



## Charter Renewal Site Visit Questionnaire

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Dear School Leader,

The renewal site visit schedule will draw on the current implementation steps of the major improvement strategies identified in the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) as identified by the school leader during the pre-visit call. If needed, organizational and financial components will be added to the site visit if these areas have been identified for improvement in the DCSD Compliance Process, or through conversations with the DCSD Office of Choice Programming.

The site visit protocol will primarily focus on areas for collaborative school improvement, and the visit will also include an opportunity for the school to highlight components of their program that are unique or are a source of pride for the school. Site visits may include instructional observations, focus groups with staff, students, and interviews with school Board members and any other relevant governing committees. The visit may include additional components as determined during the planning call.

Please review the form below prior to the pre-visit planning call. After the conversation, an initial draft will be provided to the school leader to review in order to ensure that the outcomes for the site visit are clear and mutually agreed upon.

### Pre-Visit Questionnaire (Please Complete)

Site Visit Contact Name	Jeromy Johnson
Site Visit Contact Title	Head of School
Site Visit Contact Email	jcjohnson@dcsdk12.org
Site Visit Contact Cell Phone	720-641-7977
Visit Date	9-30-24

**Section 1 - Pre-visit Planning Call Prep - The area in “Charter Response” should be completed by the Charter Leader prior to the Site Planning Call. The Reviewer will add notes and responses in preparation for the Site Visit.**

**School Mission**

Question from DCSD	Charter Response	Reviewer Response and Notes
Describe your school’s mission and vision	The Mission of the DCS Montessori is to provide students with an opportunity to acquire an education based on an authentic and accredited curriculum founded on the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori.	The mission of DCS Montessori is evident in literally every square foot of the building, and in the behavior of students, attitude of staff, and the values shared by leadership. The school is faithful to the Montessori educational philosophy and that philosophy is observed in a tangible way in every classroom. The school is committed to a developmental model, teaching students not only the content of the class, but teaching students how to grow and develop into mature young people who understand how to make good decisions in every aspect of their life.
How might the site visit team observe the school’s mission/vision?	Observe in our classrooms, especially at the younger levels.	As stated, the classroom observations at all grade levels reveal the mission in practice, particularly in the preschool rooms, where the youngsters are met with educational strategies aligned with their physiological and cognitive abilities.

## Academic Components

Question from DCSD	Charter Response	Reviewer Response and Notes
From your current UIP, please identify Major Improvement Strategy #1	Writing Implementation with consistency	
Observable Action Step(s)/Implementation Benchmark	Students engaging in writing in the Upper Elementary (4th-6th)	
How might the site visit team observe this action step/Implementation Benchmark?	Talk to students about writing or examine student writing samples	

Question from DCSD	Charter Response	Reviewer Response and Notes
From your current UIP, please identify Major Improvement Strategy #2	Need for adaptive ELA assessment and practice tool(s)	
Observable Action Step(s)/Implementation Benchmark	Teachers reviewing 4th grade STAR data	
How might the site visit team observe this action step/Implementation Benchmark?	Discuss with staff, students, or review 4th grade STAR data.	

Question from DCSD	Charter Response	Reviewer Response and Notes
From your current UIP, please identify Major Improvement Strategy #3	Lack of Sufficient Intervention (Math)	
Observable Action Step(s)/Implementation Benchmark	Observe Academic interventionist working with students, or review their schedule	
How might the site visit team observe this action step/Implementation Benchmark?	Observe Academic interventionist working with students, or review their schedule	

If there are additional focus areas identified for improvement within the school that will be highlighted during the site visit, in the renewal application, or mentioned during the renewal process, please describe them here.

***Optional Additional Focus Areas***

Additional Focus Areas	Charter Response	Reviewer Response and Notes
How might the site visit team observe these additional focus areas?	Identify any additional areas of focus here:	

**Required Components of the Renewal Site Visit:**

***Click These Links to Jump to the Section***

[Classroom Observations](#)

[Governing Board Obligations and Board Member interview](#)

[Board Governance](#)

[Staff Interviews](#)

Student focus group (if appropriate for grades served)

**Classroom Observations - Instruction**

***\*Note: The individual conducting the site visit will spend approximately 20-30 minutes, as needed, collecting information in accordance with the criteria outlined in the table below.***

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
<b>Engaging Students in Learning</b>	Students are not at all intellectually engaged in significant learning, as a result of inappropriate activities or materials, poor representations of content, or lack of lesson structure.	Students are partially intellectually engaged, resulting from activities or materials or uneven quality, inconsistent representation of content or uneven structure of pacing.	Students are intellectually engaged throughout the lesson, with appropriate activities and materials, instructive representations of content, and suitable structure and pacing of the lesson.	Students are highly engaged throughout the lesson and make material contributions to the representation of content, the activities, and the materials. The structure and pacing of the lesson allow for student reflection and closure.	<b>3</b>
<b>Curriculum</b>	The school does not have research-based, Common Core/CAS-aligned curricula in place.	The school has research-based, Common Core/CAS-aligned curricula for all core subjects in place. There are scope and sequence documents that outline grade and subject learning objectives; teachers are familiar with curriculum documents and use	All criteria for partially meets expectations plus: Common Core/CAS-aligned curricula and resources extend into intervention, special education, acceleration, the arts, and PE.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The school has tailored their curriculum to meet the needs of the particular student population.	<b>3</b>

		them consistently to guide their planning.			
<b>Academic Intervention and Acceleration</b>	The school provides limited support for students who are struggling academically or in need of acceleration. The RTI process is not systematically structured to assist all learners in need of intervention.	Tiered interventions are in place to provide needed additional academic and behavior support. Although the MTSS/RTI process is in place and used by some teachers, the MTSS/RTI process is unclear to some.	All criteria partially meet expectations plus: There are sufficient research-based resources and strategies available to provide services to students in need of intervention and/or acceleration.	All criteria meet expectations plus: The school collects data to inform and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of academic intervention and acceleration programming.	<b>3</b>
<b>English Language Development</b>	Observed content instruction does not demonstrate explicit strategies to effectively meet the needs of Multilingual Learners (MLL). The focus of the lesson is on content, not on language.	Observed content instruction meets the needs of only a subset of MLL students. Language is referenced but is not taught explicitly and/or the teacher provides some opportunities for students to practice language orally and/or in writing.	Observed content instruction meets the needs of all MLL students. Instruction explicitly addresses academic language and vocabulary, and teachers provide regular opportunities for students to practice language orally and/or in writing.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: Strategies and supports utilized for MLL students (in ELD or content classes) are monitored on an ongoing basis for effectiveness.	<b>3</b>
<b>Special Education Instruction</b>	Observed Special Education instruction and instructional	Observed Special Education instruction and instructional environment provides	Observed Special Education instruction and instructional environment provide	All criteria for meets expectations plus: instruction and systems result in	<b>3</b>

	environment provides minimal access to the appropriate grade level standards. Systems for developing IEPs do not result in a clear connection between the strengths and needs identified in the present levels, goals, and the service delivery statement.	access to the appropriate grade level standards or extended evidence outcomes such as through accommodations, specially designed instruction, etc. There is a system in place to collect progress monitoring data, including evidence of student progress and growth.	meaningful access to the appropriate grade level standards or extended evidence outcomes such as through accommodations, specially designed instruction, etc.	quality of programming that exceeds compliance standards.	
<b>Total Score</b>					<b>15</b>

<b>Scoring Scale: Instruction</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>12-15</b>
Meets Standards	<b>9-11</b>
Needs Improvement	<b>7-8</b>
Inadequate	<b>0-6</b>

## **Classroom Observations - School Culture**

***\*Note: The individual conducting the site visit will spend approximately 20-30 minutes, as needed, collecting information in accordance with the criteria outlined in the table below.***

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
<b>Creating an Environment of Respect</b>	Classroom interactions, both between the teacher and students and among students are negative or inappropriate and characterized by sarcasm, putdowns, or conflict.	Classroom interactions are generally appropriate and free from conflict but may be characterized by occasional displays of insensitivity.	Classroom interactions reflect general warmth and caring and are respectful of the cultural and developmental differences among groups of students.	Classroom interactions are highly respectful, reflecting genuine warmth and caring toward individuals. Students themselves ensure maintenance of high levels of civility among members of the class.	<b>3</b>
<b>Establishing a Culture for Learning</b>	The classroom does not represent a culture for learning and is characterized by low teacher commitment to the subject, low expectations for student achievement, and little student pride in work.	The classroom environment reflects only a minimal culture for learning, with only modest or inconsistent expectations for student achievement, little teacher commitment to the subject, and little student pride in work. Both teacher and students are performing at the minimal level to "get by."	The classroom environment represents a genuine culture for learning, with commitment to the subject on the part of both teacher and students, high expectations for student achievement, and student pride in work.	Students assume much of the responsibility for establishing a culture for learning in the classroom by taking pride in their work, initiating improvements to their products, and holding the work to the highest standard.	<b>3</b>



<b>Managing Behavior</b>	Student behavior is poor, with no clear expectations, no monitoring of student behavior, and inappropriate response to student misbehavior.	Teachers make an effort to establish standards of conduct for students, monitor student behavior, and respond to student misbehavior, but these efforts are not always successful.	Teacher is aware of student behavior, has established clear standards of conduct, and responds to student misbehavior in ways that are appropriate and respectful of the students.	Student behavior is entirely appropriate, with evidence of student participation in setting expectations and monitoring behavior.	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Score</b>					<b>9</b>

Scoring Scale: School Culture	Total
Exemplary	8-9
Meets Standards	5-7
Needs Improvement	3-4
Inadequate	0-2

### **Board Legal Obligations**

Prior to Site Visit: The school leader will consolidate all information relevant to the board governance criteria outlined below in a binder for document review.

Board Interview: The individual conducting the site visit will reserve a portion of the board interview to ask any questions that arose during document review necessary to evaluate the school according to the criteria outlined below.

Item	Met (1) / Not Met (0)	Notes
Bylaws in place that outline board role and legal obligation	1	The Board President, Adrianna Sosa, affirmed that the board has in place all necessary bylaws
Articles of incorporation in place that indicate current nonprofit status	1	In place
Board handbook in place that outlines board member expectations	1	Leadership affirmed the handbook for all board members
Financial transparency compliance	1	Leadership affirmed financial transparency compliance
Financial reporting compliance	1	Leadership affirmed financial reporting compliance
Board complies with open meetings requirements	1	President Sosa affirmed the open meetings
Board holds meetings (at least quarterly)	1	President Sosa affirmed regular meetings
Regular revision and approval of key policies (employment, enrollment, etc.)	1	President Sosa affirmed continuous policy development and revisions as appropriate
Approval of annual audit	1	Leadership affirmed approval of annual audit
Approval of annual budget	1	Leadership affirmed approval of annual budget
Board meets authorizer deadlines and requirements	1	The board has met all authorizer deadline
The charter school has adopted and implemented conflict of interest policies that prevent real or apparent conflicts of interest.	1	These policies are in place, affirmed by leadership and board
The charter school administration provides monthly financial reports to its	1	Leadership affirmed the monthly reporting

governing board for review and approval.		
Total Score	<b>14</b>	All benchmarks are met

Scoring Scale: Board Legal Obligations	Total
Exemplary	<b>13-14</b>
Meets Standards	<b>11-12</b>
Needs Improvement	<b>9-10</b>
Inadequate	<b>0-8</b>

### **Board Governance**

Prior to Site Visit: The school leader will consolidate all information relevant to the board governance criteria outlined below in a binder for document review.

Board Interview: The individual conducting the site visit will reserve a portion of the board interview to ask any questions that arose during document review necessary to evaluate the school according to the criteria outlined below.

CRITERIA	0	1	2	3	SCORE
<b>Academic Oversight</b>	The Board does not receive sufficient data on the school's academic performance to understand how	The Board regularly monitors some academic metrics, which they use to guide decision making. However, the Board lacks sufficient	The Board has members with expertise in E-12 education, and all Board members are able to understand student achievement	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The Board receives annual PD on student achievement data.	<b>3</b>

	the school is performing.	expertise to fully understand all data.	data. Student achievement metrics, both interim and summative and aggregate as well as disaggregated, are regularly monitored by the Board.		
<b>Financial Oversight</b>	The Board does not regularly monitor the school's financial performance.	The Board sets and regularly monitors progress around key financial metrics that are both short and long-term, including budget versus actuals. There is a comprehensive, Board-adopted financial policies document in place that is followed by both the Board and school leadership. The Board monitors implementation of internal controls.	All criteria for partially meets expectations plus: The Board has members with finance expertise, and all Board members are able to understand budgets, audits, and development. The Board sets and regularly monitors progress towards financial goals. The budget creation process is based on data, including sound revenue and enrollment projections.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The Board sets and monitors progress towards financial goals that are related to the school's long-term financial health.	<b>3</b>
<b>Operational Oversight</b>	The Board does not monitor operational metrics — such as facilities, transportation,	The Board regularly monitors some of the school's operational metrics, which they use to guide decision making. However, the	The Board has members with expertise in school operations, and all Board members are able to understand	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The Board receives annual PD on relevant operational data.	<b>3</b>

	school culture, and enrollment metrics as appropriate for the school — or does not use data to inform decision making.	Board lacks sufficient expertise to fully understand all data or data conversations are incomplete.	operational data. Appropriate operational metrics are regularly monitored by the Board. The Board sets goals around relevant operations systems.		
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	The Board does not engage in strategic planning and spends the majority of its time on reactive conversations and decisions.	The Board has expertise in strategy and long-term planning but spends close to half its time on reactive conversations and decisions.	The Board regularly engages in strategic planning to influence the school's short- and long-term direction as appropriate for its stage of development.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: The Board has a formal long-term strategic plan that is revisited and revised as needed on an annual basis.	<b>3</b>
<b>Human Capital Oversight</b>	The Board has not discussed future leadership plans within the last twelve months.	The Board has discussed leadership succession in the last twelve months but has not developed any corresponding written plans.	The Board has a leadership succession plan in place to ensure consistency in implementing the mission and vision of the school during transition of leadership. The Board evaluates the school leader at least annually.	All criteria for meets expectations plus: There is a strong plan for developing /maintaining a school leader pipeline, including both internal candidate development and external partnerships for leadership development.	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Scores</b>					<b>15</b>

<b>Scoring Scale: Board Governance</b>	<b>Total</b>
Exemplary	<b>13-15</b>
Meets Standards	<b>11-12</b>
Needs Improvement	<b>9-10</b>
Inadequate	<b>0-8</b>

<b>Overall Scoring for Site Visit</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Instruction	<b>Exemplary</b>
School Culture	<b>Exemplary</b>
Board Legal Obligations	<b>Exemplary</b>
Board Governance	<b>Exemplary</b>

**Staff Interview Notes**

Notes from Reviewer	Staff reported that what makes the school “works,” what makes the school the success that it is for students, is the collaborative culture and the shared mission between staff, community, leadership and board. Staff repeatedly mentioned how everyone is on the same page; namely, a
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commitment to the students to ensure that they not only are successful in their years at the school, but that they are equipped to be successes in life. Leadership and staff mentioned that they desire for students to come back in their 20's and beyond, demonstrating that the values they learned, the character they developed and knowledge they gained all worked together to produce a healthy, productive, contributing young adult.

The Montessori model emphasized a developmental approach, where students, based on where they are developmentally, are put into positions to learn and feel genuine success. It means a wide range of pedagogical strategies, tailored to the student's abilities.

It is not at all unusual, when observing classrooms, to see students working on the same project or assignment, but doing so in their own way, supported by teaching staff. The staff assess how each student learns and works to tap into those strengths.

Staff also mentioned the seemingly unlimited support offered by leadership and the board in terms of professional development. The board and the leadership is as committed to developing the finest Montessori teachers as they are in developing the best prepared students they can. When asked about "blind spots" that might exist, staff said they really could not think of any.

When speaking specifically with ESS/SPED staff, they noted that the school serves mild/moderate needs children and that one particular resource they have employed for many years is a service dog. The school has a speech

	<p>pathologist who is full time, and 3 other staff filling 1.5 FTE slots to support delivery of special education.</p> <p>The school uses a push-in model that integrates ESS/SPED students into the mainstream classrooms with specific, targeted support of assistants. The school currently has 9% of the population staffed into special education. The staff makes use of a wide range of accommodations as appropriate to each child's needs.</p> <p>While acknowledging room for improvement in all areas, the staff highlighted the balance on the team, the social emotional support given and the progress that the data shows for those students receiving special education services.</p> <p>The school is committed to and practices an individualized, developmental support model to support students and foster academic achievement and growth, and to that end offers multiple professional development opportunities both inside the school, at conferences, and programs offered by the Douglas County School District.</p>
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**Student Interview Notes**

Notes from Reviewer	<p>Students reported that they particularly like the Core classes, Global Studies, Creative Writing, Extra Curricular programming and the learning philosophy of the school. They specifically identified the multi-level classrooms, where students can learn at their own pace. They appreciated the freedom to walk between campuses to see friends. They had but a single suggestion: more time</p>
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allowed between classes. They reported feeling particularly safe, which is somewhat remarkable in a middle school setting, but not surprising given the Montessori philosophy of personal responsibility and growth. In fact, students specifically mentioned that the school has taught them to be responsible for themselves and be responsible in terms of how they treat others. Finally they mentioned a laudatory quality of the school, that the school trusts the students.