education: A Handbook

http://www.uscharterschools.org/res_dir/res_primary/res_nasdse.htm

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education:

<http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/>

Report on "Charter schools and the Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Student"

<http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/misc/charter/>



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Whole-School, Private, & Other Models

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Catalog of School Reform Models

<http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/natspec/catalog/index.html>

Accelerated Schools Project:

<http://www-leland.stanford.edu/group/ASP/>

"What is an Accelerated School?"

<http://www-leland.stanford.edu/group/ASP/brochure.html>

Advantage Schools, Inc:

<http://www.advantage-schools.com/>

Coalition of Essential Schools:

<http://www.essentialschools.org>

Comer School Development Program:

A summary of this program is available on the US Department of Education's web site

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/OR/ConsumerGuides/comer.html>

Core Knowledge Foundation:

<http://www.coreknowledge.org/>

"What is Core Knowledge?"

<http://www.coreknowledge.org/faq.htm>

Core Knowledge Lesson Plans and Units

<http://www.coreknowledge.org/newplans.htm>

The Edison Project:

<http://www.edisonproject.com/>

Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound:

<http://hugsel.harvard.edu/~elob/>

Design Principles

<http://hugsel.harvard.edu/~elob/design.htm#design>

Expeditionary Learning Program Components

<http://hugsel.harvard.edu/~elob/design.htm#program>

The Association Montessori Internationale:

<http://www.ami.edu/>

The Pedagogy

http://www.ami.edu/html/the_pedagogy.html

North American Montessori Teacher's Association (NAMTA)

<http://www.cybergate.net/~mashani/namta.html>

American Montessori Society

http://www.seattleu.edu/~jcm/montessori/menu_link.html

Montessori Resources on the Internet



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<http://www.xe.net/isnet/tms/othrmont.htm>

The National Paideia Center:

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/ed/cel-paideia.html>

New American Schools (NAS):

<http://www.naschools.org/home.htm>

Design-Based Assistance

<http://www.naschools.org/greatsch/whatis.htm>

Great Schools by Design

<http://www.naschools.org/greatsch/index.htm>

SABIS Educational Systems:

<http://www.CityScape.co.uk/school-network/index.htm>

Waldorf Education:

<http://www.io.com/~karisch/waldorf.html>

Waldorf Schools in North America

<http://www.io.com/~karisch/waldir.html>



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AN EDUCATOR'S GUIDE TO SCHOOL NETWORKS:

Solving the Networking Puzzle

MAIN MENU

OVERVIEW

PROTOCOL

HARDWARE

CABLING

TOPOLOGY

SOFTWARE

GLOSSARY

GAME

REFERENCES



An Educator's Guide to School Networks (<http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/network/>)

[[Main](#) | [Overview](#) | [Protocol](#) | [Hardware](#) | [Cabling](#) | [Topology](#) | [Software](#)]
[[Game](#) | [Glossary](#) | [References](#) | [Credits](#)]

Produced by the [Florida Center for Instructional Technology](#)
College of Education, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL © 1998



OVERVIEW

What is a Network?

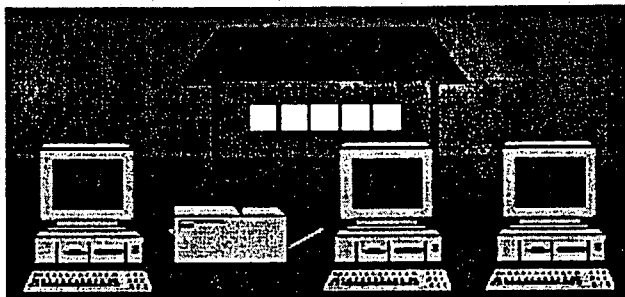
A network consists of two or more computers that are linked in order to share resources (such as printers and CD-ROMs), exchange files, or allow electronic communications. The computers on a network may be linked through cables, telephone lines, radio waves, satellites, or infrared light beams.

The three basic types of networks include:

- Local Area Network (LAN)
- Metropolitan Area Network (MAN)
- Wide Area Network (WAN)

Local Area Network

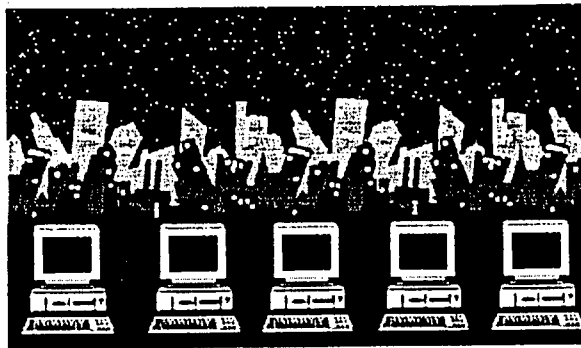
A Local Area Network (LAN) is a network that is confined to a relatively small area. It is generally limited to a geographic area such as a writing lab, school, or building. Rarely are LAN computers more than a mile apart.



In a typical LAN configuration, one computer is designated as the file server. It stores all of the software that controls the network, as well as the software that can be shared by the computers attached to the network. Computers connected to the file server are called workstations. The workstations can be less powerful than the file server, and they may have additional software on their hard drives. On most LANs, cables are used to connect the network interface cards in each computer. See the Topology, Cabling, and Hardware sections of this tutorial for more information on the configuration of a LAN.

Metropolitan Area Network

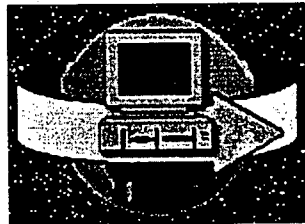
A Metropolitan Area Network (MAN) covers larger geographic areas, such as cities or school districts. By interconnecting smaller networks within a large geographic area, information is easily disseminated throughout the network. Local libraries and government agencies often use a MAN to connect to citizens and private industries.



One example of a MAN is the MIND Network located in Pasco County, Florida. It connects all of Pasco's media centers to a centralized mainframe at the district office by using dedicated phone lines, coaxial cabling, and wireless communications providers.

Wide Area Network

Wide Area Networks (WANs) connect larger geographic areas, such as Florida, the United States, or the world. Dedicated transoceanic cabling or satellite uplinks may be used to connect this type of network.



Using a WAN, schools in Florida can communicate with places like Tokyo in a matter of minutes, without paying enormous phone bills. A WAN is complicated. It uses multiplexers to connect local and metropolitan networks to global communications networks like the Internet. To users, however, a WAN will not appear to be much different than a LAN or a MAN.

Advantages of Installing a School Network

- **Speed.** Networks provide a very rapid method for sharing and transferring files. Without a network, files are shared by copying them to floppy disks, then carrying or sending the disks from one computer to another. This method of transferring files (referred to as sneaker-net) is very time-consuming.
- **Cost.** Networkable versions of many popular software programs are available at considerable savings when compared to buying individually licensed copies. Besides monetary savings, sharing a program on a network allows for easier upgrading of the program. The changes have to be done only once, on the file server, instead of on all the individual workstations.
- **Security.** Files and programs on a network can be designated as "copy inhibit," so that you do not have to worry about illegal copying of programs. Also, passwords can be established for specific directories to restrict access to authorized users.
- **Centralized Software Management.** One of the greatest benefits of installing a network at a school is the fact that all of the software can be loaded on one computer (the file server). This eliminates that need to spend time and energy installing updates and tracking files on independent computers.

throughout the building.

- **Resource Sharing.** Sharing resources is another area in which a network exceeds stand-alone computers. Most schools cannot afford enough laser printers, fax machines, modems, scanners, and CD-ROM players for each computer. However, if these or similar peripherals are added to a network, they can be shared by many users.
- **Electronic Mail.** The presence of a network provides the hardware necessary to install an e-mail system. E-mail aids in personal and professional communication for all school personnel, and it facilitates the dissemination of general information to the entire school staff. Electronic mail on a LAN can enable students to communicate with teachers and peers at their own school. If the LAN is connected to the Internet, students can communicate with others throughout the world.
- **Flexible Access.** School networks allow students to access their files from computers throughout the school. Students can begin an assignment in their classroom, save part of it on a public access area of the network, then go to the media center after school to finish their work. Students can also work cooperatively through the network.
- **Workgroup Computing.** Workgroup software (such as Lotus Notes) allows many users to work on a document or project concurrently. For example, educators located at various schools within a county could simultaneously contribute their ideas about new curriculum standards to the same document and spreadsheets.

Disadvantages of Installing a School Network

- **Expensive to Install.** Although a network will generally save money over time, the initial costs of installation can be prohibitive. Cables, network cards, and software are expensive, and the installation may require the services of a technician.
- **Requires Administrative Time.** Proper maintenance of a network requires considerable time and expertise. Many schools have installed a network, only to find that they did not budget for the necessary administrative support.
- **File Server May Fail.** Although a file server is no more susceptible to failure than any other computer, when the files server "goes down," the entire network may come to a halt. When this happens, the entire school may lose access to necessary programs and files.
- **Cables May Break.** The Topology section of this tutorial presents information about the various configurations of cables. Some of the configurations are designed to minimize the inconvenience of a broken cable; with other configurations, one broken cable can stop the entire network.



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[[Main](#) | [Overview](#) | [Protocol](#) | [Hardware](#) | [Cabling](#) | [Topology](#) | [Software](#)]
[[Game](#) | [Glossary](#) | [References](#) | [Credits](#)]

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PROTOCOL

A protocol is a set of rules that governs the communications between computers on a network. These rules include guidelines that regulate the following characteristics of a network: access method, allowed physical topologies, types of cabling, and speed of data transfer. See the Topology and Cabling sections of this tutorial for more information.

The most common protocols are:

- Ethernet
- LocalTalk
- Token Ring
- FDDI

Ethernet

The Ethernet protocol is by far the most widely used. Ethernet uses an access method called CSMA/CD (Carrier Sense Multiple Access/Collision Detection). This is a system where each computer listens to the cable before sending anything through the network. If the network is clear, the computer will transmit. If some other node is already transmitting on the cable, the computer will wait and try again when the line is clear. Sometimes, two computers attempt to transmit at the same instant. When this happens a collision occurs. Each computer then backs off and waits a random amount of time before attempting to retransmit. With this access method, it is normal to have collisions. However, the delay caused by collisions and retransmitting is very small and does not normally effect the speed of transmission on the network.

The Ethernet protocol allows for linear bus, star, or tree topologies. Data can be transmitted over twisted pair, coaxial, or fiber optic cable at a speed of 10 Mbps.

Fast Ethernet

To allow for an increased speed of transmission, the Ethernet protocol has developed a new standard that supports 100 Mbps. This is commonly called Fast Ethernet. Fast Ethernet requires the use of different, more expensive network concentrators/hubs and network interface cards. In addition, category 5 twisted pair or fiber optic cable is necessary.

LocalTalk

LocalTalk is a network protocol that was developed by Apple Computer, Inc. for Macintosh computers. The method used by LocalTalk is called CSMA/CA (Carrier Sense Multiple Access with Collision Avoidance). It is similar to CSMA/CD except that a computer signals its intent to transmit before it actually does so. LocalTalk adapters and special twisted pair cable can be used to connect a series of computers through the serial port. The Macintosh operating system allows the establishment of a peer-to-peer network without the need for additional software. With the addition of the server version of AppleShare software, a client/server network can be established.

The LocalTalk protocol allows for linear bus, star, or tree topologies using twisted pair cable. A primary disadvantage of LocalTalk is speed. Its speed of transmission is only 230 Kbps.

Token Ring

The Token Ring protocol was developed by IBM in the mid-1980s. The access method used involves token-passing. In Token Ring, the computers are connected so that the signal travels around the network from one computer to another in a logical ring. A single electronic token moves around the ring from one computer to the next. If a computer does not have information to transmit, it simply passes the token on to the next workstation. If a computer wishes to transmit and receives an empty token, it attaches data to the token. The token then proceeds around the ring until it comes to the computer for which the data is meant. At this point, the data is captured by the receiving computer. The Token Ring protocol requires a star-wired ring using twisted pair or fiber optic cable. It can operate at transmission speeds of 4 Mbps or 16 Mbps. Due to the increasing popularity of Ethernet, the use of Token Ring in school environments has decreased.

FDDI

Fiber Distributed Data Interface (FDDI) is a network protocol that is used primarily to interconnect two or more local area networks, often over large distances. The access method used by FDDI involves token-passing. FDDI uses a dual ring physical topology. Transmission normally occurs on one of the rings; however, if a break occurs, the system keeps information moving by automatically using portions of the second ring to create a new complete ring. A major advantage of FDDI is speed. It operates over fiber optic cable at 100 Mbps.

Protocol Summary

Protocol	Cable	Speed	Topology
Ethernet	Twisted Pair, Coaxial, Fiber	10 Mbps	Linear Bus, Star, Tree
Fast Ethernet	Twisted Pair, Fiber	100 Mbps	Star
LocalTalk	Twisted Pair	.23 Mbps	Linear Bus or Star
Token Ring	Twisted Pair	4 Mbps - 16 Mbps	Star-Wired Ring
FDDI	Fiber	100 Mbps	Dual ring



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[[Main](#) | [Overview](#) | [Protocol](#) | [Hardware](#) | [Cabling](#) | [Topology](#) | [Software](#)]
 [[Game](#) | [Glossary](#) | [References](#) | [Credits](#)]

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SOFTWARE

Network Operating Systems

Unlike operating systems, such as DOS and Windows95, that are designed for single users to control one computer, network operating systems (NOS) coordinate the activities of multiple computers across a network. The network operating system acts as a director to keep the network running smoothly.

The two major types of network operating systems are:

- Peer-to-Peer
- Client/Server

Peer-to-Peer

Peer-to-peer network operating systems allow users to share resources and files located on their computers and to access shared resources found on other computers. However, they do not have a file server or a centralized management source (See fig. 1). In a peer-to-peer network, all computers are considered equal; they all have the same abilities to use the resources available on the network. Peer-to-peer networks are designed primarily for small to medium local area networks. AppleShare and Windows for Workgroups are examples of programs that can function as peer-to-peer network operating systems.



Fig.1. Peer-to-peer network

Advantages of a peer-to-peer network:

- Less initial expense - No need for a dedicated server.
- Setup - An operating system (such as Windows 95) already in place may only need to be reconfigured for peer-to-peer operations.

Disadvantages of a peer-to-peer network:

- Decentralized - No central repository for files and applications.
- Security - Does not provide the security available on a client/server network.

Client/Server

Client/server network operating systems allow the network to centralize functions and applications in one or more dedicated file servers (See fig. 2). The file servers become the heart of the system, providing access to resources and providing security. Individual workstations (clients) have access to the resources available on the file servers. The network operating system provides the mechanism to integrate all the components of the network and allow multiple users to simultaneously share the same resources irrespective of physical location. Novell Netware and Windows NT Server are examples of client/server network operating systems.

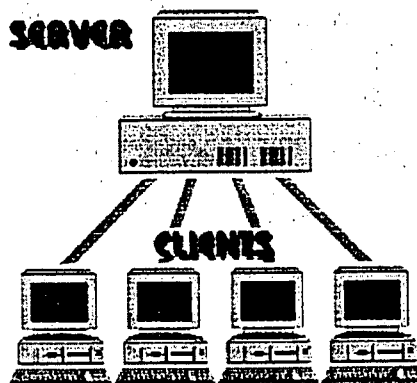


Fig.2. Client/server network

Advantages of a client/server network:

- Centralized - Resources and data security are controlled through the server.
- Scalability - Any or all elements can be replaced individually as needs increase.
- Flexibility - New technology can be easily integrated into system.
- Interoperability - All components (client/network/server) work together.
- Accessibility - Server can be accessed remotely and across multiple platforms.

Disadvantages of a client/server network:

- Expense - Requires initial investment in dedicated server.
- Maintenance - Large networks will require a staff to ensure efficient operation.
- Dependence - When server goes down, operations will cease across the network.

Examples of network operating systems

The following list includes some of the more popular peer-to-peer and client/server network operating systems.

- AppleShare
- LANtastic
- Microsoft Windows for Workgroups
- Microsoft Windows NT Server
- Novell Netware

... provide the security available on a client/server network.

Main Overview Protocol Hardware Cabling Topology Software

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HARDWARE

Networking hardware includes all computers, peripherals, interface cards and other equipment needed to perform data-processing and communications within the network.

This section provides information on the following components:

- File Servers
- Workstations
- Network Interface Cards
- Concentrators/Hubs
- Repeaters
- Bridges
- Routers

File Servers

A file server stands at the heart of most networks. It is a very fast computer with a large amount of RAM and storage space, along with a fast network interface card. The network operating system software resides on this computer, along with any software applications and data files that need to be shared.

The file server controls the communication of information between the nodes on a network. For example, it may be asked to send a word processor program to one workstation, receive a database file from another workstation, and store an e-mail message during the same time period. This requires a computer that can store a lot of information and share it very quickly. File servers should have at least the following characteristics:

- 75 megahertz or faster microprocessor (Pentium, PowerPC)
- A fast hard drive with at least four gigabytes of storage
- A RAID (Redundant Array of Inexpensive Disks) to preserve data after a disk casualty
- A tape back-up unit
- Numerous expansion slots
- Fast network interface card
- At least of 32 MB of RAM

Workstations

All of the computers connected to the file server on a network are called workstations. A typical workstation is a computer that is configured with a network interface card, networking software, and the appropriate cables. Workstations do not necessarily need floppy disk drives or hard drives because files can be saved on the file server. Almost any computer can serve as a network workstation.

Network Interface Cards

The network interface card (NIC) provides the physical connection between the network and the computer workstation. Most NICs are internal, with the card fitting into an expansion slot inside the computer. Some

computers, such as Mac Classics, use external boxes which are attached to a serial port or a SCSI port. Laptop computers generally use external LAN adapters connected to the parallel port or network cards that slip into a PCMCIA slot.

Network interface cards are a major factor in determining the speed and performance of a network. It is a good idea to use the fastest network card available for the type of workstation you are using.

The three most common network interface connections are Ethernet cards, LocalTalk connectors, and Token Ring cards. According to a International Data Corporation study, Ethernet is the most popular, followed by Token Ring and LocalTalk (Sant'Angelo, R. (1995). *NetWare Unleashed*, Indianapolis, IN: Sams Publishing).

Ethernet Cards

Ethernet cards are usually purchased separately from a computer, although many computers (such as the Macintosh) now include an option for a pre-installed Ethernet card. Ethernet cards contain connections for either coaxial or twisted pair cables (or both) (See fig. 1). If it is designed for coaxial cable, the connection will be BNC. If it is designed for twisted pair, it will have a RJ-45 connection. Some Ethernet cards also contain an AUI connector. This can be used to attach coaxial, twisted pair, or fiber optics cable to an Ethernet card. When this method is used there is always an external transceiver attached to the workstation. (See the Cabling section for more information on connectors.)

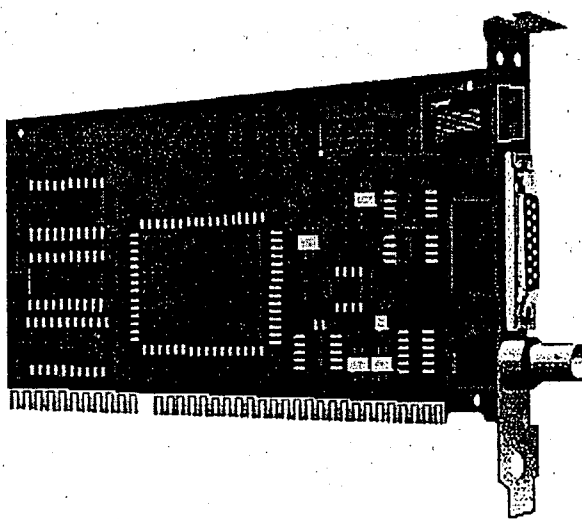


Fig. 1. Ethernet card.
From top to bottom:
RJ-45, AUI, and BNC connectors

LocalTalk Connectors

LocalTalk is Apple's built-in solution for networking Macintosh computers. It utilizes a special adapter box and a cable that plugs into the printer port of a Macintosh (See fig. 2). A major disadvantage of LocalTalk is that it is slow in comparison to Ethernet. Most Ethernet connections operate at 10 Mbps (Megabits per second). In contrast, LocalTalk operates at only 230 Kbps (or .23 Mbps).

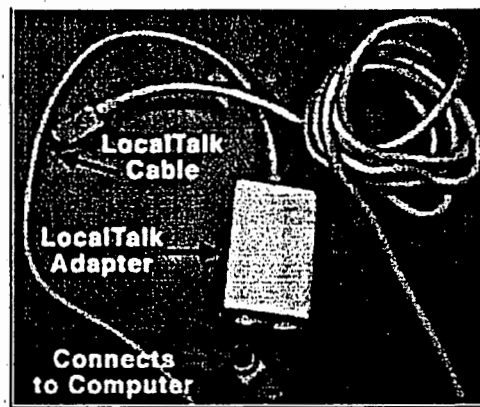


Fig.2. LocalTalk connectors

Ethernet Cards vs. LocalTalk Connections	
Ethernet	LocalTalk
Fast data transfer (10 Mbps)	Slow data transfer (.23 Mbps)
Expensive - purchased separately	Built into Macintosh computers
Requires computer slot	No computer slot necessary
Available for most computers	Works only on Macintosh computers

Token Ring Cards

Token Ring network cards look similar to Ethernet cards. One visible difference is the type of connector on the back end of the card. Token Ring cards generally have a nine pin DIN type connector to attach the card to the network cable.

Concentrators/Hubs

A concentrator is a device that provides a central connection point for cables from workstations, servers, and peripherals. In a star topology, twisted-pair wire is run from each workstation to a central concentrator. Hubs are multislot concentrators into which can be plugged a number of multi-port cards to provide additional access as the network grows in size. Some concentrators are passive, that is they allow the signal to pass from one computer to another without any change. Most concentrators are active, that is they electrically amplify the signal as it moves from one device to another. Active concentrators are used like repeaters to extend the length of a network. Concentrators are:

- Usually configured with 8, 12, or 24 RJ-45 ports
- Often used in a star or star-wired ring topology
- Sold with specialized software for port management
- Also called hubs
- Usually installed in a standardized metal rack that also may store netmodems, bridges, or routers

Repeaters

When a signal travels along a cable, it tends to lose strength. A repeater is a device that boosts a network's signal as it passes through. The repeater does this by electrically amplifying the signal it receives and rebroadcasting it. Repeaters can be separate devices or they can be incorporated into a concentrator. They

are used when the total length of your network cable exceeds the standards set for the type of cable being used.

A good example of the use of repeaters would be in a local area network using a star topology with unshielded twisted-pair cabling. The length limit for unshielded twisted-pair cable is 100 meters. The most common configuration is for each workstation to be connected by twisted-pair cable to a multi-port active concentrator. The concentrator regenerates all the signals that pass through it allowing for the total length of cable on the network to exceed the 100 meter limit.

Bridges

A bridge is a device that allows you to segment a large network into two smaller, more efficient networks. If you are adding to an older wiring scheme and want the new network to be up-to-date, a bridge can connect the two.

A bridge monitors the information traffic on both sides of the network so that it can pass packets of information to the correct location. Most bridges can "listen" to the network and automatically figure out the address of each computer on both sides of the bridge. The bridge can inspect each message and, if necessary, broadcast it on the other side of the network.

The bridge manages the traffic to maintain optimum performance on both sides of the network. You might say that the bridge is like a traffic cop at a busy intersection during rush hour. It keeps information flowing on both sides of the network, but it does not allow unnecessary traffic through. Bridges can be used to connect different types of cabling, or physical topologies. They must, however, be used between networks with the same protocol.

Routers

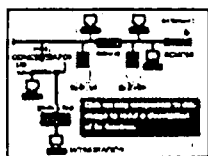
A router translates information from one network to another; it is similar to a superintelligent bridge. Routers select the best path to route a message, based on the destination address and origin. The router can direct traffic to prevent head-on collisions, and is smart enough to know when to direct traffic along back roads and shortcuts.

While bridges know the addresses of all computers on each side of the network, routers know the addresses of computers, bridges, and other routers on the network. Routers can even "listen" to the entire network to determine which sections are busiest -- they can then redirect data around those sections until they clear up.

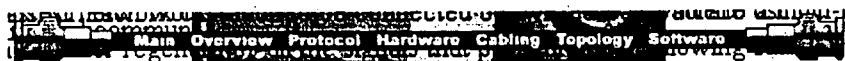
If you have a school LAN that you want to connect to the Internet, you will need to purchase a router. In this case, the router serves as the translator between the information on your LAN and the Internet. It also determines the best route to send the data over the Internet. Routers can:

- Direct signal traffic efficiently
- Route messages between any two protocols
- Route messages between linear bus, star, and star-wired ring topologies
- Route messages across fiber optic, coaxial, and twisted-pair cabling

Summary



Click on the thumbnail picture for a review of the hardware components of a network.



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[[Main](#) | [Overview](#) | [Protocol](#) | [Hardware](#) | [Cabling](#) | [Topology](#) | [Software](#)]
[[Game](#) | [Glossary](#) | [References](#) | [Credits](#)]

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CABLING

Cable is the medium through which information usually moves from one network device to another. There are several types of cable which are commonly used with LANs. In some cases, a network will utilize only one type of cable, other networks will use a variety of cable types. The type of cable chosen for a network is related to the network's topology, protocol, and size. Understanding the characteristics of different types of cable and how they relate to other aspects of a network is necessary for the development of a successful network.

The following sections discuss the types of cables used in networks and other related topics.

- Unshielded Twisted Pair (UTP) Cable
- Shielded Twisted Pair (STP) Cable
- Coaxial Cable
- Fiber Optic Cable
- Wireless LANs
- Installing Cable - Some Guidelines

Unshielded Twisted Pair (UTP) Cable

Twisted pair cabling comes in two varieties: shielded and unshielded. Unshielded twisted pair (UTP) is the most popular and is generally the best option for school networks (See fig. 1).

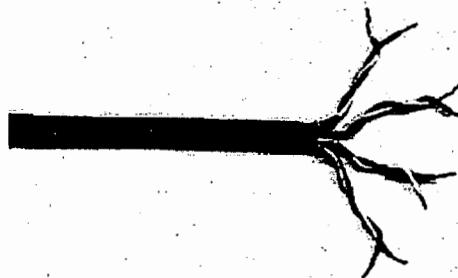


Fig.1. Unshielded twisted pair

The quality of UTP may vary from telephone-grade wire to extremely high-speed cable. The cable has four pairs of wires inside the jacket. Each pair is twisted with a different number of twists per inch to help eliminate interference from adjacent pairs and other electrical devices. The EIA/TIA (Electronic Industry Association/Telecommunication Industry Association) has established standards of UTP and rated five categories of wire.

Categories of Unshielded Twisted Pair

Type	Use
Category 1	Voice Only (Telephone Wire)
Category 2	Data to 4 Mbps (LocalTalk)
Category 3	Data to 10 Mbps (Ethernet)
Category 4	Data to 20 Mbps (16 Mbps Token Ring)
Category 5	Data to 100 Mbps (Fast Ethernet)

One difference between the different categories of UTP is the tightness of the twisting of the copper pairs. The tighter the twisting, the higher the supported transmission rate and the greater the cost per foot. Buy the best cable you can afford; most schools purchase Category 3 or Category 5. Category 5 cable is highly recommended.

If you are designing a 10 Mbps Ethernet network and are considering the cost savings of buying Category 3 wire instead of Category 5, remember that the Category 5 cable will provide more "room to grow" as transmission technologies increase. Both category 3 and category 5 UTP have a maximum segment length of 100 meters. In Florida, Category 5 cable is required for retrofit grants. 10BaseT refers to the specifications for unshielded twisted pair cable (category 3, 4, or 5) carrying Ethernet signals.

Unshielded Twisted Pair Connector

The standard connector for unshielded twisted pair cabling is an RJ-45 connector. This is a plastic connector that looks like a large telephone-style connector (See fig. 2). A slot allows the RJ-45 to be inserted only one way. RJ stands for Registered Jack, implying that the connector follows a standard borrowed from the telephone industry. This standard designates which wire goes with each pin inside the connector.

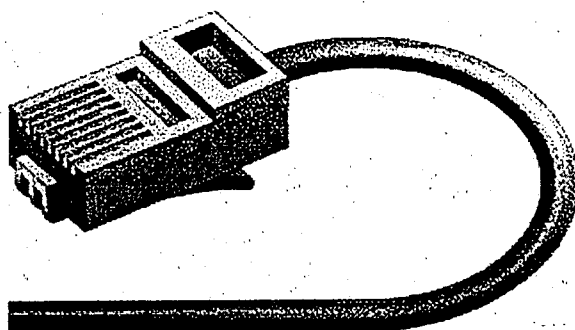


Fig.2. RJ-45 connector

Shielded Twisted Pair (STP) Cable

A disadvantage of UTP is that it may be susceptible to radio and electrical frequency interference. Shielded twisted pair (STP) is suitable for environments with electrical interference; however, the extra shielding can make the cables quite bulky. Shielded twisted pair is often used on networks using Token Ring topology.

Coaxial Cable

Coaxial cabling has a single copper conductor at its center. A plastic layer provides insulation between the center conductor and a braided metal shield (See fig. 3). The metal shield helps to block any outside interference from fluorescent lights, motors, and other computers.

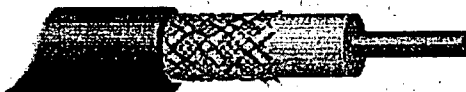


Fig.3. Coaxial cable

Although coaxial cabling is difficult to install, it is highly resistant to signal interference. In addition, it can

support greater cable lengths between network devices than twisted pair cable. The two types of coaxial cabling are: thick coaxial and thin coaxial.

Thin coaxial cable is also referred to as thinnet. 10Base2 refers to the specifications for thin coaxial cable carrying Ethernet signals. The 2 refers to the approximate maximum segment length being 200 meters. In actual fact the maximum segment length is 185 meters. Thin coaxial cable is popular in school networks, especially linear bus networks.

Thick coaxial cable is also referred to as thicknet. 10Base5 refers to the specifications for thick coaxial cable carrying Ethernet signals. The 5 refers to the maximum segment length being 500 meters. Thick coaxial cable has an extra protective plastic cover that helps keep moisture away from the center conductor. This makes thick coaxial a great choice when running longer lengths in a linear bus network. One disadvantage of thick coaxial is that it does not bend easily and is difficult to install.

Coaxial Cable Connectors

The most common type of connector used with coaxial cables is the Bayonet-Neill-Concelman (BNC) connector (See fig. 4). Different types of adapters are available for BNC connectors, including a T-connector, barrel connector, and terminator. Connectors on the cable are the weakest points in any network. To help avoid problems with your network, always use the BNC connectors that crimp, rather than screw, onto the cable.

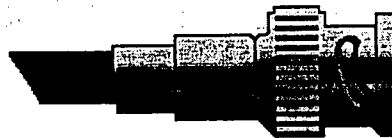


Fig.4. BNC connector

Fiber Optic Cable

Fiber optic cabling consists of a center glass core surrounded by several layers of protective materials (See fig. 5). It transmits light rather than electronic signals, eliminating the problem of electrical interference. This makes it ideal for certain environments that contain a large amount of electrical interference. It has also made it the standard for connecting networks between buildings, due to its immunity to the effects of moisture and lighting.

Fiber optic cable has the ability to transmit signals over much longer distances than coaxial and twisted pair. It also has the capability to carry information at vastly greater speeds. This capacity broadens communication possibilities to include services such as video conferencing and interactive services. The cost of fiber optic cabling is comparable to copper cabling; however, it is more difficult to install and modify. 10BaseF refers to the specifications for fiber optic cable carrying Ethernet signals.



Fig.5. Fiber optic cable

Facts about fiber optic cables:

- Outer insulating jacket is made of Teflon or PVC.

- Kevlar fiber helps to strengthen the cable and prevent breakage.
- A plastic coating is used to cushion the fiber center.
- Center (core) is made of glass or plastic fibers.

Fiber Optic Connector

The most common connector used with fiber optic cable is an ST connector. It is barrel shaped, similar to a BNC connector. A newer connector, the SC, is becoming more popular. It has a squared face and is easier to connect in a confined space.

Ethernet Cable Summary

Specification	Cable Type	Maximum length
10BaseT	Unshielded Twisted Pair	100 meters
10Base2	Thin Coaxial	185 meters
10Base5	Thick Coaxial	500 meters
10BaseF	Fiber Optic	2000 meters

Wireless LANs

Not all networks are connected with cabling; some networks are wireless. Wireless LANs use high frequency radio signals or infrared light beams to communicate between the workstations and the file server. Each workstation and file server on a wireless network has some sort of transceiver/antenna to send and receive the data. Information is relayed between transceivers as if they were physically connected. For longer distance, wireless communications can also take place through cellular telephone technology or by satellite.

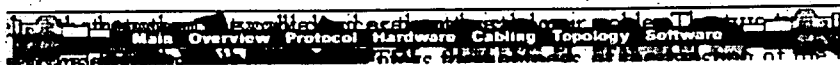
Wireless networks are great for allowing laptop computers or remote computers to connect to the LAN. Wireless networks are also beneficial in older buildings where it may be difficult or impossible to install cables.

Wireless LANs also have some disadvantages. They are very expensive, provide poor security, and are susceptible to electrical interference from lights and radios. They are also slower than LANs using cabling.

Installing Cable - Some Guidelines

When running cable, it is best to follow a few simple rules:

- Always use more cable than you need. Leave plenty of slack.
- Test every part of a network as you install it. Even if it is brand new, it may have problems that will be difficult to isolate later.
- Stay at least 3 feet away from fluorescent light boxes and other sources of electrical interference.
- If it is necessary to run cable across the floor, cover the cable with cable protectors.
- Label both ends of each cable.
- Use cable ties (not tape) to keep cables in the same location together.



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TOPOLOGY

There are two types of topology: physical and logical. The physical topology of a network refers to the configuration of cables, computers, and other peripherals. Logical topology is the method used to pass the information between workstations. Issues involving logical topologies are discussed in the section on [protocols](#).

Main Types of Physical Topologies

The following sections discuss the physical topologies used in networks and other related topics.

- [Linear Bus](#)
 - [Star](#)
 - [Star-Wired Ring](#)
 - [Tree](#)
 - [Considerations When Choosing a Topology](#)
 - [Summary Chart](#)
-

Linear Bus

A linear bus topology consists of a main run of cable with a terminator at each end (See fig. 1). All nodes (file server, workstations, and peripherals) are connected to the linear cable. Ethernet and LocalTalk networks use a linear bus topology.

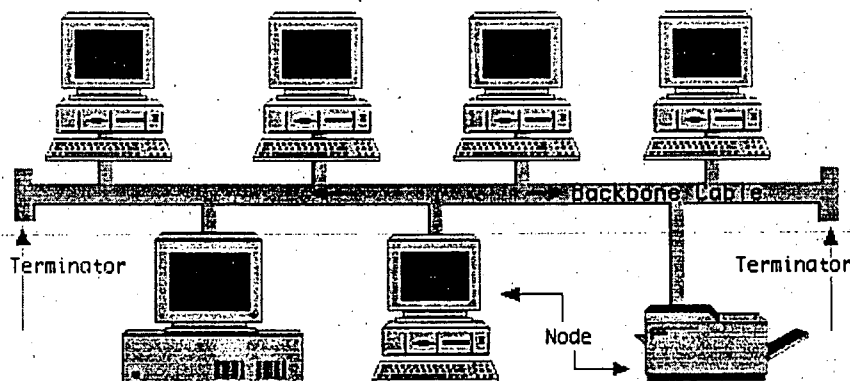


Fig. 1. Linear Bus topology

Advantages of a Linear Bus Topology

- Easy to connect a computer or peripheral to a linear bus.
- Requires less cable length than a star topology.

Disadvantages of a Linear Bus Topology

- Entire network shuts down if there is a break in the main cable.
- Terminators are required at both ends of the backbone cable.
- Difficult to identify the problem if the entire network shuts down.
- Not meant to be used as a stand-alone solution in a large building.

Star

A star topology is designed with each node (file server, workstations, and peripherals) connected directly to a central network hub or concentrator (See fig. 2).

Data on a star network passes through the hub or concentrator before continuing to its destination. The hub or concentrator manages and controls all functions of the network. It also acts as a repeater for the data flow. This configuration is common with twisted pair cable; however, it can also be used with coaxial cable or fiber optic cable.

The protocols used with star configurations are usually Ethernet or LocalTalk. Token Ring uses a similar topology, called the star-wired ring.

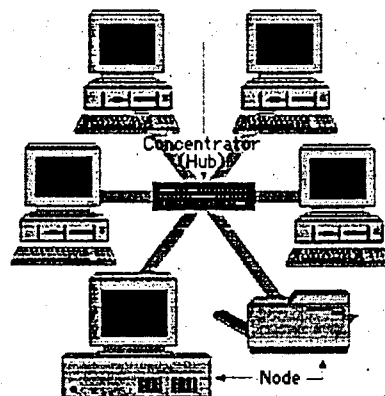


Fig.2. Star topology

Advantages of a Star Topology

- Easy to install and wire.
- No disruptions to the network when connecting or removing devices.
- Easy to detect faults and to remove parts.

Disadvantages of a Star Topology

- Requires more cable length than a linear topology.
- If the hub or concentrator fails, nodes attached are disabled.
- More expensive than linear bus topologies because of the cost of the concentrators.

Star-Wired Ring

A star-wired ring topology may appear (externally) to be the same as a star topology. Internally, the MAU (multistation access unit) of a star-wired ring contains wiring that allows information to pass from one device to another in a circle or ring (See fig. 3). The Token Ring protocol uses a star-wired ring topology.

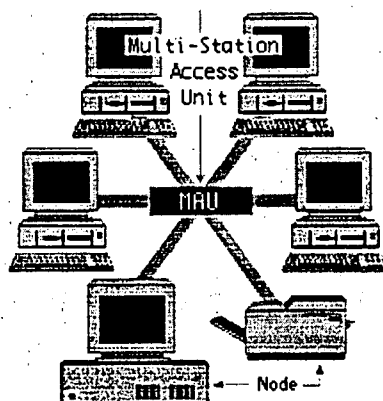


Fig.3. Star-wired ring topology

Tree

A tree topology combines characteristics of linear bus and star topologies. It consists of groups of star-configured workstations connected to a linear bus backbone cable (See fig. 4). Tree topologies allow for the expansion of an existing network, and enable schools to configure a network to meet their needs.

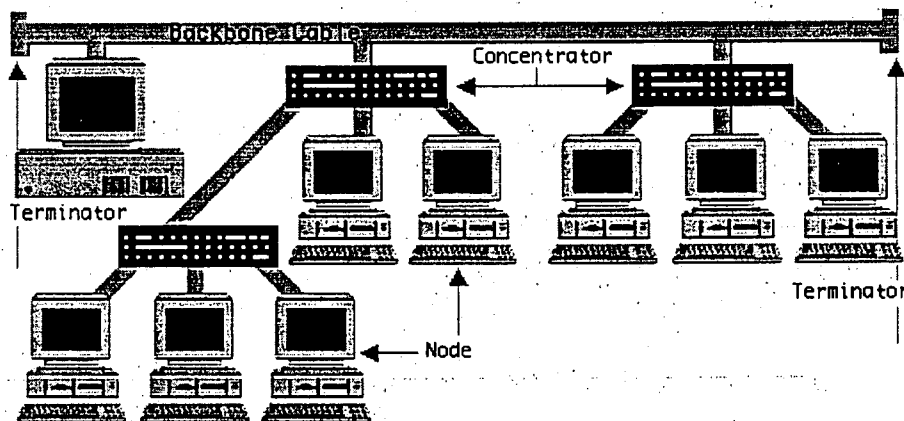


Fig.4. Tree topology

Advantages of a Tree Topology

- Point-to-point wiring for individual segments.
- Supported by several hardware and software vendors.

Disadvantages of a Tree Topology

- Overall length of each segment is limited by the type of cabling used.
- If the backbone line breaks, the entire segment goes down.
- More difficult to configure and wire than other topologies.

5-4-3 Rule

A consideration in setting up a tree topology using Ethernet protocol is the 5-4-3 rule. One aspect of the Ethernet protocol requires that a signal sent out on the network cable reach every part of the network within a specified length of time. Each concentrator or repeater that a signal goes through adds a small amount of time. This leads to the rule that between any two nodes on the network there can only be a maximum of 5 segments, connected through 4 repeaters/concentrators. In addition, only 3 of the segments may be populated (trunk) segments if they are made of coaxial cable. A populated segment is one which has one or more nodes attached to it. In Figure 4, the 5-4-3 rule is adhered to. The furthest two nodes on the network have 4 segments and 3 repeaters/concentrators between them.

This rule does not apply to other network protocols or Ethernet networks where all fiber optic cabling is used.

Considerations When Choosing a Topology:

- **Money.** A linear bus network may be the least expensive way to install a network; you do not have to purchase concentrators.
- **Length of cable needed.** The linear bus network uses shorter lengths of cable.
- **Future growth.** With a star topology, expanding a network is easily done by adding another concentrator.
- **Cable type.** The most common cable in schools is unshielded twisted pair, which is most often used with star topologies.

Summary Chart:

Physical Topology	Common Cable	Common Protocol
Linear Bus	Coax Twisted Pair Fiber	Ethernet LocalTalk
Star	Twisted Pair Fiber	Ethernet LocalTalk
Star-Wired Ring	Twisted Pair	Token Ring
Tree	Coax Twisted Pair Fiber	Ethernet

linear bus topologies because of the cost of the concentrators.
 Main Overview Protocol Hardware Cabling Topology Software
 An Educator's Guide to School Networks (<http://fcit.coedu.usf.edu/network/>)

[[Main](#) | [Overview](#) | [Protocol](#) | [Hardware](#) | [Cabling](#) | [Topology](#) | [Software](#)]
 [[Game](#) | [Glossary](#) | [References](#) | [Credits](#)]

Charter School Legal and Financial Issues

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Introduction

Charter schools are public schools authorized by state law. A common attribute of charter schools is their exemption from many state and local laws, regulations and policies. The degree to which they are free from state regulation varies from state to state, but most charter schools remain subject to state laws relating to health, safety and civil rights. A charter schools also must comply with federal laws and its regulations to the same extent that any other public school must comply. Charter schools currently receive no exemption from federal laws based on their status as a charter school.

This outline lists many legal and financial issues that charter school officials are likely to encounter as they begin to operate their schools. The federal laws cited in the outline are briefly described at the end of the document, and information about them and their implementing regulations can be obtained by contacting the agencies at the telephone numbers provided. The issues and laws outlined will not apply to all charter schools. Charter schools also may face some important legal and business issues that are not listed. *Charter schools should retain an attorney and accountant experienced with school law and finance to help guide them through the process of starting a charter school in the state in which they are located.*

Outline

I. The Charter

1. A contractual agreement between a school operator and government agency.
2. An instrument through which regulatory obligations are assumed by a school operator.
3. A permit to operate a school and receive government funding.

II. Starting a Business

1. Lawyer/accountant
2. Three-year business plan
3. Business entity formation
4. Facility/equipment acquisition.
5. Start-up financing
6. Trade Name registration

III. Financial Matters

1. Tax identification numbers
2. Fiscal agent
3. Payroll and accounting systems
4. Insurance coverage
5. Bank accounts
6. Procurement procedures
7. Expense reimbursement procedures
8. Budgeting and financial reporting

IV. Governance

1. Governing board size, composition, and selection
2. Responsibilities of chief executive officer/governing board
3. Rules of procedure
4. Open meeting laws
5. Conflicts of interest

V. Employment Matters

1. Recruitment and hiring procedures
 - A. Anti-discrimination laws

- 1) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Prohibits employers with 15 or more employees from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities with regard to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, advancement, termination, job assignment, fringe benefits, training and social events. ADA may apply concurrently with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), which prohibits employers who are federal funding recipients from discriminating against persons on the basis of disability.

- a) Definition of disabled individual

- i) Physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the individual
 - ii) Record of such impairment
 - iii) Regarded as impaired

- iv) Exclusions: compulsive gambling, kleptomania, pyromania, sexual behavior not resulting from physical impairments, homosexuality and bisexuality
- b) A qualified individual is one who can perform the essential functions of a job, with or without reasonable accommodation and satisfies the requisite skill, education and experience and other job-related requirements.
 - i) A job function is essential if the employer actually requires employees in the position to perform it, and removing the function would fundamentally alter it. Factors:
 - Whether the position exists to perform the function
 - The number of employees available to perform the function
 - The degree of expertise or skill required.
 - ii) Reasonable accommodation
 - Making existing facilities used by employees accessible to and usable by disabled employees
 - Job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment
 - Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, adjustment or modification of examinations or training materials, the provision of qualified readers or interpreters.
 - iii) Undue hardship means an action requiring significant difficulty or expense. Factors:
 - The nature and cost of the needed action
 - The overall financial resources of the facility and business as a whole, including the number of employees and the effect on expenses and operation of the facility
 - The relation of the facility to the business as whole

2) Title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII)

Forbids employers who have 15 or more employees to discriminate against individuals in all areas of the employment relationship if the action is based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

3) Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)

Prohibits employers who employ 20 or more employees for 20 calendar weeks per year from discriminating on the basis of age in the hiring, termination, benefits, or other terms and conditions of employment of individuals over 40 years of age.

B. Job requirements

1) Immigration Reform and Control Act

- a) I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification Form
- b) Records maintenance

2) Licenses

- a) Teacher/administrator certification
- b) Special education endorsement
- c) Commercial drivers license

3) State anti-nepotism laws

C. Advertisements, applications and interviews

1) Areas to avoid

- a) Marital and family status
- b) Non job-related personal history
- c) Associational activities
- d) Existence, nature or severity of disability

2) Permissible areas

- a) Position desired
- b) Prior applications
- c) Education
- d) Work experiences
- e) Professional references
- f) Convictions for serious offenses

D. Background investigations

1) Criminal history checks

- a) Convictions and arrests without disposition
- b) Confidentiality of criminal history reports

2) Background check procedures

2. Employment Status

A. At-will employment

- 1) Employment for an unstated or indefinite period of time
- 2) Employment relationship terminable with or without cause, subject to exceptions:
 - a) Statutory limitations: Title VII, ADEA, ADA and "whistle blower protections in FLSA, OSHA, etc.
 - b) Public policy: refusal to participate in illegal activity

B. Term employment

- 1) Employment for a stated period of time
- 2) "Cause" requirement for termination
- 3) Property interest in employment
- 4) Tenure

C. Independent contractor

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1) Instructions | 2) Training |
| 3) Integration | 4) Services rendered personally |
| 5) Hiring assistants | 6) Continuing relationship |
| 7) Set hours of work | 8) Full time required |
| 9) Working on employer's premises | 10) Order or sequence set |
| 11) Regular reports | 12) Payment method |
| 13) Expense reimbursed | 14) Furnishing tools or materials |
| 15) Significant investment | 16) Realization of profit or loss |
| 17) Working for more than one firm at a time | |
| 18) Making service available to general public | |
| 19) Right to terminate | |

3. Compensation

A. Equal Pay Act

Prohibits employers employing two or more employees engaged in interstate commerce from paying different wages to employees of the opposite sex for equal work on jobs the performance of which requires equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions

B. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

- 1) Minimum wage
- 2) Overtime
 - a) Time-off
 - i) Public employees only
 - ii) Mutual agreement before work performed
 - iii) 240 hour limit
 - iv) Convert to cash on severance
 - b) Cash
- 3) Exemptions
 - a) Exempt employees
 - i) Salaried administrators
 - ii) Teachers
 - b) Exempt work
 - i) Occasional or sporadic part-time work
 - ii) Volunteer work during off-duty hours

C. Salary schedules

D. Employee benefits

- 1) Pension plan
- 2) Health insurance
- 3) Life insurance
- 4) Worker's Compensation
- 5) Unemployment Insurance

4. Leaves of absence

A. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

- 1) Applicability: 50 or more full or part-time employees within a 75 mile radius every workday for 20 workweeks per year
- 2) Eligible employees
 - a) 12 months employment prior to leave
 - b) 1250 hours of work during previous 12 months
- 3) Scope of Coverage
 - a) Four leave situations

- i) Birth/first year of child care
- ii) Adoption or foster placement
- iii) Serious health condition of spouse, child or parent
- iv) Personal serious health condition
- b) 12 week leave period
- c) Medical insurance coverage
- d) Restoration of employment and benefits

B. Pregnancy Discrimination Act

Requires school to provide insurance coverage for pregnancy related conditions to the same extent as is provide for other health conditions.

C. Military Selective Service Act

Requires school to restore veterans to positions of like seniority, status and pay upon completion of military service, if veteran applies for reinstatement within 90 days after discharge.

D. Juror Protection Act

Prohibits employers from discharging, intimidating or coercing any employee as a result of the employee's service on any jury.

E. Vacation/sick leave policies

5. Employee Discipline

A. Employee code of conduct

B. Disciplinary procedures

- 1) Notice and hearing rights
- 2) Employee handbooks

6. Severance of employment

A. Section 1983 of Civil Rights Act of 1871

- 1) Prohibits employers, acting "under color of" state authority, from depriving persons of "any rights, privileges or immunities secured by the constitution and laws"
- 2) "State action" requirement
- 3) Claims of entitlement to continued employment and procedural due process prior to dismissal

B. Due process requirements

- 1) Notice of charges with sufficient specificity to respond
- 2) Notice of time and place of hearing

- 3) Notice of persons who made allegations and nature of testimony
- 4) Hearing before an impartial hearing officer
- 5) Opportunity to be represented by counsel
- 6) Opportunity to present employee's side of story through testimony of employee or others
- 7) Opportunity to confront and cross-examine witnesses.
- 8) Written decision state reasons for the decision

C. Tenure laws

- 1) Statutory evaluation and remediation procedures
- 2) Statutory notice and hearing procedures

D. Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)

Mandatory offer of right to continue group health plan coverage following death of employee, termination of employment, reduction in hours, divorce or legal separation.

D. State reduction-in-force laws

E. Release of claims

- 1) Mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse/immoral conduct
- 2) Settlement agreements

7. Impact of collective bargaining laws and agreements

VI. Student Matters

1. Admission procedures

A. State/district residency requirements

B. Immunization records

C. Selection procedures

D. Placement Evaluations

E. Anti-discrimination laws

- 1) Disability (IDEA and Sec. 504)
- 2) Race, national origin, religion and sex (Title VII)
- 3) Sex (Title IX)
- 4) English-speaking ability (Title VI)

F. Parent-student contracts

2. Conduct

A. Code of conduct

- 1) Behavior
- 2) Dress/grooming
- 3) Internet

B. Student/parent handbook

C. Discipline/due process procedures

3. Fees

A. State regulation of extracurricular and other mandatory fees

B. Before and after school fee-based programs

C. Mandatory contribution of materials as a type of "fee"

D. Means testing

VII. Students with Special Needs/Legal Rights

1. Students with disabilities

A. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

1) The special education process

- a) Identification/referral
- b) Referral decision
- c) Initial evaluation and MET eligibility determination
- d) IEP development
- e) Service level determination
- f) Initial placement
- g) IEP implementation
- h) Review/Annual IEP and MET eligibility re-determination
- i) Program termination

2) Change of placement

- a) Short term action
- b) Long term action
- c) 45 day placement for gun/drug violations

3) Related Services

- a) Transportation

b) Medical

B. Section 504 accommodations

2. Limited English Proficient (LEP) students

A. Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964

B. Bilingual Education Act

VIII. School Records

1. Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act (FERPA)

A. Applicability of FERPA

1) Federal funding

2) "Education record" definition

B. Parent/student rights

1) Notice

2) Access

3) Amendment

4) Confidentiality

5) Right to complain

C. Nonconsensual disclosures

1) Health/safety emergency

2) Directory information

3) Subpoenas

4) Other school officials

5) Other schools, colleges and universities

6) Federal, state and local authorities

2. Public record requests

A. Statutory protections

B. Privacy rights of employee

3. Record retention regulations and procedures

A. State requirements for school records

B. Record maintenance required: Title VII, ADEA, FLSA, ADA, Rehabilitation Act, Immigration Control Act, FMLA, Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act, ADA

IX. Curriculum and Instruction Matters

1. State curriculum standards
2. State instructional days/hours standards
3. State/federal prohibitions against religious instruction
4. Copyright infringement
5. State assessment requirements
6. Promotion and graduation standards
7. Credit transfers to and from high school and post-high school institutions.

X. Facilities

1. State standards for K-12 facilities
2. Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 standards
3. Environmental Audit
 - A. Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)
 - B. Comprehensive Environmental, Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)
4. OSHA and accident prevention standards

XI. Transportation

1. Bus and other vehicle regulations
2. Commercial/bus drivers license
3. Transportation employee drug/alcohol testing
4. Assumption of duty at cross-walks

Federal Laws Affecting Charter Schools

Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) generally prohibits employers from discriminating on the basis of age in the hiring, termination, benefits, or other terms and conditions of employment of individuals over 40 years of age. This act applies to public schools and employers who employ 20 or more employees. 29 U.S.C. §§621-634. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (202) 663-4900.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination by an employer who employs 15 or more workers against a qualified individual with a disability. 42 U.S.C. §12101-12213 (1991). Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (202) 663-4900 or Office of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice (202) 514-0301.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires schools to inspect for asbestos and develop a plan for removal of asbestos that is friable. 15 U.S.C. §2641 *et. seq.* Environmental Protection Agency.

Bilingual Education Act prohibits federally assisted education programs from excluding a student on the basis of a surname or language minority status. 20 U.S.C. §7401 *et. seq.* U.S. Department of Education (202) 205-5576.

Comprehensive Environmental, Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) *et seq.* may impose liability upon an owner of land that is the site of a release or threatened release of a toxic substance. 42 U.S.C. §9601 *et seq.* Environmental Protection Agency.

Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA) requires employers to offer employees and their dependents the right to continue group health plan coverage following termination of employment or following certain other circumstances which would otherwise terminate coverage. 29 U.S.C. §1161-1167

Equal Pay Act prohibits employers from paying wages to employees of one sex at rates of pay less than the rates they pay employees of the opposite sex for work requiring equal skill, effort, and responsibility, and which is performed under similar working conditions. 29 U.S.C. §206(d). Wage and Hour Administrator of the U.S. Department of Labor (202) 219-8305. (Request referral to regional office.)

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, equal pay, record keeping, and child labor standards for employees who are within the coverage of the FLSA and who are not exempt from specific provisions. 29 U.S.C. §201 *et seq.* (1988). Wage and Hour Administrator of the U.S. Department of Labor (202) 219-8305. (Request referral to regional office.)

Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act (FERPA) confers upon students (and their parents) rights of notice, access, amendment and confidentiality with regard to their educational records maintained by a school that received federal financial assistance. 20 U.S.C. §1232g. Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education (202) 260-3887.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires employers with 50 or more workers in a 75-mile radius to provide eligible employees up to 12 work weeks of leave in a 12 month period when the leave is requested for (1) birth, adoption or foster care placement, (2) care for a sick spouse or parent, or (3) a personal serious health condition. 29 U.S.C. §2611 *et. seq.* (1993). Wage & Hour Administrator of the U.S. Department of Labor (202) 219-8305. (Request referral to regional Wage & Hour office.)

Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 creates civil and criminal sanctions for employers who fail to properly verify the employment eligibility of all workers hired after November 6, 1986. 8 U.S.C. §§1324a and 1324b (1988). Information: contact local Immigration & Naturalization Service. (Request information regarding Form I-9.)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires schools receiving federal financial assistance to provide a free and appropriate education to children with disabilities. 20 U.S.C. §1400, *et. seq.* Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education (202) 205-9056.

Juror Protection Act prohibits discharge, threats to discharge, intimidation, or coercion of any permanent employee by reason of that employee's jury service in any court of the United States. 28 U.S.C. §1875.

Military Selective Service Act of 1974 requires employers to restore veterans to positions of like seniority, status and pay upon completion of military service and application to return to work within 90 days of discharge. 38 U.S.C. §§2021-2026.

Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 requires to conduct pre-employment/pre-duty, reasonable suspicion, random and post-accident alcohol and controlled substances testing of each applicant for employment or employee who is required to obtain a commercial driver's license. 49 U.S.C. §2717. Department of Transportation Office of Drug Enforcement and Program Compliance (202) 366-3784.

Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1970 regulates health and safety in the workplace, including handling and disposal of materials that may contain blood-borne pathogens. 29 U.S.C. §651 *et. seq.* (1993). Occupational Health and Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Labor (202) 219-8667.

Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 prohibits termination or refusal to hire or promote because of pregnancy, individual inability to work, protects reinstatement rights following pregnancy leave, and requires employers to treat pregnancy and childbirth as they do other causes of disability under fringe benefit plans. 42 U.S.C. §2000.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) prohibits recipients of federal funds from discriminating against an individual on the basis of disability. 29 U.S.C. §§700 *et. seq.* (1994). Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education (202) 205-9056.

Section 1983 of Civil Rights Act of 1871 (Section 1983) prohibits employers, acting "under color of" state authority, from depriving persons of "any rights, privileges or immunities secured by the constitution and laws" of the United States.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 (1974) and U.S. Court of Appeals (5th Circuit) in *Castaneda v. Pickard*, 648 F.2d 989 (5th Cir. 1981)) requires public schools to provide any alternative language programs necessary to ensure that national origin minority students with limited-English proficiency have meaningful access to education programs. 42 U.S.C. §2000d *et. seq.* (1993). Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (202) 205-5413.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 forbids employers who have 15 or more employees to discriminate against individuals in all areas of the employment relationship if the action is based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. 42 U.S.C. §2000e *et. seq.* (1993). Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (202) 663-4900.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits gender-based discrimination by an educational institution that receives federal financial assistance. 20 U.S.C. 1681 Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (202) 205-5413.

Recommended Reading

NSBA Council of School Attorneys (Alexandria, VA (800) 706-6722)

- Termination of School Employees: Legal Issues and Techniques
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: A Legal Primer
- Americans with Disabilities Act: Its Impact on Public Schools

The Education Law Association (Dayton, OH (937) 229-3589)

- The Pre-employment Process: Avoiding Impermissible Inquiries and the Effect of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The Principal's Legal Handbook

International City/County Management Association (Washington D.C. (800) 745-8780)

- FLSA: The Public Employer's Guide

Improving Your Chances of Winning a Grant

1. Read the application package word for word, cover to cover right away. If you have any questions, call the competition manager at the funding agency.
2. Pay particular attention to the funding priorities. If your proposed project doesn't meet the priorities, it doesn't stand much chance of being funded, no matter how good the idea is or how great the need.
3. Make a checklist of everything that's required in the proposal. Be sure that everyone on the proposal writing team has a copy of the list and knows who's responsible for what. Check the list every couple of days, and especially just before you assemble the final document.
4. Do your homework. Find out how other districts have been successfully implementing similar projects. Check the U.S. Department of Education's web site to find the results of major studies on technology.
5. If at all possible, conduct a needs assessment to help you define the problem(s) and identify potential solutions. Solicit input from project partners and constituent groups: teachers, students, parents, administrators, businesses, university partners, community groups, and so forth. Be sure to mention this multi-participant input into the project's design in your proposal.
6. Your proposal will be stronger if you have some data showing the strength of the need or problem. On the other hand, don't take up space with irrelevant or redundant information.
7. Consider the difference between a need and a want. Most funding agencies fund projects that will meet a particular need or solve a certain problem.
8. The identified needs and problems should determine the project's goals.
9. Don't assume that the reviewers will make the connection between the project's goals and the funding agency's program priorities. Explain how the project addresses the priorities.
10. Your proposal will be more compelling if the goals focus on the improvement of teaching and learning rather than training, equipment acquisition, or infrastructure development. For example, it's better to say the goal is "for teachers to use technology skillfully and effectively in everyday classroom activities" than to say the goal is "to train teachers to use technology." Developing and implementing training might be an objective or strategy for meeting the goal.

11. The goals should be attainable.
12. Each goal should have several supporting objectives. Objectives should be measurable.
13. The objectives are the threads that connect the different components of the proposal and make it a cohesive document. They are the heart of the design; they drive the technical approach, management plan, personnel, resources, evaluation, and budget.
14. In general, it's a good idea to have no more than three goals for a project. One or two would probably be fine.
15. If you are looking for a model for staff development, performance-based assessment, evaluation, technology integration, or evaluation, look in the professional literature for examples that you can adopt or adapt. In addition to the ERIC databases, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) have several good publications on the subjects at hand.
16. A literature search might also help you determine outcomes and set realistic expectations for the project. In terms of expected outcomes, think beyond student scores on standardized tests to include other potential factors, such as lower dropout rates, lower absenteeism, higher quality of students' work, teacher productivity, or changes in communication patterns.
17. Give yourself plenty of time. Proposals that are thrown together at the last minute usually look it. For some reason, it takes at least two weeks to put together a good proposal, regardless of the number of pages.
18. Keep your eye on the prize. Remember that the goal of putting the effort into a proposal is to win funding for a project. Don't let any one person's ego get in the way; instead, capitalize on the strengths of each person on the team.
19. If you have multiple writers for the proposal, designate your best writer as the person to put all the sections together and give you proposal one voice, i.e., make it read as if it were written by one person.
20. When possible, use active voice rather than passive. Say, for example, "The project director will convene a meeting" instead of "A meeting will be held."
21. Try to use the language of proposals. For example, the document you're writing is a proposal, not a grant. The grant is the award you're trying to win. Also, the U.S. Department of Education is referred to as ED, not DOE. DOE is the U.S. Department of Energy.

22. If you have boilerplate sections from prior proposals or other materials, be sure to tailor them to the project you are proposing.
23. As you are writing, put yourself in the reviewer's shoes. Is this proposal interesting? Is it compelling? Does it have a certain quality that will make it stand out among all the others? If you don't love the project, chances are the reviewers won't either.
24. Assume that the reviewers know nothing about your district, the problem you're addressing, the technologies you plan to use, or the strategies you plan to implement. You don't want to talk down to them, but you do want to make your narrative and charts very clear.
25. Think about the tone you are setting, and adjust it to fit the audience. Show confidence in your ability to carry out the project, but don't be arrogant.
26. Remember that success breeds success. If you have conducted similar projects, be sure to mention how successful they were, without bragging or going into details.
27. Be absolutely certain that the proposal has addressed all the review criteria listed in the application package!
28. Check the narrative to be sure that all the costs included in the budget are explained in the section where you've discussed the proposed project activities or strategies.
29. When you have the first solid draft, ask one of your colleagues who is not involved in the project to read it to see if all the basic elements are there, the concepts are sound, the writing and charts are clear, and the various sections fit together into one cohesive project design. Tell them to be ruthless in their critique.
30. When you have a close to final draft, have another colleague read it for editorial comments and typographical errors.
31. Don't even think about going over the page limit or using smaller margins than specified in the application package.
32. As you are assembling the final proposal, go through it page by page to be sure everything is there and in the right order.
33. Think about the visual appeal of your document. Try not to have more than three consecutive pages of unbroken text. Use bullets, enumeration, charts, graphs, or side bars to make the document easier to read. Quotes in boxes add interest.
34. Check the photocopies to make sure they are attractive, e.g., shading looks good, there are no stripes or splotches. If you can, use higher quality paper than you

normally use for everyday office work - use paper that has a nice weight and shows the print well.

35. Read the deadline to see if it's when the proposals have to be postmarked or when they must be received. If you don't follow the instructions to the letter, chances are your proposal won't even be reviewed. As a measure of safety, get written verification that you met the deadline, such as a receipt from Federal Express or registered mail.
36. The closer the deadline gets, the higher the level of stress. Remember that you have to continue working with your colleagues, so try to remain on friendly terms with them.

overview

US Charter Schools web
site.org or call Don Klein
16.278.4600,

www.uscharterschools.org

The US Charter Schools web site is dedicated to linking charter school developers and operators across the country to the most current and comprehensive technical assistance information available on-line. The web site, developed by WestEd and the California State University Institute for Education Reform in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education, is an evolving, interactive resource that helps charter schools and members of the community who work closely with them to share information and build on-line connections.

Starting and Running Your Charter School

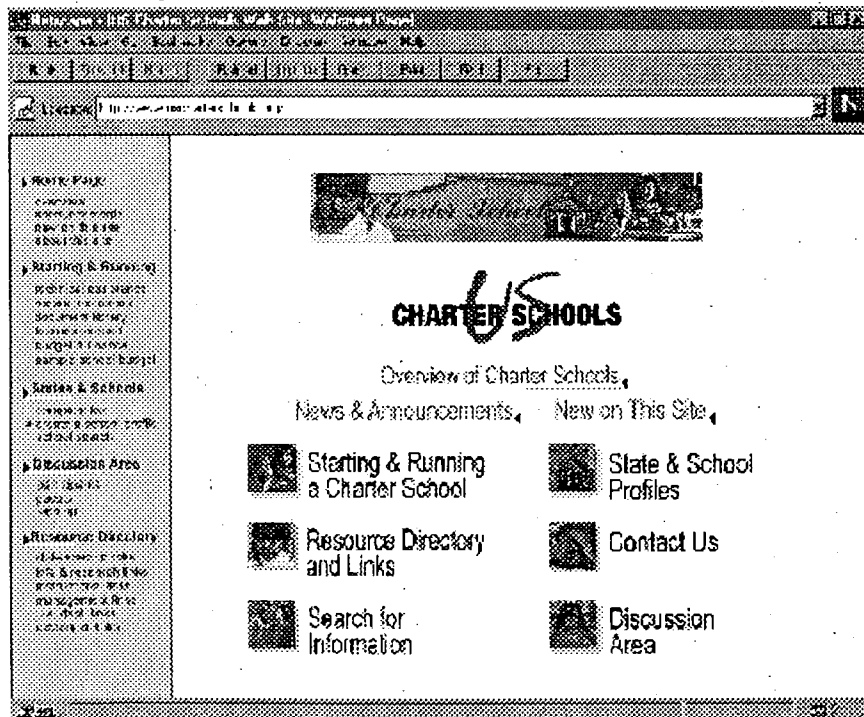
This area of the site addresses technical assistance questions encountered in the development and daily operation of charter schools. This section provides a general overview of the start-up process for developers, such as the steps involved in developing a mission or vision statement, interpreting state guidelines and laws, and writing a charter. More in-depth information on legal, fiscal, and instructional program issues is also included.

State & School Profiles

Designed for operators and developers alike, this area presents key contact and legislative information on each state with charter schools. It also provides charter school operators the opportunity to create a personalized, on-line profile of their charter school that describes their mission, instructional program, student population, and much more. This database of profiles is designed to support networking opportunities among charter schools and can be searched by keywords.

Discussion Area

The USCS Discussion Groups allow charter school operators, teachers, developers, board members and parents to exchange information with colleagues across the country on a variety of topics, including Budget, Finance & Facilities, Curriculum & Instruction, and Technology Planning.



Federal Technical Assistance Providers Serving the District of Columbia

This list gives a general description of six federal technical assistance centers with their education focus, as well as contact information on individual centers that serve the District of Columbia. There is no fee for services. For more information, contact the Region III Comprehensive Center listed below.

Comprehensive Regional Assistance Centers help states, school districts and schools in meeting the education needs of children in high poverty areas, including migratory, immigrant, limited English proficient, neglected or delinquent children, homeless, Indian, Native Alaskan and Hawaiian children, as well as children with disabilities. ✎

Region III Comprehensive Center

1730 N. Lynn Street Suite 401
Arlington, VA 22209
(703) 528-3588
(800) 925-3223
Fax (703) 528-5973

Regional Educational Laboratories conduct research on education issues, print publications, provide training programs to teachers and administrators. Services must be accessed through school district education officials. ✎

Mid-Atlantic Laboratory for Student Success

Temple University
9th Floor, Ritter Hall Annex
Philadelphia, PA 19122
(215) 204-3000
(800) 892-5550
Fax: (215) 204-5130
E-mail: lss@vm.temple.edu
URL: <http://www.temple.edu/departments/LSS/>

Eisenhower Regional Math/Science Consortium provides technical assistance and disseminates information to teachers and states implementing math and science programs in accordance with state standards. ✎

Mid-Atlantic Eisenhower Consortium for Mathematics and Science Education

Research for Better Schools
444 North Third St.
Philadelphia, PA 19123
(215) 574-9300
Fax: (215) 574-0133
E-mail: mathsci@rbs.org
URL: <http://www.rbs.org>

Desegregation Assistance Centers help district and school personnel create safe, positive and bias-free educational environments for all students and focus on districts that experience conflicts arising from efforts to desegregate and the removal of barriers to equal educational opportunities. ✎

Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium

5454 Wisconsin Ave. Suite 655
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
(301) 657-7741
Fax: (301) 657-8782
E-Mail: maec@nicom.com
URL: <http://www.nicom.com/~maec>

Regional Resource and Federal Center Program assists state education agencies in improving programs for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and their families. ✎

Mid-South Regional Resource Center

Human Development Institute
University of Kentucky
126 Mineral Industries Building
Lexington, KY 40506-0051
(606) 257-4921
TTY: (606) 257-2903
Fax: (606) 257-453
E-Mail: msrrc@ihdi.uky.edu
URL: <http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/MSRRC.html>

Regional Technology in Education Consortia help states, local educational agencies, teachers, school library and media personnel and administrators integrate technologies into K-12 classrooms, library media centers, adult literacy centers and other educational settings. ✎

Northeast Regional Technology Consortium

NetTech
City University of New York
555 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019
(212) 541-0972
Fax: (212) 541-0357
URL: <http://www.nettech.org>

Welcome to the Region III Comprehensive Center

Delivering high quality technical assistance to states, school districts and schools under the Improving America's Schools Act

The Region III Comprehensive Center at The George Washington University welcomes you to its website. We hope this website becomes a means of learning and sharing of information for our clients and for ourselves.

Our primary purpose in designing this website is to link users with resources and expertise that bear on issues of importance to the field of education. In addition, users will discover what the R3CC does, how we do it and why our services might apply to you.

The mission of the Region III Comprehensive Center is to provide high quality technical assistance and service to SEAs, LEAs, and schools to facilitate the success of comprehensive education reform and school improvement initiatives. We accomplish our mission by working collaboratively with our clients and partners with a focus on improving teaching and learning and ensuring equitable opportunities for all students to achieve challenging content and performance standards.

Region III Comprehensive Center Primary Partners

The George Washington University, Center for Equity and Excellence in Education (<http://www.gwu.edu/>) offers an array of human and technological resources from the Graduate School of Education and Human Development, School of Business and Public Management, School of Medicine and Health Sciences, and the Department of Sociology.

RMC Research Corporation

(<http://www.rmccres.com/>) provides extensive experience in research, evaluation, and professional development, as well as extensive experience as technical assistance providers for Chapter/Title I programs.

We are accomplishing our mission of improving teaching and learning opportunities for all students by working in partnership with schools, districts, and state departments of education. We concentrate our services in five major areas: (1) on-site consultation, (2) convening specials events, (3) developing and disseminating resource materials and information, (4) conducting professional development activities, and (5) building networks. The Center coordinates its work with other research and development centers, resource organizations, **technical assistance providers** ([link to web section "Region III Technical Assistance Providers"](#)) and the **U.S. Department of Education** (<http://www.ed.gov>).

As you navigate through our website, please let us know how we can improve the site, our services or our products.

Region III Comprehensive Centers Associate Partners

Research for Better Schools (RBS)

(<http://www.etdc.wednet.edu/equity/tools/139.html>) has an extensive history of conducting research, development, and technical assistance projects designed to contribute to educational improvement in Pennsylvania and in other Mid-Atlantic states.

ESCORT at the State University of New York Research Foundation brings technical assistance expertise in migrant education, interstate coordination, and curriculum alignment.

The Region III Comprehensive Center
1730 North Lynn Street, Suite 401
Arlington, VA 22209

T: 800-925-3223
703-528-3588

F: 703-528-5973

e-mail: r3cc@ceee.gwu.edu

The Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) and operated by The George Washington University's Center for Equity and Excellence in Education under Grant No. 283A50040.

What We Do: Region III Comprehensive Center Services

Delivering high quality technical assistance to states, school districts and schools under the Improving America's Schools Act

Our services are available to state departments of education, local school districts, schools, tribes, and other programs responsible for implementing provisions in the Improving America's Schools Act in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and the District of Columbia. Assistance is given primarily to districts and schools with a high percentage of children in poverty.

R3CC technical assistance providers:

- ✓ give direct services to clients and build client capacity;
- ✓ help clients take a systems perspective in order to design and implement improvements effectively;
- ✓ focus on adult learning--where both clients and technical assistance providers actively engage in the construction of new knowledge.
- ✓ get to "know" each client by building good working relationships and maintaining a deep understanding of the local environment and context;
- ✓ are there when help is most needed--as change is being implemented;
- ✓ provide sustained and focused assistance over time in implementing an innovation;
- ✓ play a variety of roles: a source of information; a consultant for developing resources and analyzing issues; a trainer for implementing new practices; a process facilitator; and a builder of linkages.

R3CC technical assistance services are focused in five major areas. Click on each area to find examples of Center work.

✓ **Serving as a consultant, critical friend, and sounding board**

Such assistance may include:

- telephone/e-mail consultation
- on-site consultation (e.g. action research, data analysis, planning, problem-solving, group facilitation, evaluation, etc.)
- creating planning tools (e.g., needs analysis, change inventories, formative evaluation strategies)

✓ **Convening special events**

Such assistance may include:

- designing, planning and convening conferences, symposia and meetings

✓ **Developing and disseminating resource materials and information**

Such assistance may include developing, identifying and providing:

- background readings, annotated bibliographies and research summaries
- reference documents regarding IASA and Goals 2000
- issue area papers
- special products such as *Help a Child Learn to Read: A Manual for Tutoring in Schools*

✓ **Conducting professional development activities**

Such assistance may be sustained and intensive or short-term and can include:

- small group seminars
- intensive skill training workshops
- institutes (continuous or short-term)
- large group awareness presentations and workshops
- training of trainers

✓ **Building networks**

Such assistance may include connecting clients to:

- one another through establishing networks of schools and districts
- one another through establishing special interest and working groups
- other technical assistance and resource organizations

Requesting Services

For each state and the District of Columbia, specific staff members are assigned as the primary contacts for our clients. If you are affiliated with a state department of education, are an administrator or superintendent of a district, or a school principal and wish to receive services, please contact us at the address listed below.

The Region III Comprehensive Center
1730 North Lynn Street, Suite 401
Arlington, VA 22209

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F: 703-528-5973

e-mail: r3cc@ceee.gwu.edu



REGION III



WHAT'S NEW
COMPREHENSIVE CENTERS NETWORK
R3CC PRODUCTS

COMPREHENSIVE
CENTER



ABOUT REGION III

R3CC OVERVIEW
R3CC STAFF
R3CC SERVICES
R3CC STATES
R3CC CALENDAR
REGION III TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS

FOCUS AREAS

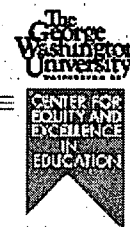
PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
SAFE AND DRUG-FREE ENVIRONMENTS
SCHOOL REFORM AND IMPROVEMENT
STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS
TEACHING AND LEARNING





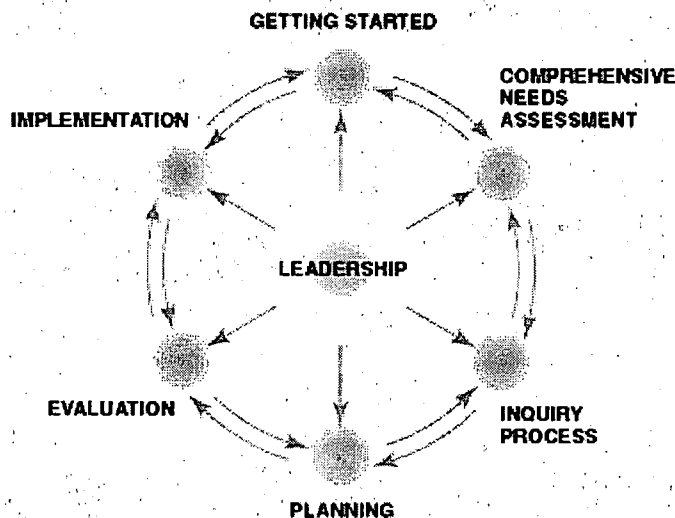
FOCUS AREA

School Reform and Improvement



Key Concepts

CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT



Continuous School Improvement

Educators involved in continuous school reform often describe this reform as cyclical rather than linear in design. The process is never static, nor does it proceed in a linear step-by-step fashion. Rather it is dynamic and recursive, as indicated by the graphic. For example, if the components depicted in the graphic proceed in a clockwise fashion, planning for a schoolwide reform program precedes its implementation; however, in reality planning and implementation often blend together- thus, the forward and backward arrows. These arrows symbolize the forward and backward movement of continuous school improvement. Roadblocks encountered in implementation can serve to refine and redirect the planning, which can in turn impact future inquiry and conduct of the comprehensive needs assessment. Moreover, as the graphic indicates, ongoing school reform is never finished. As school demographics, student needs, and community influences change, so will the school itself need to change, thus putting in motion again these school reform processes. The following bullets highlight key points for each component. For more

in-depth information, click on each component in the graphic. Citation information on the documents used to inform each component is also given. Please contact the organizations indicated for more information on or to request these documents.

- **Leadership:** Effective leaders of school reform are good managers, focus others on the reform, decentralize the reform effort, and match people with tasks.
- **Getting Started:** Getting started involves preparing to plan. Essential activities include developing a school leadership team, determining how prepared the school is for change, informing and engaging stakeholders, and beginning professional development activities.
- **Comprehensive Needs Assessment:** The needs assessment often involves developing a school profile. This profile should address the following dimensions: student learning, curriculum and instruction, school organization, family and community involvement, and student factors.
- **Inquiry Process:** The purpose of inquiry is to explore and verify the primary need areas identified in the comprehensive needs assessment, consider various approaches to addressing these needs, and identify promising approaches.
- **Planning:** The school improvement plan should offer substantive changes in how the school conducts its business, changes in school organization, curriculum and instruction, and in parent involvement.
- **Implementation:** Effective implementation is dependent upon good communication with school staff and community, effective training of all participants, ability to be flexible, and the readiness to redesign organizational infrastructure.
- **Evaluation:** Evaluating the effectiveness of a school reform program involves both monitoring the implementation of program components and assessing student outcomes.



Center for Equity and Excellence in Education

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