

NEO Oversight Plan for Operating Schools

The NEO Oversight Plan serves as a template for all charter schools authorized by NEO. If necessary, this plan may be amended and adapted for specific charter schools. NEO's ongoing oversight of authorized schools will include the following activities:

Student/School Academic Performance

- NEO will review the school academic performance with school leader(s) at a formal site visit at each NEO authorized school using the School's Performance Framework.
- NEO will review, summarize, and use the school academic performance data that MDE reports, including LEA level data for Authorizers to monitor and evaluate progress.
- NEO will publish an Annual Report that includes academic performance data of NEO authorized schools, including areas of strength and improvement.
- NEO will facilitate sharing of effective practices by conducting at least one informal site visit, "learning walk", at each NEO authorized school focused on main strategies for improving student learning and indicators of successful implementation.

Climate

- NEO will review the school climate performance with school leader(s) at a formal site visit at each NEO authorized school using the School's Performance Framework and NEO's Annual Report.
- NEO will publish an Annual Report that includes climate performance data of NEO authorized schools, including attendance and mobility.
- NEO will facilitate sharing of effective practices by conducting at least one informal site visit, "learning walk", at each NEO authorized school focused on main strategies for improving student learning and indicators of successful implementation.

Operations/Governance

- NEO will attend at least two charter school board meetings annually and provide feedback to the school on compliance as well as provide observations and questions for the board to consider in their process of continuous improvement using the Board Meeting Observation Form.
- NEO will collect and review official school records including board meeting minutes and policy revisions, and verify compliance using the Operations Monitoring and Evaluation Report for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating compliance, and to provide feedback for continuous improvement.
- NEO will conduct an annual site visit to verify compliance with the items identified in the Operations Monitoring and Evaluation Report, which may be revised depending on areas of compliance that must be verified as a result of complaints or concerns.
- NEO will review school compliance with required state and NEO reporting deadlines and identify any areas where NEO has concerns based on the provisions of the Contract Agreement.

Financial

- NEO will collect and review school financials via Epicenter for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating compliance and providing feedback for continuous improvement.
- NEO will review the annual budget of the school and provide comment as necessary.
- NEO will review the school's Annual Financial Audit and identify any areas where NEO has concerns based on the provisions of the Contract Agreement and applicable law.
- NEO will use the NEO Stewardship Award in Finance to recognize and identify exemplary school performance to facilitate sharing of effective practices.

Ongoing, Consistent, and Robust Monitoring and Evaluation

Novation Education Opportunities (NEO), as the authorizing entity, will conduct at least two site visits to each NEO authorized school. One site visit will be an informal site visit, a "learning walk", for the purpose of identifying and facilitating sharing of effective practices. The other site visit will be a formal site visit utilizing the Operations Monitoring and Evaluation Report, either for the purpose of reviewing and verifying school performance for contract renewal, or for reviewing and verifying school performance for performance monitoring. NEO staff and/or NEO Advisors who are experts in overseeing, monitoring and evaluating academics, operations, governance, and finance will be conduct the site visits. The formal site visit will include review of previously requested documents that have not been uploaded to Epicenter to verify compliance. NEO will contact school administration at least one month in advance of the site visit to make arrangements for visiting the school with minimal disruption of its operations.

At least two weeks prior to the formal site visit, NEO will update the Performance Framework and provide the Operations Monitoring and Evaluation Report Template to the school leadership and board chair. School administration will then have two weeks to review the Performance Framework, with the opportunity to comment on each area. NEO will resolve any discrepancies in information with the school at the formal site visit. The review of the status of the Performance Framework will provide the school leadership, board and NEO, feedback on school progress toward meeting the authorizer-school contract terms including the Performance Framework standards and targets. NEO will also complete the Operations Monitoring and Evaluation Report at the formal site visit.

The School's Performance Framework is incorporated into the school's contract with NEO and defines clear, measurable and attainable academic, operational and financial performance standards, measures, metrics, targets and weightings. The targets in the Performance Framework are finalized using the most updated school performance baseline data available at the beginning of each contract term.

The Performance Framework is designed to achieve at least one outcome that meets or exceeds expectations adopted by the commissioner for public school students (World's Best Work Force) per Minnesota Statutes.

The Performance Framework must include a growth measure and target for students below grade level making high growth and students at or above grade level making medium or high growth. The school may use the state assessment growth data or growth data from another assessment such as the NWEA MAP.

Because the purpose of the school is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement and therefore should provide a better option to students in the area served, the Performance Framework must also include the following standard academic performance measures in English Language Arts and Mathematics:

1) For a satisfactory rating, the percent of students meeting enrollment criteria who meet or exceed standards (score grade-level proficient) will exceed the state for the All, English Learner, Special Education and Free/Reduced Meal student focus groups where data is available and/or demonstrate at least a 10 percentage point increase from the baseline results. The baseline results are determined by the results of the prior term.

2) For a satisfactory rating, the percent of students meeting enrollment criteria who meet or exceed standards (score grade-level proficient) will exceed the resident district for the All, English Learner, Special Education and Free/Reduced Meal student focus groups where data is available. The resident district is defined as the district in which the greatest percent of students enrolled reside.

The Contract Renewal Framework may also include additional academic performance measures that the school and authorizer mutually agree to include.

Clear Climate, Operations, and Finance Standards

Other measurable performance standards and quantifiable targets for the operational period under the initial charter contract are to be mutually agreed upon between the authorizer and the school and incorporated into the Performance Framework in the areas of Climate, Operations, and Finance.

Ratings

There are three levels of ratings: not satisfactory, satisfactory and exemplary.

The Performance Framework defines performance requirements for each level. The rating scale is 0-2 (zero through two).

For each measure, a school earns 2 (two) points for exemplary performance, 1 (one) point for satisfactory performance, and 0 (zero) points if performance is not satisfactory.

Weighting of Performance Measures

The measures of Academic Performance are weighted equally by default. The school may propose that certain measures be weighted more than others. The school must submit a proposal that includes a rationale and any supporting information for changes in weighting to the NEO Executive Director at the time of contract negotiations. For example, a school may request that the NWEA MAP growth results be weighted more than the results of the MN State Assessments because all students take the NWEA MAP and because the NWEA MAP provides more valid, reliable and consistent results over time.

However, the Academic Performance measures must be weighted more than 50% of the total points of all performance areas including Climate, Operations, and Financial Performance because the primary purpose of the school is to improve all pupil learning and all student achievement. At the beginning of the contract term the weightings are finalized and are not revised during the term of the contract.

The Executive Director will present the proposal to the NEO Board of Directors and make a recommendation. The NEO Board makes the final decision to enter into or revise contract agreements.

Implementation Guide

NEO and the school will create an implementation guide with specifications for collecting, sharing and reporting all source data used in the Contract Renewal Framework evaluation as well as a process for verification of all school reported data to ensure that the method of data collection remains valid and consistent during the term of the contract.

Combining Data Over the Contract Term

Annual school performance results will be combined each successive year of the contract term wherever possible so that fluctuation due to small group size will be minimized.

Contract Revisions

Once finalized, the terms of the contract can only be revised if a measure is no longer available or changes, and/or if there is another condition which prevents the school from effectively using that measure of performance. The proposed revision must be submitted in writing along with a rationale for the revision and any supporting information to the NEO Executive Director. The Executive Director will present the proposed revision to the NEO Board of Directors and make a recommendation. The NEO Board makes the final decision to revise contract agreements.

NEO and a charter school may revise the contract for the following material contract changes when applicable:

- A change in Location and address of the school
- A change in contract term
- A significant change to the program such as a site and/or grade level expansion
- A significant change to the education program such as incorporating a STEM focus or other focus that was not part of the original charter
- A significant difference in student achievement baseline data from initial assumptions a new school use to set academic performance goals
- A significant change in the state testing that makes current academic performance goals irrelevant
- A significant change to the NEO Renewal Framework Performance Indicator(s)
- Revision to any policy included in the contract
- Any other reason that results in misalignment of the contract and the school conditions agreed upon by both authorizer and charter school.

The school must request the revision in writing and email the revision request in pdf format to the NEO Executive Director.

The school must provide a clear justification for the revision as it relates to one of the reasons noted in this procedure.

The NEO Executive Director will present the request for the revision to the NEO board for consideration.

If the NEO Board approves the revision, the revised contract will be signed and dated by both parties, and the revised contract will be submitted to MDE within 10 days.

Contract Renewal Eligibility

NEO schools must achieve at least a Satisfactory Rating (50% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall and in each performance area (Academic, Climate, Operations, Finance) to be automatically recommended for a three-year contract renewal and at least an Exemplary Rating (70% of points possible) in the Performance Framework overall to automatically be recommended for a five-year contract renewal.

All contract renewals will be for either three or five years. Fewer than three years does not provide enough information on which to make a renewal decision.

Intervention and Corrective Action

NEO schools that prior to their year of contract renewal fall below a Satisfactory Rating in the Performance Framework overall and/or in any performance area (Academic, Climate, Operations, Finance) must enter into a Continuous Improvement Plan that addresses the specific standards in the Performance Framework where the school performance is below Satisfactory. This plan may be the same plan required by the state accountability system.

Closure Plan

If the school does not meet the terms of the Improvement Plan and attain a Satisfactory Rating by the end of the contract term, the school is a candidate for nonrenewal. If the school's contract is not renewed, the school must implement the Closure Plan as described in the school's contract with NEO.

Compliance Checklist: This report is used to document if the school attains a satisfactory or exemplary level by meeting statutory, contractual and MDE compliance requirements. To reach the exemplary rating, a school must have no documented infractions during the fiscal year. Beyond that, to reach the exemplary rating, a school must also maintain a star rating in Epicenter.						
Charter School Name:						
Date of Annual Site Visit:						
Attendees (School and NEO):						
How Verified	Who	#	Requirement	Source Information	Verification Procedure	Code* Follow Up Date and Plan for Meeting Requirement if Not Yet Met
Annual Site Visit	Board Chair Interview	1	Board Member Background Checks	MN Statute 123B.03 Contract Section	The school will provide evidence at the annual site visit that the board member background checks are complete for all current board members.	
		2	Board Training (new and ongoing)	MN Statute 124E.07 Subd. 7	The school will provide evidence at the annual site visit that all current board members meet the training requirements by reviewing the board training certificates (employment, law, finance), and that the board adheres to its bylaws and MN Statutes, including as applicable for board elections.	
		3	Board Member Composition, Terms and Elections	School Bylaws, MN Statute 12E.07	The school will provide evidence at the annual site visit that the board evaluates school leadership per the required qualification areas and implements a school leadership professional development plan as required by MN Statute.	
		4	School Leadership Evaluation	MN Statute 124E.12 Subd. 2	The school will provide evidence at the annual site visit that the background checks are completed for all current staff and volunteers.	
		5	Staff and Volunteer Background Check	MN Statute 123B.03	The school will provide evidence at the annual site visit that teachers meet licensure requirements by reviewing the licensure folder for all current teachers that the school maintains on site.	
		6	Teacher Licensure	MN Statute 124E.12 Subd. 1	The school will provide evidence at the annual site visit that the school implements a teacher evaluation and a peer review process.	
		7	Teacher Evaluation, Peer Review Process	MN Statute 124E.03 Subd. 2(h)	The school will provide evidence at the annual site visit that the school ensures that all students receive instruction on their grade-level MIN Academic Standards and Benchmarks and that the school utilizes a TSES Manual for serving students in special education and an LIEP for serving English learners.	
		8	Standards Alignment, TSES Manual, and LIEP	MN Statute 120B.021 Subd. 1, IDEA, FAPE, and MN Statute 124D.61		

NEO Advisor Facility Walk Through	9 Compliance with Civil Rights Requirements	Federal Civil Rights Law	NEO will verify that the nondiscrimination poster is posted in a prominent place in schools that administer a USDA Child Nutrition program, and that the education program and school activities are equally accessible to all students (ramps, elevator).		
	10 Nonsectarian School Facilities and Program	MN Statute 124E.06 Subd. 3(b)	NEO will verify that there are no exclusive religious texts, symbols, quotations, or objects displayed, the school does not promote religion, and that instructional time is not used for religious accommodations.		
	11 Certificate of Occupancy and Food and Beverage License	MN Administrative Rules 1300.0220, MN Statute 299F.47 and MN Food Code	NEO will verify at the annual site visit that the Certificate of Occupancy is posted and current or that the school has an exemption, and that Fire Marshall inspection is current. If the school provides meals, NEO will verify that the school has a current Food and Beverage License, a Food Service Plan, a Certified Food Protection Manager on site, has requested 2 Food Safety inspections, and has posted the results of the inspections.		
	12 Safety and Security	MN Statutes 124E.03 Subd. 2 and 121A.035 Homeland Security and Emergency Management, MN	NEO will verify at the annual site visit that there is a Crisis Management Policy as well as a system and practice for ensuring secure entry/exit. NEO will also verify that emergency procedures and schedule are in place for fire and tornado drills. MDE requires 5 fire and lockdown drills a year and 1 tornado drill.		

NEO Advisors Board Meeting Observ	13	Open Meeting Law	MN Statutes 124E.07 Subd. 8(a) and 13D, Contract Section 6.1	NEO will verify that the board follows MN Open Meeting Law by reviewing the NEO Board Observation Rubric section on compliance with Open Meeting Law.	
	14	Bylaws	Contract Section 6.1 Contract Section 4.1(C)	NEO will verify that the board governs according to the board's bylaws and that the school's bylaws comply with current statute by reviewing the NEO Board Observation rubric section on compliance with Open Meeting Law.	
NEO Advisors	15	Current Board Roster	MN Statute 124E.07 Subd. 8(b),	NEO will verify that the board roster on file w/NEO and at the school's website is current.	
Website Review	16	Website Requirements	MN Statutes 124E.07 Subd. 8(b), 124E.09(C)	NEO will verify through website review that all website requirements are met.	
Epicenter Document Review	17	Policies & Assurances 1) Annual Assurance and 2) Compliance with laws prohibiting discrimination. 3) Admissions and Lottery	MDE, Federal Civil Rights Law	NEO will verify that the school has required policies including the Annual Charter School Assurances and Conflict of Interest Disclosure. NEO will also verify that the school submitted the Assurance of Compliance with State and Federal Law prohibiting discrimination to MDE on time. NEO will also verify that the school's Admission and Lottery Policy is compliant.	
	18	Updated Certificate of Insurance	MN Statute 124E.09(C), Contract Section 6.1(b)	NEO will verify that the school has a current insurance policy that meets statutory requirements.	
	19	School Calendar Required Instructional Hours	MN Statutes 124E.03 Subd.6, 120A.41	NEO will verify that the school calendar has at least the required number of instructional hours (calendar must identify instructional hours).	
	20	Annual Budget	Contract Section 6.1(b)	NEO will verify that the school submitted the board approved annual budget by July 1 and any revised budget(s) if revisions in board meeting financials.	
	21	Annual/WBWF Reports	MN Statutes 124E.03, 124E.16, Federal Civil Rights	NEO will verify that the Annual /WBWF reports and Audit meet requirements, and that the school has an EL Plan of Service and K-3 Literacy Plan if applicable.	
	22	Board Meeting Packet	Contract Section 6.8(a)	NEO will verify that the board meeting packet submissions (including financials) meet contract requirements (budget to actual, ledger, cash flow, check register)	
*Codes: M = Met, N = Not Met (If not met, please identify follow up date and plan for meeting the requirement)					