

# CHALLENGE FOUNDATION ACADEMY

## 2010-2011 Performance Analysis

### Core Question 2: Is the organization effective and well-run?

2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health?	
STANDARD	The school presents significant concerns in no more than <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement. In addition, if the school presents significant concerns in one area, it has a credible plan for addressing the concern that has been approved by the Mayor’s Office.

#### 2010-11 Performance: **Meets Standard**

In 2010-11, the Challenge Foundation Academy (CFA) established adequate staffing and systems for managing the school’s finances. As a result of its relationship with an experienced accounting firm, the Challenge Foundation, and retention of a Chief Operating Officer, the school achieved a balanced budget and substantial reserves.

Revenue projections and expenses appeared to be adequate, and the school fulfilled all financial reporting requirements of the charter agreement in a timely manner. The Mayor’s Office contracted with an independent accounting firm to complete annual financial performance reviews of each school. Based on a review of the Challenge Foundation Academy’s finances for 2010-11, the Mayor’s Office found that the school achieved a balanced budget. Accordingly, the school met standard for this indicator.

2.2. Are the school’s student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?	
STANDARD	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates are generally at or above the school’s agreed-upon target rates.

#### 2010-11 Performance: **Approaching Standard**

CFA met its enrollment target for 2010-11. The following chart displays the school’s target enrollment compared with its official fall enrollment, as reported by the IDOE.

Year	Target Enrollment	Fall Enrollment	Percent Below
2010-11	438	475	0%

**Source:** Official fall enrollment figures from the IDOE. Target enrollment is the maximum capacity from the school’s charter agreement with the Mayor’s Office, submitted by the school.

The 2010-11 attendance rate for CFA was slightly lower than the state and higher than the county.

	TPS	MC	IN
<b>2010-11 Attendance rate</b>	95.89%	94.89%	95.92%

No targets have been established for student retention rates for CFA.

Based on the 2010-11 performance, CFA approached the Mayor’s Office standard for this indicator because they were not fully enrolled and had an attendance rate lower than the state.

<b>2.3. Is the school’s Board active and competent in its oversight?</b>	
<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>The Board’s membership collectively contributes a broad skill set and fair representation of the community; Board members are knowledgeable about the school; roles and responsibilities of the Board are clearly delineated; Board meetings reflect thoughtful discussion and progress in the consideration of issues; overall, the Board provides consistent and competent stewardship of the school.</b>

**2010-11 Performance: Meets Standard**

The CFA board was active and knowledgeable regarding its role. The Board had an effective governance structure that is clearly defined in the by-laws. This clear structure enables the Board to be consistent and competent in its stewardship and to remain knowledgeable about the school. The Board was balanced in expertise, was representative of the community, and had exceptional consistency in membership; however representation of all members at meetings was not consistent.

The Board had consistently reached a quorum. Board minutes showed that the Board was knowledgeable about the school’s finances, curriculum, personnel issues, and school operations. The Board demonstrated thoughtful discussion and consideration of issues. Accordingly, the school met the Mayor’s Office standard for this indicator.

<b>2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?</b>	
<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>More than 80% but less than 90% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.</b>

**2010-11 Performance: Exceeds Standard**

In the spring of each year, researchers administer anonymous surveys to parents of students enrolled at Mayor-sponsored charter schools. In 2010-11, 94% of CFA parents reported overall satisfaction with the school. According to the data, the school exceeded the Mayor’s Office standard for performance for this indicator in the 2010-11 academic year.

<b>2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?</b>	
<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>The school's leadership a) has sufficient academic and/or business expertise; b) has been sufficiently stable over time; c) has clearly defined roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the Board; d) actively engages in a process of continuous improvement which has led to some mid-course corrections.</b>

**2010-11 Performance: Exceeds Standard**

The administration and leadership at CFA demonstrated exceptional academic and business expertise, had been relatively stable over time, and roles and responsibilities among leaders and between leaders and the Board were clearly defined. The Principal, Assistant Principal, and Chief Operations Officer provided competent leadership at the school. The school leader, who has been at the school for the last three years, continued to provide focused leadership to staff in areas of curriculum alignment, data analysis, and implementing standards-based, data-driven instruction. An external site team contracted by the Mayor's Office concluded that the principal had a secure understanding of the strengths and development needs of the school, and there was a good correlation between these and the school's plans for continued improvement.

The administration had clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The school Board had enhanced the part-time Business Manager's role to serving as a COO part time to continue oversight of business and facility responsibilities. The board had also increased leadership capacity by providing an assistant principal. Overall, school leadership was effective in creating, promoting, and meeting school goals. They provided competent leadership in academic, business, and operational elements at the school. The school's continuous improvement process led to a number of mid-course corrections, particularly around curriculum modifications and data analysis, which have significantly enhanced the school's performance. Therefore, the school exceeded the Mayor's Office standard in this indicator.

<b>2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?</b>	
<b>Meets standard</b>	<b>School has clearly met its school-specific organizational goal.</b>

**Not applicable.** CFA did not have school-specific organizational and management performance goals that were evaluated in 2010-11.