

# DEVELOPING SOUND PERFORMANCE GOALS AND MEASURES

## *Guidance for Charter Schools*

*Prepared by Margaret Lin<sup>1</sup>*

To set performance goals, schools will find it helpful to engage in *backward mapping* – asking themselves what they would like to have achieved several years from now. What would the school like a newspaper article or concerned parent to say about the school at that time? The school should then translate these broad hopes into specific goals reflecting both (1) **Educational Performance** and (2) **Organizational and Management Performance**.

For each goal, schools should develop specific indicators, assessment tools, baseline data, targets for performance, and strategies for attaining them. (See attached templates for assistance.)

### Developing Sound Performance Goals and Measures

Charter school organizers and operators should define both **educational** and **organizational and management** goals for their school. This important exercise helps organizers begin to reflect on how they will define and measure success. It also helps existing schools foster a culture of professional accountability and sets the stage for the effective use of data for continuous school improvement.

However, to be meaningful and realistic, each school must reexamine and refine its goals and measures after enrolling students and gathering baseline achievement data early in their first year of operation.

This resource is designed to offer focused guidance in developing sound goals and measures – both educational and organizational – for inclusion in each school’s accountability plan. These goals and measures should be carefully selected to be most useful to the charter school, the authorizing entity, and other stakeholders in the school’s success.

The performance framework presented here asks each school to develop school-specific goals and measures for:

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<sup>1</sup> Margaret Lin is a Senior Associate at the National Association of Charter School Authorizers. This guidance was originally developed for charter authorizers to provide to schools, and appears in customized form in *The Charter School Accountability Handbook for Mayor-sponsored Charter Schools*, 3rd ed. (City of Indianapolis, 2004). Many of the concepts, definitions and principles in these pages are adapted from the following sources: *Measuring Up: How Chicago’s Charter Schools Make Their Missions Count*, by Margaret Lin (Leadership for Quality Education, 2000); *Guidelines for Writing Charter School Accountability Plans, 2001-2002* (Charter Schools Institute, State University of New York), [http://www.newyorkcharters.org/charterny/act\\_guide.html](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/charterny/act_guide.html); and “Some Expectations Regarding the Contents of Charter School Accountability Plans,” District of Columbia Public Charter School Board.

- 1) **Educational Performance** – addressing aspects of student learning that demonstrate the school’s mission; and
- 2) **Organizational and Management Performance** – addressing matters such as finances, facilities and other operational management; leadership, governance and personnel; attendance and retention rates; strength of community; parent satisfaction and market demand.

While it is important that charter schools have enough goals to measure progress relating to their mission, too many goals can become difficult to manage and measure. In addition, not all goals that your school may develop for internal guidance and strategic planning are necessary for external accountability purposes. Thus, for purposes of an external accountability plan, most schools would be wise to develop no more than ten to twelve broad goals, with the majority focusing on educational performance. Fewer goals are also acceptable. Each school, however, should use its own discretion to determine a suitable number of goals based on its individual situation.

Note: The following guidance focuses particularly on developing strong *educational* goals and measures for your accountability plan. This task demands particular attention because educational performance indicators are often more challenging to state in objective, externally meaningful terms than are measures that focus on organizational and management performance. However, the principles for developing both educational and organizational goals and measures are very similar. Thus, to the extent applicable, you should follow the guidance in these pages for developing your organizational and management goals and measures as well.

### General Criteria for Educational and Organizational Goals

#### Goals should be SMART:

- **Specific** (and, for educational goals, tied to learning **Standards**). A well-defined goal must be specific, clearly and concisely stated, and easily understood. Educational goals should be tied to learning standards that specify **what students should know and be able to do**, for each subject or content area and for each grade, age, or other grouping level. Equally important, educational goals should be developed with solid knowledge of students’ **baseline achievement levels**.
- **Measurable**. A goal should be tied to measurable results to be achieved. Measurement is then simply an assessment of success or failure in achieving the goal.
- **Ambitious and Attainable**. A goal should be challenging yet attainable and realistic. Educational goals should be based on a well-informed assessment of your school’s capacities and your students’ baseline achievement levels.
- **Reflective of Your Mission**. A goal should be a natural outgrowth of your school mission, reflecting the school’s values and aspirations.

- **Time-Specific with Target Date.** A well-conceived goal should specify a time frame or target date for achievement. It is useful for schools to set both short-term (annual) and long-term (3-5 year) targets for accomplishing goals.

### Definitions of Key Terms in Goal-Setting<sup>2</sup>

**\*\*Remember:** while these definitions pertain specifically to educational goals, they are also applicable to organizational and management goals.

To develop adequate learning goals and measures, schools should begin with a clear understanding of a few essential terms:

**Goal:** A clear, measurable statement of what the school will accomplish with its students after a specific length of time attending the school.

**Indicator:** A clear statement of how the school will know that it has achieved a goal, without necessarily detailing specific assessments or measures.

(*Examples:* “Students will demonstrate reading proficiency at or above grade level” or “Students will achieve annual growth that is sufficient for them to reach proficiency on state standards by the time they exit our school.”)

**Standard:** A clear, measurable statement of what students will be expected to know (a *content* standard) or be able to do (a *performance* or *skill* standard) at a given point in their development, usually each year and at graduation. Allows monitoring of progress toward an ultimate *goal*.

(Standards are usually defined grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject, and are thus more specific than – but necessary to support – overarching school goals.)

**Benchmark:** A clear, measurable statement of what the school will accomplish with its students at a given point in the school’s development, usually each year or at more frequent intervals. Allows monitoring of progress toward an ultimate *goal*.

**Assessment** (*sometimes also “measure”*): A method, tool or system to evaluate and demonstrate student progress toward – or mastery of – a particular learning standard or goal.

(*Examples:* A standardized test, or a portfolio-judging system)

**Measure:** An application of an assessment that defines progress toward or attainment of a goal.

(*Example:* “Percent of students at State Assessment performance levels, disaggregated by student subgroup” or “Value-added scale score growth for each student.”)

Assessments – and by extension, measures – should be **valid, reliable**, and demonstrate **scoring consistency**:

- **Valid:** Assesses the skill or knowledge it is intended to assess.
- **Reliable:** Provides consistent results when taken repeatedly by the student at a given point in his/her development, as well as by other students at the same point in development.
- **Scoring Consistency:** Produces consistent scores, ratings, results or responses when a particular assessment tool, scoring guide or rubric is used by different evaluators to assess the same student performance or work sample. (Often called *interrater reliability*)
- **Target:** An application of an assessment or measure that indicates the level of performance that will constitute success over a time period.

(*Example:* “90% of students at Successful Charter School will achieve annual

<sup>2</sup> Some of these terms may be defined or used differently elsewhere in the education community. This page is meant to provide a consistent set of working definitions for schools to use in developing accountability plans.

## Essential Principles for Developing Sound Educational Goals and Measures

- Your mandate as the operator of a charter school is not just to teach well but also to **demonstrate objectively** – in ways that are **clear, understandable** and **credible** to a variety of external audiences – that you are doing so. Thus, you must measure and report educational progress precisely and extensively.
- Distinguish between **goals** and **measures**. Goals are the starting point, but require valid, reliable ways to measure and demonstrate that you have achieved them.
- Make sure that your goals are **clear, specific** and **measurable**. They should also be **challenging yet achievable**.
- Your measures for attainment of those goals should describe **how you will assess progress**, and **how much progress will constitute success**.
- Educational goals must be connected to a well-defined set of learning standards for both **content** (what students should know) and **performance** (what students should be able to do). Such standards should exist for **every subject or content area** and **each grade, age or other grouping level** in the school. Focus on **outcomes** and **evidence of learning**, not inputs. For example, participation rates or the number of hours spent on an activity are *not* sufficient measures of success. Participation and investment of time are necessary first steps, but they are inputs, not **demonstrable** measures of learning and accomplishment.
- In developing goals for your accountability plan, focus on **what’s most important**. No more than eight to ten clear, well-chosen and carefully measured educational goals should allow you to provide a convincing story of your progress and achievements – and will be more effective than listing a score of vague, trivial, redundant or hard-to-measure indicators.
- The measures you develop to assess achievement of each goal, if not based on standardized assessments, should be demonstrably **valid** and **reliable**. (The “Framework for Creating Unique Learning Measures” provided later in this guidance will provide some help in developing validity and reliability in assessments.)

### A Note on Defining Standards: Milestones on the Path to Broader School Goals

Educational goals must be tied to clear content and performance standards specifying what you expect your students to know and be able to do in order to graduate or be promoted to the next level. These standards need only to be referenced in your accountability plan, but they form the foundation of your school’s education program. As such, selecting and developing grade-by-grade, subject-by-subject standards is an essential component of accountability planning that goes hand-in-hand with broader goal-setting. In setting standards, keep in mind this central question: ***Do our standards embody the expectations necessary to achieve our mission and reach our goals?***

Of course, many of your school standards will be state standards. However, most schools have important aims beyond the state requirements, and developing these supplemental

standards is a technically challenging task. It usually consists of several steps, including:

1. Articulating desired characteristics of “educated” students at a general level – or setting your school’s overarching goals;
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-level content and performance standards.<sup>3</sup>

## Practical Steps for Developing Sound Educational Goals and Measures

- **Define a set of goals** that describe what success will look like at your school. These goals should be carefully selected to reflect the **breadth and depth of your mission**.

### Defining Goals: Some Helpful Guiding Questions

Ask the following critical questions when defining your school’s goals:

- *How will you know if your school is succeeding (or not)?*
- *What will be important characteristics of “educated students” at your school?*
- *What will students learn, know, understand and be able to do after a certain period of time, before promotion to the next grade level, or before graduation from our school?*
- *What should your graduates permanently possess as a result of their time in your school?*

- Outline your goals in **precise, declarative sentences**. Example: “All students at the Excelencia Charter School will be proficient readers and writers of Spanish within four years of enrolling.”
- Identify at least **one and possibly multiple measures** to assess and demonstrate progress toward each goal. These measures must indicate both (1) the **level of performance** you will expect your school or students to achieve, and (2) **how much progress will indicate success**. (It is not sufficient to say you’ll administer a certain type of assessment; you must explain how you expect your students to perform on it to demonstrate progress and success.)
- You may develop different types of measures to assess (1) absolute achievement; (2) student growth or gains; or (3) achievement compared to other schools. (The box below, entitled “**Example: Multiple Measures Applied to a Single Goal**,” provides an example of different ways to measure achievement of the same goal.)
- For every goal, choose means of assessment that make **non-attainment** of the goal as **objectively apparent** as success. That is, the assessment(s) should tell you (and

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from *Accountability for Student Performance: An Annotated Resource Guide for Shaping an Accountability Plan for Your Charter School* (Charter Friends National Network, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2001), p. 5, <http://www.charterfriends.org/accountability.doc>.

external audiences) immediately whether you have achieved a particular goal or not. For example, if one goal of your school is to develop your students into skilled readers, it would not be persuasive to rely on a survey of parents' opinions of their children's reading skills to show that your students did indeed become skilled readers. You would need to select some type of **externally credible assessment** to measure and demonstrate students' reading proficiency.

- Make sure that your measures of student learning are based on knowledge of your students' **baseline achievement levels**. Without such knowledge, your measures will not be meaningful or realistic.
- Set **long-term goals** as well as **intermediate (typically annual) benchmarks** to assess progress. Administer assessments corresponding to this timeline to provide longitudinal data over the term of the charter.
- To have time to counter learning deficits that students may have upon entering your school, you may consider setting certain goals for students who have been enrolled in your school for a **specific length of time**, such as "students who have been in the school for at least three years."
- For every measure you develop, ask yourself, "*Will this measure be readily understandable and **credible** to someone who doesn't spend a day or a week in our school getting to know us?*" Remember, your school will be judged by the media, community leaders and the public at large, in addition to your authorizer and parents. For measures not based on standardized tests, establishing external credibility typically requires demonstrating **validity** and **reliability**. (The "Framework for Creating Unique Learning Measures" in the next section offers an overview of one way for schools to do this.) Credibility – through valid and reliable measures – is important for all measures you develop. Be sure to establish this.
- Understand **what data** you will need to gather to support each measure. Remember, *if you have no data, you have no case* proving your school's achievements. Likewise, if you have insufficient data, you have an insufficient case.

### Selecting Assessments: Some Helpful Guiding Questions

Ask the following critical questions when selecting or developing assessments:

- *How will we ensure and demonstrate that we meet or exceed these expectations? How will we measure and report – clearly and concisely – whether our students are reaching each learning standard?*
- *What are all the characteristics of a student performance or sample of work that meet a particular standard? Exceed the standard? Approach the standard? Do not meet the standard?*
- *Does this assessment enable all students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understandings relevant to the given standard?*
- *Is the assessment **valid** – does it measure the skills or knowledge we intend it to measure?*
- *Is the assessment **reliable** – does it provide consistent results when taken repeatedly by the same student at a given point in his/her development? Does it provide consistent results when taken by other students at the same point in development?*

- *Is there a clearly written scoring tool or rubric that is consistent with the purpose of the assessment?*
- *Do our assessment tools, scoring guides, or rubrics pass the test of **interrater reliability**, or **scoring consistency and accuracy**? That is, do different assessors or evaluators use them in the same way, resulting in consistent responses when scoring the same student performance or work sample?*
  - Tip:** *Schools can achieve interrater reliability by undertaking an audit-like process to pilot and refine assessment tools – for example, double- or triple-scoring every fifth sample of student work, comparing the scoring responses given by the different evaluators, and revising or clarifying the scoring tool as needed to eliminate inconsistent ratings. (See the examples that appear later in this guidance.)*
- *Are our assessment tools or scoring guides user-friendly? Are the instructions and procedural explanations for teachers or other assessors clear?*
- *Is the assessment feasible to administer?*

There is no single best way to measure achievement of a particular goal. As charter schools, you are free to choose measures that you prefer, provided that they are also clear, meaningful and persuasive to external audiences.

### **Double-Checking the Quality and Integrity of Learning Measures: Some Helpful Guiding Questions**

Ask the following critical questions when selecting or developing assessments:

- *Are our assessments aligned with our standards and curriculum?*
- *Are the standards and curriculum aligned?*
- *Are the knowledge and skills we test important to teach and test?*
- *Does our school adequately teach the knowledge and skills being tested?*
- *Do our assessments accurately measure attainment of the standards?*
- *Do our standards and assessments show both breadth and depth?*
- *Do our standards and assessments demand that students demonstrate more than simple recall?*
- *Do our standards and assessments represent a worthwhile educational experience?*
- *Are the standards and assessments free of gender, cultural and other biases?*

The following example shows how three different measures might be applied to a single learning goal. (These goals could be developed by one school or by three different schools that have the same goal.) Note that each measure describes **how progress will be assessed and how much progress will constitute success**. The third measure allows the school to assess skills beyond those measured on standardized tests, and would thus require some demonstration of validity and reliability or be used in addition to externally validated assessments.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from *Guidelines for Writing Charter School Accountability Plans, 2001-2002* (Charter Schools Institute, State University of New York), p. 4, [http://www.newyorkcharters.org/charterny/act\\_guide.html](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/charterny/act_guide.html).

### Example: Multiple Measures Applied to a Single Goal

**Goal:** “All students at the Successful Charter School will become proficient readers of English within three years of enrolling at our school.”

**Possible Measures:**

- “Students at the Successful Charter School will improve their performance on the reading portion of the State ABC Test by at least 5% per year, on average.”  
*(Measuring growth – Note: The proposed rate of improvement must be sufficient, based on information collected through baseline data, to meet the ultimate target goal in the specified time frame)*
- “Students at the Successful Charter School will perform at a level higher than their peers in the Successful School District on the English & Language Arts portion of Required State Examination in all grades, as demonstrated by a greater percentage of students passing and by a higher overall average student score.”  
*(Assessing comparative performance)*
- “All students at the Successful Charter School will read aloud and discuss an essay of literary significance before a panel of teachers and outside experts at the end of their 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade years, achieving a “Proficient” or higher rating from the panel for each of the following skills: elocution, comprehension and analysis.”  
*(Performance-based assessment)*

### “From Qualitative to Quantitative”: A Framework for Creating Unique Learning Measures<sup>5</sup>

Following is a six-step framework for designing **valid, reliable** measures of learning in areas not typically assessed by standardized tests. Schools may use this framework to create their own externally credible measures in similarly difficult-to-measure areas.

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<sup>5</sup> From *Measuring Up: How Chicago’s Charter Schools Make Their Missions Count*, by Margaret Lin (Leadership for Quality Education, 2000), pp. 32-33.

## Six-Step Framework for Creating Unique Learning Measures

### 1. Define Clear Standards

**Define:** What are our ultimate goals for our students and graduates? What do we expect them to know and be able to do before promotion to the next grade level or graduation?

Have the standards externally reviewed by experts and community members (e.g., standards and subject-area experts, curriculum specialists, university professors, other educators, school district administrators, school governing board members, parents).

### 2. Design Assessments Aligned with Those Standards

**Define:** How can students demonstrate they have reached our standards?

### 3. Develop Scoring Tools or Rubrics

- a. For every assessment designed to measure attainment of a particular standard, first **define:** What are the essential features of a student performance or sample of work that *meets* the standard? That *exceeds* the standard? That *does not meet* the standard? That *approaches* the standard?
- b. Create a **scoring tool** or guide that rates student performance or work by applying these criteria.
- c. Assign **point values** to express students' overall attainment or non-attainment of the standard (for example: 4 = exceeds standard; 3 = meets standard; 2 = approaching standard; 1 = does not meet standard).
- d. **Train** teachers and other assessors to use the scoring guides or rubrics consistently.

### 4. Test the Reliability of Assessments

Pilot assessments and scoring tools repeatedly to ensure **scoring consistency and accuracy** across different evaluators and assessment occasions. Try an **audit-like process** in piloting and refining an assessment – for example, double- or triple-score every fifth sample of student work, compare scoring responses, and revise or clarify the scoring tool as needed to eliminate inconsistent ratings. Use **exemplars** – samples of student work that should be scored at varying levels – to help achieve consistent interpretation and usage of scoring guides.

### 5. Translate Student Scores into Aggregate Measures

After ensuring the validity and reliability of an assessment, translate student scores on the assessment into aggregate measures: What percent of all students met, exceeded, approached, or did not meet the standard?

### 6. Communicate Results

Communicate student progress toward the standards by reporting individual and aggregate growth, using students' beginning or baseline performance as the point of comparison. Communicate school results through multiple avenues, such as community meetings and annual or more frequent reports for parents, your authorizer, the public, and the media.

## Examples of Measures Created through this Framework

Examples of goals and assessment processes developed by charter schools in Chicago, IL following this framework include:

### **Narrative Writing: Writing Appraisal System**

*North Kenwood-Oakland Charter School (NKO)*

#### **Performance Goal:**

“80% of our students will demonstrate mastery in narrative writing by meeting or exceeding the minimum grade-level standard score for work assessed according to the seven-category Writing Appraisal System.”

#### **Establishing Reliability in Assessment:**

North Kenwood-Oakland, an elementary charter school in Chicago, has created a unique system to assess its students’ writing skills. The assessment team that developed NKO’s Writing Appraisal System was composed of writing assessment specialists, NKO faculty, and Literacy Coordinators (teachers) from eight other public schools in Chicago in the Center for School Improvement’s (CSI, affiliated with the University of Chicago) network. Together, this team examined accountability protocols developed earlier by CSI as well as from across the country, paying particular attention to urban school district and charter school writing assessment materials.

Drawing upon these models, the assessment team created scoring guides to gauge student progress toward NKO Charter School’s Unique Writing Standards as well as state and district standards. The team then repeatedly scored samples of student writing collected from the eight schools in CSI’s network, compared their scores to find variances, and revised the rubrics as needed to eliminate significant discrepancies. To build consistent understanding and usage of the rubrics, the team used **exemplars** – samples of student work illustrating distinct levels of achievement that should be scored accordingly. They repeated this exercise several times throughout the Project year until they had confidence in the reliability of the assessment instruments.

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### **Oral Expression**

*North Lawndale College Preparatory Charter High School (NLCP)*

#### **Performance Goal:**

“Within two years, 75% of our students will master speaking effectively in a variety of academic and professional settings.”

#### **Establishing Reliability in Assessment:**

North Lawndale College Prep, a charter high school in Chicago, has established both internal and external consistency and reliability in tools to assess its students’ skills in Oral Expression. First, in training faculty and student judges in the use of the rubric, the school uses videotaped Oral Presentations by students from other schools. Teams of assessors of three people each (two faculty members and one student) watch a taped presentation, score it and then compare and discuss individual scoring. They repeat this with two additional taped presentations.

Having each Oral Presentation assessed by three people provides an ongoing check on consistency, reliability and fairness. Significant scoring variances within any three-member scoring team are discussed and resolved by the team. If necessary, the scoring team can request assistance from one of the two English faculty members to resolve a scoring difference.

The school also uses a team of external expert assessors to evaluate randomly selected, taped Oral Presentations. This team consists largely of speech and communications faculty of local colleges and universities and possibly the Speaking, Arguing and Writing Program at Mt. Holyoke College. Scores produced by the external assessors are compared with those of NLCP's internal team, and scoring variances are resolved by refining or clarifying the assessment tool.

### Developing Organizational and Management Performance Goals and Measures

In addition to goals and measures for student learning, your accountability plan will require a few goals and measures pertaining to **Organizational and Management Performance**. Many of the general principles and steps outlined above are useful to follow in developing these indicators, though the framing question to guide this task is:

*In addition to educational measures, what evidence will show that our school is an effective, well-run institution?*

This will be your opportunity to demonstrate success in areas of organizational and operational performance such as (but not limited to):

- Financial management and performance;
- Strength and stability of leadership, governance and personnel;
- Facilities and other operational management;
- Enrollment, attendance and retention;
- Staffing and professional development;
- Parent and community involvement; and
- Parent and student satisfaction.

For most schools, developing three to four school-specific goals for organizational performance should be sufficient. The following box offers examples of organizational goals and possible related measures.

## **Examples of Organizational and Management Performance Goals and Measures**

**Goal:** “Teachers and staff will be highly qualified, demonstrate high expectations for all students, and have a positive attitude toward the school and their colleagues.”

**Measures:** “90% or more of the teaching staff will have at least a bachelor’s degree in the subject they teach and at least two years of teaching experience. The teacher retention rate will be at least 90% each year, not including departures for health or family reasons. All teachers will consistently earn satisfactory ratings on regular classroom observations by the Principal and Academic Director. The school will earn satisfactory ratings from at least 90% of the faculty on a survey administered each semester to assess professional satisfaction. At least 90% of parents responding to an annual survey will indicate satisfaction with teachers at our school.”

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**Goal:** “Families will see themselves as partners in their children’s education and will be active in the life of the school.”

**Measures:** “At least 80% of parents will participate in report card pick-up days and quarterly parent-teacher conferences, as recorded on sign-in sheets. At least 80% of parents will regularly attend student exhibitions, performances, academic fairs and other showcase events, as recorded on sign-in sheets. At least 20% of parents will volunteer at least 15 hours per year for the school, and at least 50% of parents will volunteer at least 10 hours per year.”

## GENERAL TEMPLATE FOR ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN<sup>6</sup>

Accountability Plan for \_\_\_\_\_ (School Name)

<b>Mission Statement</b>	<i>The mission of our charter school is to...</i> (Brief, jargon-free statement of the school's purpose and broad aims)
<b>Performance Goal</b>	<i>What will our school accomplish?</i> (Precise, declarative statement tied to a specified timeframe or length of attendance)
<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<i>How will we know that we have achieved this goal?</i>
<b>Assessment Tools and Measures</b>	<i>How will we measure achievement of this goal, using mandated assessments and/or school-specific assessments (such as portfolios, juried performances)?</i>
<b>Attachments</b>	<i>Attachments to illustrate the performance goal and assessments.</i> (Note and attach relevant school-developed assessments and/or assessment tools.)
<b>Rationale for Goal and Measures</b>	<i>Why is this goal important to our mission, and why is our chosen method of assessment appropriate and useful for measuring performance toward this goal?</i> (2-3 sentences)
<b>Assessment Reliability and Scoring Consistency</b>	<i>How will we demonstrate both the <u>reliability</u> and <u>scoring consistency</u> of the assessment(s) we plan to use, if non-standardized?</i>
<b>Strategies for Attainment</b>	<i>What are our strategies (curricular, instructional, assessment, organizational, operational) for attaining this goal?</i> (Include designation of point person)
<b>Baseline Data</b>	<i>What is our beginning data point?</i>

<sup>6</sup> Originally developed for *The Charter School Accountability Handbook for Mayor-sponsored Charter Schools*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (City of Indianapolis, 2004).

<b>1st-Year Target*</b>	<p><i>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our first year? (Set your Rating 3 [“Meets standard”] at a level that you would consider on target for your first year.)</i></p> <p><u>Rating 1</u> (Does not meet standard):</p> <p><u>Rating 2</u> (Approaching standard):</p> <p><u>Rating 3</u> (Meets standard):</p> <p><u>Rating 4</u> (Exceeds standard):</p>
<b>4th-Year Target*</b>	<p><i>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our fourth year? (Set your Rating 3 [“Meets standard”] at a level that you would consider on target for your fourth year.)</i></p> <p><u>Rating 1</u> (Does not meet standard):</p> <p><u>Rating 2</u> (Approaching standard):</p> <p><u>Rating 3</u> (Meets standard):</p> <p><u>Rating 4</u> (Exceeds standard):</p>
<b>Annual Progress</b>	<p><i>What progress have we made toward this goal this year?</i></p>

**- SAMPLE COMPLETED TEMPLATE PAGE FOLLOWS -**

**SAMPLE GOAL SUBMISSION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN**

**Accountability Plan for the New Academy Charter School**

<b>Mission Statement</b>	<i>The mission of our charter school is to</i> cultivate in youth of the Riverside and Brickyards neighborhoods a deep appreciation and understanding of mathematics and science, and to develop in them the academic and social skills and character qualities essential to be active community members, responsible citizens and successful individuals.
<b>Performance Goal</b>	<i>What will our school accomplish? (Precise, declarative statement tied to a specified timeframe or length of attendance)</i>  Graduating students will have a plan for their future and the confidence, skills and preparation to pursue it.
<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<i>How will we know that we have achieved this goal?</i>  Students will demonstrate that they have thought about their interests and aptitudes, have researched necessary steps to achieve their goals, and have outlined a realistic path for taking those steps.
<b>Assessment Tools and Measures</b>	<i>How will we measure achievement of this goal, using mandated assessments and/or school-specific assessments (such as portfolios, juried performances)?</i>  Beginning in the 8 <sup>th</sup> grade, students will develop a career plan that is revised annually. The career plan will be evaluated for soundness by the school counselor and each student's teacher-advisor, using a tool that we have developed for this purpose.
<b>Attachments</b>	<i>Attachments to illustrate the performance goal and assessments. (Note and attach relevant school-developed assessments and/or assessment tools. If a school-developed assessment or tool is still under development, note this here along with the date when it will be ready for submission, and submit it once it is developed.)</i>  Our school-developed tool for evaluating student career plans is attached. [Example response only – no tool is attached to this sample.]
<b>Rationale for Goal and Measures</b>	<i>Why is this goal important to our mission, and why is our chosen method of assessment appropriate and useful for measuring performance toward this goal? (2-3 sentences)</i>  Developing in students the self-knowledge and skills to plan realistically for their futures is essential to our mission. We are committed to preparing our students to succeed beyond our doors. Individual student career plans, thoughtfully revised each year with faculty counseling, will teach students to engage in self-reflection and research that will equip them to follow a plan throughout their lives – adjusting as necessary, but continuously focused on meaningful and realistic goals.
<b>Assessment Reliability and Scoring Consistency</b>	<i>How will we demonstrate both the <u>reliability</u> and <u>scoring consistency</u> of the assessment(s) we plan to use, if non-standardized?</i>  The school counselor and all teachers (who also serve as advisors to assigned groups of students) will be trained to use the tool that we have developed for evaluating student career plans. From the first set of career plans developed in 2004-2005, we will identify exemplars representing distinct levels of achievement (Excellent, Good, Fair, Needs Improvement) that should be rated accordingly, and will use these to help guide and build consistency in evaluation. Guided by the exemplars, the counselor and teachers will repeatedly evaluate a sample set of actual career plans developed in 2004-2005 (including written comments and oral feedback as well as a numeric score for each plan), comparing their scores and comments to identify variances, and revising the evaluation tool as needed

	to eliminate significant discrepancies. We will repeat these “practice evaluations” as needed until we are confident in the reliability and consistent usage of the evaluation tool.
<b>Strategies for Attainment</b>	<p><i><b>What are our strategies (curricular, instructional, assessment, organizational, operational) for attaining this goal? (Include designation of point person)</b></i></p> <p>The school will provide career interest and aptitude inventories for students. The school counselor will work with students and teacher-advisors to support the development of annual plans beginning in the eighth grade. The Academic Director will oversee these strategies.</p>
<b>Baseline Data</b>	<p><i><b>What is our beginning data point?</b></i></p> <p>Career plans from the 2004-2005 school year, which will be finalized in May 2005.</p>
<b>1st-Year Target</b>	<p><i><b>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our first year? (Set your Rating 3 [“Meets standard”] at a level that you would consider on target for your first year.)</b></i></p> <p><u>Rating 1 (Does not meet standard):</u> Fewer than 70% of students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><u>Rating 2 (Approaching standard)</u> 70% to 84% of students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><u>Rating 3 (Meets standard):</u> <b>85% of students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</b></p> <p><u>Rating 4 (Exceeds standard):</u> 86% or more students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p>
<b>4<sup>th</sup>-Year Target</b>	<p><i><b>What do we expect to achieve by the end of our fourth year? (Set your Rating 3 [“Meets standard”] at a level that you would consider on target for your fourth year.)</b></i></p> <p><u>Rating 1 (Does not meet standard):</u> Fewer than 80% of students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><u>Rating 2 (Approaching standard):</u> 80% to 94% of students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p> <p><u>Rating 3 (Meets standard):</u> <b>95% of students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</b></p> <p><u>Rating 4 (Exceeds standard):</u> 96% or more students in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade and higher have individual career plans that are realistic, well-considered and well-developed for their grade levels (earning a rating of “Good” or “Excellent” according to our evaluation tool).</p>
<b>Annual Progress</b>	<i><b>What progress have we made toward this goal this year?</b></i>