Progress Monitoring Toolkit

A Toolkit to Support Strong Implementation of School Actions

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Executive Summary

Purpose of the Toolkit

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide a set of tools intended to support high-quality progress monitoring of (1) partner-managed and (2) district-managed actions. These tools should help Texas districts serving as authorizers as they implement a comprehensive, coherent performance accountability and compliance monitoring system for partner-operated campuses. In addition, the tools should help districts implement district-managed actions. Chief Innovation Officers, in collaboration with identified leaders within their school systems, would use these tools as part of a regular calendar of progress monitoring.

Districts have many choices about how best to progress monitor school actions, and local context (e.g., existing systems for monitoring, number of actions to progress monitor, relative performance of campuses, size of the district) should inform those choices. This toolkit is intended to provide descriptive framing and examples to help districts make the choices that are best for them.

Note: At the time of initial publication, this toolkit includes tools that can be used both with partner-managed and district-managed actions. Over time, additional tools will be added that specifically support progress monitoring of district-managed actions.

Visits for Monitoring & Compliance of Partner-Operated School Actions (as authorizer)

When progress monitoring partner-operated actions, authorizer visits are a critical component of a comprehensive, coherent performance accountability and compliance system that ultimately empowers the authorizing board to make rigorous, evidence-based decisions regarding renewal, revocation, probation, or any other interventions. In addition, these visits can be powerful opportunities to build trusting relationships between the district and partner while increasing the likelihood of student success.

Authorizer visits help to inform the evidence base for quantitative and qualitative analysis. Whenever possible, data and any needed artifacts should be collected efficiently to optimize time and minimize campus disruption. This includes pulling reports centrally when possible and housing documents (e.g., certificates of occupancy, handbooks) in a secure, shared folder. Suggestions for where to collect that information can be found later in this document under the heading Compliance Visit | Desk Audit. In addition to this, though, monitoring visits are essential.

According to NACSA, "A quality authorizer conducts school oversight that competently evaluates performance and monitors charter school fulfillment of legal obligations; ensures charter schools' legally entitled autonomy; protects students' rights; informs intervention (including probation), revocation and renewal decisions; and reports publicly on individual and collective performance of the charter schools it oversees."

To this end, monitoring visits on partner-operated campuses should be grounded in the terms of the negotiated contract. The "look fors" on the visit should be shaped by the agreements laid out in the school design and/or application, the contract, and (when relevant) the high-quality expectations for a particular school model (e.g., Montessori, STEAM, P-TECH). In addition, the visitation process should adhere to any contractual agreements related to notification and follow-up.

Visits for Monitoring & Compliance of District-Managed School Actions

The role of the district is different when progress monitoring district-managed actions, though there can be some overlap in processes and tools. For district-managed actions, the purpose of progress monitoring often includes a combination of monitoring (1) a prioritized set of school quality indicators that are aligned to the Effective Schools Framework and district expectations, (2) look fors that specifically align with the school model (e.g., STEAM, Montessori), and (3) when relevant any additional expectations or established autonomies/flexibilities (e.g., those laid out in a district/campus Performance Agreement). Depending on the organizational structure within a district, progress monitoring is often done in collaboration with academics (e.g., Chief Academic Officer) and school performance (e.g., Chief Schools Officer). This could mean a district adds a new type of visit to the calendar; it could also mean a district repurposes or supplements existing progress monitoring processes (e.g., learning walk, instructional round, HQIM visit) to maximize time and streamline feedback. During the life cycle of a grant, there may be processes in place (e.g., School Quality Review) that serve all purposes of progress monitoring but there may be supplemental experiences that districts choose to add.

Types of Visits

When progress monitoring partner-operated actions, there are several types of visits to engage in - some that should happen regularly (e.g., Compliance and Monitoring Visits) while others happen once (e.g., Pre-Opening Visit) and when renewal decisions are being made. The table below outlines different types of visits, how long and how often they should happen, and for what purpose.

Districts may choose not to include Compliance Visits when progress monitoring district-managed actions, as districts often have existing systems and processes in place to monitor campus compliance. If the district has established a set of autonomies and flexibilities that would benefit from some progress monitoring, though, an on-site visit may be beneficial.

Type of Visit	Timing & Frequency	Recommended Duration	Purpose(s)
Partner-Operated			
Pre-Opening Visit	1x before the school launches with students	Half-day or less	Determine the new charter school's readiness to serve students and begin instruction

Compliance Visit*	1x/year (unless additional visits are necessary)	Half-day or less	For partner-operated campuses, assessing how effectively the charter is fulfilling its legal and contractual obligations. While an on-site compliance-focused visit can help an authorizer gather needed evidence, that visit will need to be supplemented by a desk audit and potentially interviews before, during, or after the visit with specific stakeholder groups. This is distinct from, but can be integrated into, existing district compliance visits such as Special Education and Dual Language.
Monitoring Visit*	**Years 1-2:** At least 2x annually (recommended) **Years 3+:** No fewer than 1x annually; varies depending on context and overall performance	Typically 2-4 hours/visit, but a visit could last as long as a full day depending on the scope of the visit	**1,** Monitor the successful implementation of the school model; **2,** assess a variety of indicators beyond what exists in existing quantitative analyses; **3,** provide meaningful opportunities for formative positive and adjusting feedback; and **4,** determine potential opportunities for sharing and strengthening the partnership; and **5,** provide opportunities to spotlight and celebrate innovation.
Renewal Visit	1x, aligned to each school's specific renewal cycle	Varies based on the charter contract, but is a resource-intensive process that balances careful quantitative analysis spanning the life of the charter contract and in-depth qualitative review.	Determine what actions will be taken related to charter renewal.
District-Managed			
Compliance Visit (If needed)	1x/year (unless additional visits are necessary)	Half-day or less	If the district's existing methods do not monitor all aspects of compliance, districts may add this visit. In addition, districts may identify opportunities to streamline other district

			compliance visits such as Special Education and Dual Language.
Monitoring Visit	**Years 1-2 of new school design implementation:** At least 3x annually, including within the first quarter of school opening **Years 3+:** No fewer than 2x annually; varies depending on context and overall campus performance	Typically 2-4 hours/visit, but a visit could last as long as a full day depending on the scope of the visit	Typically, these visits are intended to (1) provide formative feedback around a prioritized set of look fors related to overall school quality and the specific implementation of a new school design and (2) identify any additional support a campus may need to reach its full potential.
*Compliance & Monitoring visits can be integrated into the same visit			

Monitoring Visits

Monitoring Visit | Sample Agenda

Description: This tool outlines an example of how to structure an on-site monitoring visit.

	Monitoring Visit
Setting	Campus
Participants	**Campus Leadership** (e.g., Principal, Asst. Principal) **District Leadership** (e.g., CIO, CIO support team, CAO, CSO) **[If applicable] Operator Leadership** (e.g., Executive Director/Superintendent, School Leadership Team)
Length	2-4 hours
Frequency	1-3 or more times/year

Monitoring Visit Agenda	**Agenda for the Visit**
	I. **Check-in with leadership***
	    A. Warm Welcome & Introductions
	    B. Frame for the Day
	    C. Establish norms for the visit (e.g., No more than ## visitors per classroom at once, Collect low-inference evidence)
	    D. Review academic priorities for the year and any relevant recent data
	    E. Align on focus areas and look fors
	    F. Review and better understand current context
	    G. Share any feedback from district functional areas
	II. **Classroom visits** with a walkthrough tool to collect evidence
	III. **Leadership debrief** to ask and answer questions, share feedback and wonderings, and determine any next steps
	IV. **Gratitude & Closing**
	
	Additional options for visits include: - Focus group/panel with students - Focus group/panel with faculty - Focus group/panel with families

	● Observe a campus-based professional learning routine/practice (e.g., PLC, department meeting)
Pre-Work	**District leadership** ● [For partner-managed actions] Send agenda and materials for the visit (e.g., Monitoring Tool) to Operator according to any timelines negotiated in the contract (Recommended: at least 2 weeks before visit) ● Review any existing data and planning documents (e.g., Campus Improvement Plan, School Design, negotiated contract) ● Check in with functional areas to identify any feedback **Campus Leadership** ● Identify and share the focus areas for the year, which forms the foundation of the Monitoring visit ● Be ready to discuss any recent data
Follow-Up	● [For partner-managed actions] CIO Team synthesizes findings, drafts a findings report, and sends to Operator within 1 week ● [If needed] Follow up next steps, per the visit
*This leadership meeting can also happen prior to the visit.	

Monitoring Visit | Example Monitoring Tool from Edgewood ISD

Description: This monitoring tool is an example of one used when progress monitoring a partner-operated school action in Edgewood ISD in order to (1) collect supplemental qualitative evidence in classrooms related to the successful implementation of the operator's school model and (2) support the creation of meaningful opportunities to provide feedback to operators. The content for the digital note catcher - both the focus areas and the look fors - come from the negotiated contract and approved school design.

For district-managed actions, districts would prioritize focus areas and look fors based on a combination of school quality, school model/design, and district expectations.

Functionality: The digital note catcher can be organized to meet a district's needs and/or preferences. Two illustrative examples are included below as options: 1, a narrative description of look fors; and 2, a checklist of look fors. Districts may choose to leverage other formats or data collection tools (e.g., Google Forms).

A customizable classroom observation template can be found below.

Date	
Time	
Location	
Classroom context	**Check all that apply:** ☐ Whole group instruction ☐ Small group instruction ☐ Elective ☐ Intervention ☐ Blended learning ☐ Model-specific (e.g., STEAM time) ☐ [what else might we see?]
Observer	

Evidence - Look Fors
Y> Yes, there was clear evidence this was in place for students
N> No, there was not clear evidence this was in place for students
N/O> Not observed during the time

	Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **Content Literacy:** Students (a) recognize and confidently use the vocabulary of each content area; (b) read and comprehend various texts; (c) listen to guest speakers and ask relevant questions; actively engage in class activities; and (d) create visual representations. Classrooms are rich-print environments (e.g., word wall, search for awesome language while reading, labeling objectives in multiple languages, and anchor charts. Word study is prevalent as part of a student's day. There is attention paid to word formation processes. Students are given changes to identify word relationships (e.g., polysemy, homonyms, synonyms, and antonyms). Students are given extensive reading activities that support vocabulary acquisition through independent reading time. **Option 2: Checklist of look fors** **Content Literacy:** Students: ☐ recognize and confidently use the vocabulary of each content area ☐ read and comprehend various texts ☐ listen to guest speakers and ask relevant questions; actively engage in class activities ☐ create visual representations
	Notes
	Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **Communication Literacy:** Students: (a) read, write, listen, speak, view, and represent ideas visually every day and engage in enthusiastic conversations; (b) see themselves as developing writers, speakers, and visual designers; (c) use Social Emotional Learning to have more productive conversations; and (d) speak with confidence. **Option 2: Checklist of look fors** **Communication Literacy:** Students: ☐ read, write, listen, speak, view, and represent ideas visually every day and engage in enthusiastic conversations ☐ see themselves as developing writers, speakers, and visual designers ☐ use Social Emotional Learning to have more productive conversations ☐ speak with confidence
	Notes

	Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **Intercultural Literacy:** Students: (a) become aware of their own cultural identity and feel pride in their families and communities; (b) they see themselves and their families as contributors to history and to current societal innovations; (c) appreciate diversity and inclusion, and bullying based on difference is diminished; and (d) can apply their Social and Emotional Learning to cross-cultural communication. **Option 2: Checklist of look fors** **Intercultural Literacy:** Students: ☐ become aware of their own cultural identity and feel pride in their families and communities ☐ they see themselves and their families as contributors to history and to current societal innovations ☐ appreciate diversity and inclusion, and bullying based on difference is diminished ☐ can apply their Social and Emotional Learning to cross-cultural communication
	Notes
	Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **Personal Literacy:** Students: (a) develop strong intrapersonal skills through Social and Emotional Learning; (b) learn to express their own ideas productively; (c) learn to recognize when they need help and how to reach out; (d) learn to recognize their physical needs (e.g., rest, movement, food, water); and (e) feel valued in their teams. **Option 2: Checklist of look fors** **Personal Literacy:** Students: ☐ develop strong intrapersonal skills through Social and Emotional Learning ☐ learn to express their own ideas productively ☐ learn to recognize when they need help and how to reach out ☐ learn to recognize their physical needs (e.g., rest, movement, food, water) ☐ feel valued in their teams
	Notes

	Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **Digital Literacy:** Students: (a) conduct investigations and research using online tools and digital resources; (b) locate, analyze and select primary sources, quality news sources, multiple perspectives and opposing viewpoints; (c) obtain and analyze various forms of data and represent their findings in a variety of formats; (d) demonstrate comfort when introduced to new digital tools; and (e) communicate effectively using digital formats. **Option 2: Checklist of look fors** **Digital Literacy:** Students: ☐ conduct investigations and research using online tools and digital resources ☐ locate, analyze and select primary sources, quality news sources, multiple perspectives and opposing viewpoints ☐ obtain and analyze various forms of data and represent their findings in a variety of formats ☐ demonstrate comfort when introduced to new digital tools ☐ communicate effectively using digital formats
	Notes
	Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **Maximizing instructional time:** Focused reading intervention exists for students who are struggling with reading at grade level. Social skills are built in small groups. School schedule includes time allocated to a mix of different types of experiences. Students have opportunities to engage in High Leverage Practices. Instructional time is maximized in alignment with House Bill 4545. **Option 2: Checklist of look fors** **Maximizing instructional time:** ☐ Focused reading intervention exists for students who are struggling with reading at grade level ☐ Social skills are built in small groups ☐ School schedule includes time allocated to a mix of different types of experiences ☐ Students have opportunities to engage in High Leverage Practices ☐ Instructional time is maximized in alignment with House Bill 4545
	Notes

		Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **New Tech alignment:** Student outcomes are clearly defined and measure student success. Outcomes are based on TEKS and larger goals for the student (e.g., college and career readiness, competent citizens and caring community members). **Culture that empowers:** Students are given opportunities to find and use their voices. Families are valued. School staff members recognize the impact and value of the work they do. **Teaching that engages:** Instruction is highly integrative and interdisciplinary. Students are pulled in to actively work and solve problems that have meaning for them. **Technology that enables:** Students are empowered by technology and are able to experience success in solving problems, proposing new ways and seeing the impact of their contributions. Students are able to solve problems using Technology. **Option 2: Checklist of look fors** **New Tech alignment:** ☐ Student outcomes are clearly defined and measure student success ☐ Outcomes are based on TEKS and larger goals for the student (e.g., college and career readiness, competent citizens and caring community members) ☐ Students are given opportunities to find and use their voices. Families are valued. School staff members recognize the impact and value of the work they do. ☐ Instruction is highly integrative and interdisciplinary. Students are pulled in to actively work and solve problems that have meaning for them. ☐ Students are empowered by technology and are able to experience success in solving problems, proposing new ways and seeing the impact of their contributions. Students are able to solve problems using Technology.
		Notes
		Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **Project based learning & STEAM:** Students engage in project based learning and STEAM-related activities in ways that are integrated into content areas.

	Option 2: Checklist of look fors ☐ Students engage in project based learning and STEAM-related activities in ways that are integrated into content areas
	Notes
	Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **School Culture:** Students: (a) engage in mindfulness; (b) leverage a democratic process and shared accountability in classrooms; and (c) demonstrate cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control. Student engagement is high. Morning meeting and closing circle are implemented daily. **Option 2: Checklist of look fors** **School Culture:** Students: ☐ engage in mindfulness ☐ leverage a democratic process and shared accountability in classrooms ☐ demonstrate cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control ☐ Student engagement is high ☐ Morning meeting and closing circle are implemented daily
	Notes
	Option 1: Narrative description of look fors **Assessment:** Campus leaders regularly track and use data and other evidence to track progress using multiple measures and make adjustments - including corrective action - as needed. **Option 2: Checklist of look fors** ☐ Campus leaders regularly track and use data and other evidence to track progress using multiple measures and make adjustments - including corrective action - as needed.
	Notes

Partner-Operated Monitoring Visit | Annotated Summary of Findings

Description: Within one week of a Monitoring Visit on a partner-operated campus, Operators should receive written documentation of the findings and agreed next steps (if any) from the visit. This (1) increases transparency, (2) sets expectations as needed, and (3) provides an ongoing evidence base authorizers can use over time when making authorization-related decisions.

Strengths	Challenges/Considerations
Priority 1 *[These are based on the conversations with leadership; if specific areas were prioritized for the visit, this feedback should be aligned to that; if something else emerged as a priority during the visit, that can also be added]*	
[Bulleted description of evidence-based strengths identified as part of the Monitoring visit process; these insights can be developed based on data review, conversations, and classroom/common space observations] • • •	*[Bulleted description of evidence-based strengths identified as part of the Monitoring visit process; these insights can be developed based on data review, conversations, and classroom/common space observations]* • • •
Priority 2 *[These are based on the conversations with leadership; if specific areas were prioritized for the visit, this feedback should be aligned to that; if something else emerged as a priority during the visit, that can also be added]*	
[Bulleted description of evidence-based strengths identified as part of the Monitoring visit process; these insights can be developed based on data review, conversations, and classroom/common space observations] • • •	*[Bulleted description of evidence-based strengths identified as part of the Monitoring visit process; these insights can be developed based on data review, conversations, and classroom/common space observations]* • • •
Priority 3 *[These are based on the conversations with leadership; if specific areas were prioritized for the visit, this feedback should be aligned to that; if something else emerged as a priority during the visit, that can also be added]*	
[Bulleted description of evidence-based strengths identified as part of the Monitoring visit process; these insights can be developed based on data review, conversations, and classroom/common space observations] • • •	*[Bulleted description of evidence-based strengths identified as part of the Monitoring visit process; these insights can be developed based on data review, conversations, and classroom/common space observations]* • • •
Agreements and Next Steps	

[These reflect any agreements and next steps made as part of the monitoring visit; this could include agreements the Operator made, and it could also reflect agreements made by the district]
Operator
- Operator will [commitment]…by [date]

District
- District will [commitment]…by [date]

Monitoring Visit Template | Classroom Observation Tool

Description: This tool can be used for progress monitoring both partner-operated and district-managed school actions, though the focus areas and look fors would derive from different sources as described above.

Date	
Time	
Location	
Classroom context	**Check all that apply:** ☐ Whole group instruction ☐ Small group instruction ☐ Elective ☐ Intervention ☐ Blended learning ☐ Model-specific (e.g., STEAM time) ☐ [what else might we see?]
Observer	

Evidence - Look Fors **Y>** Yes, there was clear evidence this was in place for students **N>** No, there was not clear evidence this was in place for students **N/O>** Not observed during the time	
	Focus Area 1: Pulled from the approved school design and/or negotiated contract, this is a place to house the look fors from a particular focus area for the Monitoring Visit. This can be drafted in the form of a description (which would look like this) or a checklist such as the one visualized below. Checklist of Look Fors in Focus Area 1: ☐ Description of Look For 1 ☐ Description of Look For 2 ☐ Description of Look For 3

	Notes: <mark>This section is a blank space on the monitoring tool to capture notes from individual classrooms.</mark>
	Focus Area 2: Pulled from the approved school design and/or negotiated contract, this is a place to house the look fors from a particular focus area for the Monitoring Visit. This can be drafted in the form of a description (which would look like this) or a checklist such as the one visualized below. Checklist of Look Fors in Focus Area 2: ☐ Description of Look For 1 ☐ Description of Look For 2 ☐ Description of Look For 3
	Notes: <mark>This section is a blank space on the monitoring tool to capture notes from individual classrooms.</mark>.
	Focus Area 3: Pulled from the approved school design and/or negotiated contract, this is a place to house the look fors from a particular focus area for the Monitoring Visit. This can be drafted in the form of a description (which would look like this) or a checklist such as the one visualized below. Checklist of Look Fors in Focus Area 1: ☐ Description of Look For 1 ☐ Description of Look For 2 ☐ Description of Look For 3
	Notes: <mark>This section is a blank space on the monitoring tool to capture notes from individual classrooms.</mark>

Partner-Operated Monitoring Visit Template | Summary of Findings

Strengths	Challenges/Considerations
Priority 1:	
• • •	• • •
Priority 2:	
• • •	• • •
Priority 3:	
• • •	• • •
Agreements and Next Steps *Operator* • *District* •	

Compliance Visits

Compliance Visit | Overview

This section is primarily focused on monitoring compliance of partner-operated campuses. For district-managed school actions, compliance systems and processes typically reflect the district's approach to compliance overall (e.g., leveraging the district's audit, using district compliance processes for programs like Special Education and Dual Language). That said, districts may have an interest in exploring different approaches to managing compliance that are informed by these tools if desired.

For partner-operated school actions, compliance visits are opportunities for the District to assess how effectively the charter operator is fulfilling its legal and contractual obligations related to Academics, Finance, and Organizational Operations. While many aspects of compliance can be assessed without an on-site visit and instead through a desk audit, there are aspects of compliance that require, or benefit from, on-site visits. Depending on the context, compliance visits can also be integrated into a Monitoring visit.

In the published Texas Education Agency Campus Evaluation Framework, several specific aspects of compliance-related monitoring are spotlighted (see below) along with aligned indicators and measures. The timing and method of evidence collection for the information in each of these areas varies; some require on-site visits while others do not. For evidence collection that does require on-site visits, a compliance visit can be the method of data collection.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK COMPONENTS – AN OVERVIEW

ACADEMIC	FINANCIAL	ORGANIZATIONAL
The **Academic Evaluation Framework** includes measures that allow a district authorizer to evaluate the academic performance of a charter school. This section includes: 1. Texas A - F Accountability System; 2. Mission-specific Goals; and 3. Additional focus areas from the Texas A - F Accountability System that the authorizer wishes to highlight or emphasize.	The **Financial Evaluation Framework** measures the financial health and viability of schools through up to four near-term indicators: 1. current ratio; 2. unrestricted days cash; 3. enrollment variance; and 4. debt default; and up to four sustainability indicators: 1. total margin and aggregated three-year total margin; 2. debt-to-asset ratio; 3. cash flow; and 4. debt service coverage ratio. Performance on indicators are evaluated on an annual basis using the annual financial audit, though not all indicators are applicable to all schools.	The **Organizational Evaluation Framework** provides performance and compliance targets for the legal and contractual obligations that schools must meet. There are six areas of focus: 1. Educational program; 2. Financial management and oversight; 3. Governance and reporting; 4. Students and employees; 5. School environment; and 6. School culture.

Partner-Operated Compliance Visit | Sample Agenda

Description: This is a sample agenda for how to structure an on-site compliance visit to prioritize in-person evidence collection aligned to the Campus Evaluation Framework. The method of evidence-collection should be aligned to the specific evidence being collected. Examples of methods include: 1, discussion with leadership; 2, interviews with relevant stakeholders; and 3, viewing processes such as file storage.

Compliance Visit	
Setting	Campus
Participants	**Operator Leadership** (e.g., Executive Director/Superintendent, School Leadership Team) **Campus Leadership** (e.g., Principal, Asst. Principal) **District Leadership** (e.g., CIO, CIO support team, CAO)
Length	Half day or less
Frequency	1x/year (unless additional visits needed)

Monitoring Visit Agenda	**Agenda for the Visit**
	I. **Warm Welcome & Introductions**
	II. **Framing**
	III. **Discussion with Operator Leadership**
	   A. Academic Evaluation Framework
	      1. Performance Goals
	      2. Assessment
	   B. Finance Evaluation Framework (if relevant)
	   C. Organizational (Operational) Framework
	      1. Indicator 1: Near-Term Measures
	      2. Indicator 2: Financial Management and Oversight (if relevant)
	      3. Indicator 3: Governance and Reporting
	      4. Indicator 4: Students and Employees
	      5. Indicator 5: School Environment
	      6. Indicator 6: School Culture
	IV. **Next Steps**
	
	Strategies to consider as part of the visit, with interview protocols below:
	   - Observations from classrooms, cafeteria, or relevant common spaces - Interview Operator Leadership - Interview Office Staff

	● Interview Families/Community Members ● Interview Teachers
Pre-Work	**CIO Team** ● Send agenda and materials for the visit (e.g., compliance tool) to Operator according to any timelines negotiated in the contract (Recommended: at least 2 weeks before visit) ● Review any existing data ● Check in with functional areas to identify any Operator feedback (positive and adjusting) **Campus Leadership** ● Identify and share the focus areas for the year, which forms the foundation of the Monitoring visit
Follow-Up	● CIO Team synthesizes findings, drafts a findings report, and sends to Operator within 1 week ● [If needed] Follow up next steps, per the visit

Partner-Operated Compliance Visit | Desk Audit

Description: The table below outlines compliance-related evidence that does not require an on-site visit and suggests locations where that information may be found.

Measure	Suggested location to find information
Academic Evaluation	
Texas A - F Accountability System	www.txschools.gov
Mission-specific Goals	Potentially available on Operator website
Additional focus areas from the Texas A - F Accountability System that the authorizer wishes to highlight or emphasize	Varies by operator
Financial Evaluation	
Current ratio	Audited balance sheet
Unrestricted days cash	Audited balance sheet, income statement
Enrollment variance: actual enrollment divided by enrollment projection in charter school approved budget	Charter school board-approved annual budget (which includes projected enrollment) and actual enrollment
Debt default	Notes to audited financial statements
Total margin and aggregated three-year total margin	Three years of audited income statements
Debt-to-asset ratio	Audited balance sheet
Cashflow	Three years of audited balance sheets
Debt service coverage ratio	*Net Income:* audited income statement *Depreciation expense:* audited cash flow statement *Interest expense:* audited cash flow statement and/or income statement

	● *Annual principal and interest obligations:* provided from school
Organizational Evaluation	
Education program	● Interviews with stakeholders ● Reports from the charter school ● Additional data sources that vary based on the material terms of the education program outlined in the contract
Education requirements	● Assurance of compliance from the charter school board (as possible) ● Data requests (as needed)
Effective instruction & assessment	● Review of: curriculum materials, lesson plans, professional development calendars, job descriptions, or third-party reports or monitoring
Students with disabilities	● Data from student information systems or other regular reporting mechanisms ● Record reviews ● Interviews of stakeholders (if not on the site visit) ● Third-party reports or monitoring
Bilingual education/English learners	● Data from student information systems, or other regular reporting mechanisms ● Review of school policies on a website or in a code of conduct ● Record audits ● Interviews of stakeholders (if not on the site visit) ● Third-party reports or monitoring
Financial reporting and compliance	Review of financial reports, financial audit
Financial management and oversight	Annual financial audit, documented scope of audit requirements
Governance requirements	● Analysis of board packets, including board minutes, and assurances of compliance ● Published school board policies and bylaws, including any amendments made since the last review ● Statement of assurances of compliance with conflicts of interest and board membership requirements, among other requirements ● Periodic attendance by the district authorizer at board meetings (as needed) ● Board strategic plan (if needed) ● Board oversight and evaluation plan (if needed)

Reporting requirements	Adherence to district-created reporting calendar in place to track all required reports to the authorizer, TEA, and any other relevant parties
Management accountability	Written performance agreement (e.g., written contract, established evaluation process)
Governance commitment to student academic achievement and well-being	● Review of board meeting information ● Observation of board meetings ● Interviews of stakeholders ● Third-party reports or monitoring
Students and employees	● Reports to the authorizer and/or TEA ● Charter school board policies and examples of forms ● Interviews with charter school community stakeholders (if not on site visit) ● Written board assurance of compliance with certain elements of this measure that may be difficult to verify unless through investigation (if needed)
Attendance goals	● Student attendance reports
Staff credentials	● Reports to TEA through TAPR
Employee rights	● Written board assurance of compliance ● Third-party reports (e.g., court rulings, employment agency findings)
Background checks	● TEA's Educator Certification reporting system ● Written board assurance of compliance
School environment	● Written board assurance of compliance ● Review of existing documentation
Health and safety	● Written board assurance of compliance ● Third-party reviews
Information management	● Written board assurance of compliance ● Third-party reviews
School culture	● Review of school policies, student/parent handbooks, and other records ● Third-party reports or monitoring
Family and community involvement	● Review of school policies, student/parent handbooks, calendars, and other records ● Third-party reports

Partner-Operated Compliance Visit | Illustrative Example from a Texas district

Description: This is an example of a structured compliance visit implemented by a Texas district. This visit provided an opportunity to collect evidence that required an on-site visit.

Objectives:
- **Launch** the 2021-2022 performance accountability and compliance monitoring system
- **Engage in conversation and collaboration** to assess the current state of compliance-related areas in the partnership between ISD and Operator
- **Gather feed forward** to improve this process

Agenda:
- **Warm Welcome & Quick Introductions**
- **Framing for the Day**
- **Academic Evaluation Framework**
    a. Review performance goals and share campus improvement plan aligned to goals specified in contract
    b. Review assessment and reporting timeline and guidelines provided by Operator
- **Financial Evaluation Framework** (N/A due to timing of visit)
- **Organizational (Operational) Evaluation Framework**
    a. Progress monitor any agreed-upon expectations
    c. **Review Indicator 1: Near-Term Measures**
        i. Educational plan implementation – classroom visit – evidence of implementation
            1. Share Campus Mission and Vision
            2. Review Response to Intervention framework (e.g., routines and strategies currently being implemented)
            3. Review plan for evidence-based professional development
            4. Review approach to creating Positive School Climate
        ii. Review instructional minutes document and master schedule updates (if any)
        iii. Check on required training of staff (e.g., completion report)
        iv. Students with Disabilities
            1. Review list of identified students
            2. Review ARD schedule (e.g., review copy of a sign in sheet from a scheduled meeting)
            3. Review a randomly-selected SPED folder
            4. Review documentation receipt of accommodations (teachers, instructional coaches, etc.)
        v. Bilingual Education/Emergent Bilingual
            1. Review a list of students identified as EB (ELL)

2. Review timeline for LPAC meetings, minutes, & member roster
3. Review a randomly-selected LPAC folder
4. Review documentation receive of accommodations
d. **Review Indicator 2: Financial Management and Oversight - N/A due to timing of visit**
e. **Review Indicator 3: Governance and Reporting**
   i. Review posting of board policies and adopted bylaws on campus website
   ii. Review operation policies posted on campus website
   iii. Discuss campus adherence to reporting requirements (Title I, PEIMS, etc.)
f. **Review Indicator 4: Students and Employees**
   i. Review progress toward campus Attendance goals
   ii. Review staff credentials (e.g., teachers & paraprofessionals certifications)
   iii. Review staffing roster & placements
   iv. Review background checks required by law
g. **Review Indicator 5: School Environment**
   i. Review operator inventory lists
   ii. Review safety planning & protocols
   iii. Review health & food services, documentation, and protocols
   iv. Review information management
      1. Student records (verify review, reporting, security)
      2. Testing materials (verify security)
h. **Review Indicator 6: School Culture - to be monitored on separate visit**
i. **Closing**
   i. Identify any additional information to review
   ii. Establish a date for monitoring visit
- **Reflection & Closing:**
  a. What about this experience worked well?
  b. What about this experience could improve moving forward?

Interview Protocols Aligned to Campus Evaluation Framework

Overview: Before, during, or after a compliance visit at a partner-operated campus, interviews with various stakeholder groups can be a useful process to collect all the compliance-based information an authorizer should be collecting. Below is a starter set of questions to ask that are mapped to specific aspects of the Campus Evaluation Framework. In some cases, questions will need to be tailored to the negotiated terms in the contract or district-specific policies; those are highlighted in yellow.

Interview Questions for Operator Leadership
- 1.A: [Specific questions about the education program as outlined in the contract]
- 1.E: What are the processes used to identify students for bilingual or English as a second language services?
- 1.E: [Review an LPAC folder looking for compliance]
- 3.D: What would you say are your primary responsibilities as school leaders on the campus? (probe for role as instructional leader and opportunities to coach and give feedback to teachers)
- 3.D: What are the data systems and processes you utilize to inform decision-making? [Follow-up questions may be added that are specific to contract]
- 3.D: What are the primary resources you've invested in to ensure student achievement? What if any additional resources do you think are needed?

[If not outlined in existing documentation such as a Student Handbook/Code of Conduct]
- 4.5: Describe the processes you utilize to ensure students have due process.
- 4.5: What processes do you implement to ensure student privacy is protected?

Interview Questions for Office Staff
- 4.5: How do you collect student information at the beginning of the year? When a student enrolls after the first day?
- 4.5: Where do you store that student information? How do you secure it? [note: visual evidence may be helpful]

Interview Questions for Families/Community Members
- 4.5: Describe the process you went through for your child to enroll in the school.
- 6.A: Are there any needs you think your child has that are not being met by the school right now?
- 6.B: What is the school doing to create a welcoming environment for you and your family? What if anything do you think could create an even more welcoming environment for you?
- 6.B: How and how frequently do you receive updates on how your child is doing in school?
- 6.B: What role if any can parents and families have in creating and refining the school's mission, vision, and values?
- 6.B: What are the different ways you can be involved in the school as a parent? What are you invited to do? What can you volunteer to do?

Interview Questions for Teachers
- 1.A: ==[Specific questions about the education program defined in the contract]==
- 3.D: What are the systems and processes used for teacher coaching and feedback in the school?
- 3.D: What are the data systems and processes you use as a teacher to inform decision-making?
- 3.D: What if any additional resources do you think are needed on the campus to support student achievement?
- ==6.A: When students in your class do something that violates the student code of conduct, describe what happens?==