

Accountability Plan Guidelines For Alternative Charter Schools

2024

**Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

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# Overview

According to the charter school statute, “When deciding on charter renewal, the board shall consider progress made in student academic achievement,” ([MGL c. 71, S. 89 (dd)](https://malegislature.gov/laws/generallaws/parti/titlexii/chapter71/section89)). Academic progress is typically defined by the [statewide accountability system](https://www.doe.mass.edu/accountability/); however, there are limitations in using data in the statewide accountability system to evaluate academic progress at alternative charter schools (ACSs) due to a few factors:

* ACSs often enroll a smaller number of students than other schools. Testing cohorts are often too small to report data, leading to a lack of publicly reported accountability data; and
* ACSs enroll high percentages of students who are multiple grade levels behind academically. These schools require more nuanced measures to capture growth and achievement.

The [Charter School Performance Criteria](https://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/acct.html?section=criteria) includes a provision stating that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) may consider additional valid and reliable data demonstrating progress in student achievement.[[1]](#footnote-2) Accountability Plan goals are one example of how ACSs may collect and report valid and reliable data to supplement data from the statewide accountability system.

Every charter school in Massachusetts creates an Accountability Plan to publicly articulate the goals the school has set to measure its success, and ACSs are required to include additional goals in their Accountability Plans related to student achievement. The [Accountability Plan Guidelines](https://www.doe.mass.edu/charter/acct.html?section=guidelines) provide guidance on how to design goals aligned to the school’s mission and key design elements. This guidance clarifies the Department’s expectations for ACSs to create student achievement goals related to academic achievement.

During the 2021-22 school year, the Department worked with existing Massachusetts alternative charter schools and experts in the field from [A-GAME: Advancing Great Authorizing and Modeling Excellence](https://nationalcharterschools.org/agame/), Naomi Rubin DeVeaux and Dr. Jody Ernst, to arrive at a common method of establishing rigorous goals related to academic performance that are responsive to students’ levels of engagement with school.

In order to create goals that are responsive to students’ levels of engagement, different levels of engagement must be defined. Massachusetts ACSs provided descriptive information about the academic, behavioral, testing, and engagement behaviors of their most engaged to least engaged students. Through guided exercises, the group began to differentiate three phases of ACS student engagement in school using collected data, such as average daily attendance, discipline, credits towards graduation, age, and life experiences outside of school. The three phases are:

1. **Minimally Connected (MC)**: Students who are minimally connected show little to no active engagement in their education.
2. **Partially Connected (PC):** Students who are partially connected have met some basic requirements for a high school diploma, but may require many credits to graduate, may demonstrate limited academic skills, or may face life experiences that make it challenging to engage with school.
3. **Connected (C):** Students who are well connected to school are within reach of graduating high school and/or are actively engaged in completing courses and coming to school on a more regular basis than students in the MC or PC phases.

Once the Massachusetts ACSs identified three basic phases of student engagement, the ACSs partnered with A-GAME and the Department to identify the wide range of data ACSs could use to identify a student’s engagement phase (Appendix A).

A-GAME and the Department partnered to create this guidance, which explains what data ACSs should use to determine each student’s engagement phase and how ACSs can create goals that are rigorous and responsive to students at each engagement phase.

# Part I: Define Each Engagement Phase

## Step One: Select Data Points Appropriate for Each Engagement Phase

*Appendix A: Category Data Points*, presents four categories with related data points a school can use to sort students into engagement phases. Each category is important for establishing student connectedness; all four categories form a holistic view of a student’s engagement with school and likelihood to graduate with a high school diploma. The four categories and data points include:

1. Student Engagement Behaviors
   1. Attendance
   2. Engagement Behaviors
   3. Discipline
2. Academic Assessments
   1. Reading Lexile Level
   2. Reading Skill
   3. Math Skill
3. On-Track to Graduate
   1. Credit Accumulation
   2. Age
   3. School Enrollment Gaps
   4. Number of Prior High Schools
4. Life Experiences
   1. Experiences of Trauma
   2. Obligations and/or Circumstances Outside of School

ACSs should first select **at least one data point from each category**. The four chosen data points will help the school identify each student’s engagement phase for the year. A school can opt to select more than one data point per category; however, the school must determine whether the benefits of having more data points to identify students’ engagement phases outweighs the amount of time and effort it will take the school to gather the data.

When identifying which data point to identify per category, schools should consider if the school will be able to consistently report on its chosen data points throughout the entire five-year charter term. The school must ensure that it has access to the selected data and plan accordingly for any anticipated challenges.

If a school would like to use a data point for a category that is not listed in *Appendix A*, then the school may request adding a new data point with Department approval.

## Step Three: Identify Students’ Engagement Phases

Once the school has identified at least one data point for each category, the school should gather all the necessary data to identify students’ engagement phases **either by October 1 or within the first four to six weeks of a student enrolling at the school** (although a majority of goals will be focused on students who are enrolled for the full academic year, schools should be assigning all students to an engagement phase upon four to six weeks of enrollment to ensure schools are gathering data and assessing progress for all students)**.** The table below provides an example of how a school could use a dashboard of its selected data points to identify students’ engagement phases.

**Table 1. Example Dashboard Showing Students’ Engagement Phases**

Example Dashboard Showing Students’ Engagement Phases in columns: Categories, Life Experiences, On-Track to Graduate, Student Engagement Behaviors, and Academic Assessments

As noted in the table above, for each of the four categories (life experiences, on-track to graduate, student engagement behaviors, and academic assessments) this school decided to use four data points to determine students’ engagement phases:

1. Number of obligations/circumstances outside of school
2. Number of prior high schools
3. Engagement behaviors (# of touch points on average per week)
4. Reading Lexile level

The school color coded each data point to signal if the data reflected behaviors common with a minimally connected (red), partially connected (yellow), or connected (green) student. Then, the school used the four data points to determine each student’s engagement phase.

To identify each student’s engagement levels, categorize a student according to the majority of the evidence, similar to what the school used in table 1 above to assign students’ engagement phases.

1. A minimally connected (MC) student either had:
   1. Four MC data points, or
   2. Two MC data points and 1 partially connected (PC) data point
   3. One MC data point, two PC data points, and 1 Connected (C) data point
2. A partially connected (PC) student either had:
   1. Four PC data points,
   2. Three PC data points and one MC data point,
   3. Two MC data points and two PC data points,
   4. One MC data point, one C data point, and two PC data points, or
   5. Two MC data points, one C data point, and one PC data point
3. A connected (C) student either had:
   1. Four C data points, OR
   2. Two C data points and two MC data points

Once the school has assigned all students to an engagement phase, the school should review each student’s engagement phase to determine whether the identified engagement phase is consistent with staff’s observations of the student. There may be cases where staff disagree with the engagement phase identified for the student through the data points. If that is the case, the staff must use professional judgment. Three key practices to establish to ensure reliability of students’ engagement phases are:

* Having the same team of people determine engagement phases for all students
* Using the same process and data when determining engagement phases
* Weighing recent, observable data over historical data (While past life events are important, they do not always correlate with current behaviors).

Once a student’s engagement phase is determined by October 1 or within the first four to six weeks of enrollment, the school may **not** change a student’s engagement phase throughout the course of the year without clear, recorded evidence of changed external life experience(s) (e.g., move, acute trauma, etc.). Establishing and maintaining records of students’ engagement phases upon enrollment is critical to the validity and reliability of the school demonstrating progress in meeting its Accountability Plan goals.

The Department reserves the right to audit and review ACSs data or data collection protocols and practices at any time. The purpose of an audit is to ensure students are being properly identified into the engagement phase that best meets their academic and social-emotional needs and to provide the school with actionable information that maximizes their ability to support students’ educational and social-emotional development. Failure to provide supporting documentation may result in the student being counted as Connected for purposes of measuring the school’s goals.

# Part II: Create Responsive Goals

An ACS may choose to make all or some of its goals in its Accountability Plan responsive, but the **Department requires at a minimum that ACSs make responsive goals related to academic achievement and growth and graduation rates for students at each engagement phase.** Additional goals related to student performance, such as dropout rates, course completion, assessment participation rates, do not need to be responsive.

Responsive goals are student-centered and differentiated according to students’ engagement phases. Responsive goals ensure that every student is accounted for in the school’s Accountability Plan, and the school is measuring academic growth and achievement for every student, even those who are minimally or partially connected. Any goal that is designed for only a portion of the population does not provide strong evidence of the school’s academic success. For example, if a school has a goal of “at least 60 percent of students will meet their expected growth norms on an externally validated assessment,” then the assumption is that 40 percent of students will not meet this goal. Responsive goals are created with the assumption that all students will make progress, albeit at differing rates or with differentiated outcomes.

Once a school identifies students’ engagement phases, the school must review historical data to identify how students in each phase have performed in the past on academic metrics. Then, the school must create responsive goals that are differentiated according to students’ engagement phases. Here is an example of how a school created a goal, analyzed historical data, and then created responsive goals appropriate for each engagement phase.

|  |
| --- |
| **Example #1:**  **Draft goal: Each year, 90 percent of students who are enrolled the full academic year (FAY) will show grade level proficiency using the end of year NWEA reading RIT scores, compared to NWEA end of year norms.** |
| **Step 1:** Analyze how students in the three different engagement phases have performed on that goal using most recent results. |
| |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Engagement Phase | Number of students enrolled the FAY | Number of students tested | Number of students scoring at or above grade level | Percent of students scoring at or above grade level | | Minimally Connected | 40 | 15 | 1 | 2.5 | | Partially Connected | 88 | 75 | 33 | 37.5 | | Connected | 63 | 60 | 52 | 82.5 |   From these results, we see that Connected students came close to meeting the goal of 90 percent, but students in the two other phases did not. |
| **Step 2:** Review historical data to identify a realistic and ambitious goal for each engagement phase. |
| A review of the school’s historical data shows that many Partially Connected students are within half a grade level of meeting the goal on the end of year NWEA reading assessment:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Engagement Phase | Number of students enrolled the FAY | Number of students tested | Number of students within 0.5 grade level equivalents of their assigned grade | Percent of students within 0.5 grade level equivalents of their assigned grade | | Minimally Connected | 40 | 15 | 3 | 7.5 | | Partially Connected | 88 | 75 | 21 | 23.9 | | Connected | 63 | 60 | 5 | 7.9 | | Total | 191 | 150 | 29 | 15.2 |   The school combined the number of students meeting the grade level goal and the students that are within half a grade level from the goal.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Engagement Phase | Number of students enrolled the FAY | Number of students tested | Number of students scoring at or above grade level | Number of students within 0.5 grade level equivalents (GLE) of their assigned grade | Total Met | Percent Met | | Minimally Connected | 40 | 15 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 10.0 | | Partially Connected | 88 | 75 | 33 | 21 | 54 | 61.4 | | Connected | 63 | 60 | 52 | 5 | 57 | 90.5 | | Total | 191 | 150 | 86 | 29 | 115 | 76.7 |   Adding a metric that specifically targets the success of the Partially Connected students is responsive to the school’s unique population of students and students’ incoming skill level and does not penalize the school for working with students who have perhaps not been seen as successful before. However, the addition of the metric did not improve the percentage of the Minimally Connected students by much.  Although Minimally Connected students are not at grade level, the school can still demonstrate that these students made progress toward proficiency. The school can show improvement on the NWEA reading assessment through goals around RIT score progress, NWEA growth metrics, or improvement in grade level equivalent (GLE) over the course of the year.  For example, the school analyzed the percent of Minimally Connected students who did not score at or above grade level or who were within half a grade level away from their appropriate grade level.   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Engagement Phase | Number of students enrolled the FAY | Number of students tested | Number of students who improved at least 1 GLE | Percent of students who improved at least 1 GLE | | Minimally Connected | 40 | 15 | 11 | 27.5 |   The school combined all of the goals together: students who scored at grade level or above, students who scored at least half a grade level within their appropriate grade level, and students who improved at least one GLE.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Engagement Phase | Number of students enrolled the FAY | Number of students tested | Number of students scoring at or above grade level | Number of students within 0.5 GLE of their assigned grade | Number of students who improved at least 1 GLE | Total Met | Percent Met | | Minimally Connected | 40 | 15 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 15 | 37.5 | | Partially Connected | 88 | 75 | 33 | 21 | N/A | 54 | 61.4 | | Connected | 63 | 60 | 52 | 5 | N/A | 57 | 90.5 | | Total | 191 | 150 | 86 | 29 | 11 | 126 | 81.7 |   The aggregated results show that 84 percent of students enrolled for the full academic year are scoring at or near grade level in reading or showing at least one grade level improvement during the year based on GLE scores. While the school did not accomplish its original goal of 90 percent, the goal below seems more realistic and ambitious with the appropriate planning and supports for staff and students. |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Step 3:** Write the Final Accountability Plan Goal | | | | |
| **Goal:** | **Minimally Connected (MC)** | **Partially Connected (PC)** | **Connected (C)** | **Data to be reported:** |
| By the end of each year, at least 90 percent of students who are enrolled for the full academic year (FAY) will either perform no more than 0.5 grade level behind in reading or show at least one grade level growth between the beginning of the year and the end of the year. | MC students will increase at least one full grade level equivalent (GLE) between the fall and spring NWEA reading assessment. | PC students will score no more than half a grade level behind their appropriate grade level by the spring NWEA reading assessment. | C students will score at or above grade level on the end of year spring NWEA reading assessment. | Denominator:  # of C FAY students [PLUS] # of PC FAY students [PLUS] # of MC FAY students  Numerator:  # of C students scoring at or above grade level [PLUS] # of PC students who scored within 0.5 GLE of their current grade level [PLUS] # of MC students who showed at least one GLE increase |

Additional examples of responsive goals are provided below in Appendix B.

Not all goals related to student performance must be differentiated. For example, the state’s graduation rates are based on cohorts and students graduating within four or five years after entering grade 9. For ACSs that enroll students who are off-track for their cohort, a cohort-based graduation rate does not work well.

Here is an example of a goal the school can create that meets the requirement for goals related to high school completion and is not responsive or differentiated.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Example #2:** | |
| **Goal:** | **Data to be reported:** |
| Each year, at least 90 percent of students who, as of October 1, need no more than 5 core credits and who have completed all of their competency determinations will complete high school with a high school diploma by the end of the year, including summer graduates before July 31. | Numerator: Total number of students who graduated between Oct 1 and July 31  Denominator: Number of students who, as of Oct 1, needed no more than 5 core credits to graduate AND who had completed their competency determinations. |

When ACSs create responsive goals, the school should consider the following:

* **Accompany any goals related to assessments with a goal related to increasing participation rates.** 
  + Due to small cohort sizes, or student test aversion, many ACSs do not have sufficient testing data to produce aggregated results on statewide or non-statewide assessments. The statewide accountability system defines low assessment participation as less than 95 percent of the student population (for all students for student groups). Therefore, any goal the school creates related to non-statewide assessments should include a target assessment rate of at least 95 percent participation to ensure the school is aiming to capture data that accurately reflects students’ academic achievement and growth.
  + When participation in academic assessments is far below 95 percent, schools may create specific goals for increasing participation rates of all students (Ex. Each year, the school will aim for a participation rate of at least 75 percent and not below 60 percent for Connected students, and a participation rate of at least 60 percent and not below 50 percent for minimally connected and partially connected students).
  + The Department recognizes that due to the unique population alternative schools serve, a 95 percent target assessment rate might not be an attainable goal for the school. Schools should be creating target assessment rates that are attainable and ambitious for the school. However, if the target assessment rate does not reflect most of the student population, the Department will expect the school to collect other quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate student academic progress.
* **When applicable, use nationwide data for alternative schools to determine achievement goals.** (Resource: [A-GAME Data Hub](https://nationalcharterschools.org/a-game-grant/data-visualizations/) and [A-GAME Dashboards](https://nationalcharterschools.org/a-game-grant/data-visualizations/aec-dashboards/#aescdata))
* **When applicable, use research to determine benchmarks for goals.** For example, the A-GAME has a [Resource Packet](https://nationalcharterschools.org/a-game-grant/documents-deliverables/) that provides research explaining how students who attend alternative charter schools traditionally perform on the NWEA MAP and Star 360 assessments compared to their peers in traditional public schools. The average student growth percentile or trends in performance should help schools create goals that are ambitious and realistic. When prior research is not available, the school’s own historical data should be used to benchmark student outcomes and set future goals.
* **Start with the skills/knowledge, not the assessment.** Determine what skills and knowledge students are expected to have at the end of the grade or upon graduation and then find the best way(s) to measure attainment. For example: students are expected to graduate being able to read media, manuals, and guides necessary to be career and college ready. This may translate to having a minimum reading Lexile level of 1050. Set the goal at having a reading Lexile level of 1050 and then determine the assessment that can best measure that achievement and growth towards it.

# Appendix A: Category Data Points

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category 1: Student Engagement Behaviors** | | | | |
| **Data Point** | **Minimally Connected (MC)** | **Partially Connected (PC)** | **Connected (C)** | **Suggested Data Methods** |
| **Attendance** | * Attended school during the prior school year less than 50 percent of the time, or * Dropped out of school and currently attends school less than 50 percent of the time | * Attended school during the prior school year between 50 to 69 percent of the time, or * Currently attends 50 to 69 percent of the time | * Attended school during the prior year at least 70 percent of the time, and/or * Currently attends at least 70 percent of the time | Student average daily attendance within the school’s Student Information System (SIS) for the first four to six weeks of enrollment, or (for continuing students) the first four to six weeks of the school year.[[2]](#footnote-3) |
| **Engagement Behaviors** | On average, students have fewer than 2 touch points per week (fewer than 8 touch points[[3]](#footnote-4) in a month) | On average, students have two or more but less than three touch points per week (between 8-11 touch points in a month) | On average, students have three or more touch points per week (at least 12 in a month) | For new students, a touch point log would be completed during the first four to six weeks students are enrolled.  For continuing students, a touch point log should be completed during the first four to six weeks of the school year.  The log should include the date, time, length, adult (e.g., teacher, counselor), type (see list), and method (e.g., in-person, telephone, video). |
| **Discipline** | * Previously expelled, or * Received more than three out-of-school suspensions (OSS) during the prior school year, or * Received more than five in-school-suspensions during the prior school year, or * Student exhibits behavioral issues during the first four to six weeks of enrollment, resulting in an OSS. | * Received at least one OSS during the prior school year, or * Received three to five in-school suspensions (ISS) during the prior school year, or * Student exhibits behavioral issues during the first four to six weeks of the school year, resulting in three or more removals from the classroom or ISS. | * No record of OSS during the prior school year, or * Received fewer than three ISS during the first four to six weeks of enrollment or no record of any ISS, or * Student exhibits no more than two behavioral issues that result in removal from classroom of ISS. | For new students, the school would review a student’s prior discipline records and the first four to six weeks the student is enrolled.  For continuing students, the school would review a student’s discipline record from the previous year and the first four to six weeks of the current school year.  The discipline log should include the date, time, type of behavior, and resulting consequence. |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category 2: Academic Assessments** | | | | |
| **Data Point** | **Minimally Connected (MC)** | **Partially Connected (PC)** | **Connected (C)** | **Approved Data Sources** |
| **Reading Lexile Levels** | * Reading Lexile level of 699 or below (grade 3 or below), or * Refuses to participate in assessment | * Reading Lexile Level of 700-999 (reads between grades 4 and 7) | * Reading Lexile level 1000 or above (reads at or above grades 7 and 8) | Reading Lexile levels are provided in many diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments. Notify the Department which assessment the school will use to assess students’ reading Lexile level. |
| **Reading Skill** | * Four or more grade levels behind their same-aged peers in reading, or * Refuses to participate in assessment | Between 2 to 3.9 grade levels behind their same-aged peers in reading | Fewer than two grade levels behind their same-aged peers in reading | Any standardized or normative assessment that reports grade level equivalent (GLE) or from which the GLE can be assessed using grade level norms and have been approved by the Department for use. Approved assessments include:   * Star 360 reading * NWEA MAP reading * Achieve 3000 |
| **Math Skill** | * Four or more grade levels behind their same-aged peers in mathematics, or * Refuses to participate in assessment | Between 2 to 3.9 grade levels behind their same-aged peers in mathematics | Less than two grade levels behind their same-aged peers in mathematics | Any standardized or normative assessment that reports grade level equivalent (GLE) or from which the GLE can be assessed using grade level norms and have been approved by the Department for use. Approved assessments include:   * Star 360 reading * NWEA MAP reading * iXL |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category 3: On-Track to Graduate** | | | | |
| **Data Point** | **Minimally Connected (MC)** | **Partially Connected (PC)** | **Connected (C)** | **Approved Data Sources** |
| **Credit Accumulation** | At least two years or more off track in accumulated credits | More than one year but less than two years off track in accumulated credits | Less than or equal to one year off track in accumulated credits | For new students, the school can review students’ transcripts.  For continuing students, the school can review students’ credit earning records. |
| **Age** | 20 years or older | Between 18 to 19 years old | 17 years or younger | Student’s age as of October 1 |
| **School Enrollment Gaps** | Lapses in school enrollment or attendance of at least 45 school days in a row (prior to enrollment in the ACS) | Lapses in school enrollment or attendance of 10 to 44 days in a row (prior to enrollment in the ACS) | A lapse of no more than 10 days in a row in school enrollment or attendance (prior to the enrollment in the ACS) | Student’s last date of attendance as recorded in the Student Information System (SIS) |
| **Prior High Schools** | More than 2 prior high schools | 2 prior high schools | 0-1 prior high schools | Student records, interview, or survey |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category 4: Life Experiences** | | | | |
| **Data Point** | **Minimally Connected (MC)** | **Partially Connected (PC)** | **Connected (C)** | **Approved Data Sources** |
| **Experiences of Trauma** | An ACES score of 4 or higher | An ACES score of 2-3 | An ACES score of 0-1 | ACES must be administered by a qualified individual at the school (school social worker or mental health provider) within the first four to six weeks of enrollment or the family may share the student’s previously administered ACES results with the school upon intake as long as the assessment was administered by a qualified individual. |
| **Obligations and Circumstances Outside of School[[4]](#footnote-5)** | 4 or more | Between 2 and 3 | 0-1 | Obligations and circumstances may be assessed via student survey, found in the student’s cumulative file report, or reported on intake by the student and/or family member. |

# Appendix B: Additional Examples

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Example Goals:** | **Minimally Connected (MC)** | **Partially Connected (PC)** | **Connected (C)** | **Equation/Business Rules** |
| Example Achievement Goal:  At least 90% of students who are enrolled for a full semester will meet their credit earning goal for the semester. | Semester credit earning goal (assumes 24 credits needed for graduation):  at least 1 | Semester credit earning goal (assumes 24 credits needed for graduation):  at least 2 | Semester credit earning goal (assumes 24 credits needed for graduation):  at least 3 | **Numerator:** # of MC students who earned at least 1 credit in semester 1 [PLUS] # of PC students who earned at least 2 credits in semester 1 [PLUS] # of C students that earned at least 3 credits in semester 1 [PLUS] # of MC students who earned at least 1 credit in semester 2 [PLUS] # of PC students who earned at least 2 credits in semester 2 [PLUS] # of C students that earned at least 3 credits in semester 2  **Denominator**: # of MC students enrolled for all of semester 1 [PLUS] # of PC students enrolled for all of semester 1 [PLUS]# of C students enrolled for all of semester 1 [PLUS] # of MC students enrolled for all of semester 2 [PLUS] # of PC students enrolled for all of semester 2 [PLUS] # C of students enrolled for all of semester 2  **Exclude**:  Students enrolled for less than 80% of a semester  Students whose attendance/participation rate was 25% or less (based on schools approved attendance/participation policy) |
| Example School Engagement Goal:  Each semester, at least 90% of students will meet their attendance goal, as determined in their individual learning plan at the beginning of each semester | Attendance goal:  above 50% | Attendance goal:  above 69% | Attendance goal:  Maintain 70% or above | **Numerator**: # MC students who attended more than 50% of semester 1 [PLUS} # PC students who attended more than 69% of semester 1 [PLUS] # C students who attended at least 70% of semester 1 [PLUS] # MC students who attended more than 50% of semester 2 [PLUS} # PC students who attended more than 69% of semester 2 [PLUS] # C students who attended at least 70% of semester 2  **Denominator**: # MC students enrolled semester 1 [PLUS] # PC students enrolled semester 1 [PLUS} # C students enrolled semester 1 [PLUS} # MC students enrolled semester 2 [PLUS] # PC students enrolled semester 2 [PLUS} # C students enrolled semester 2  **Exclude:**  Students who enrolled but never attended the school  **Note:** attendance rates can be used for students who were enrolled for partial semesters. |

1. In the event that a school believes that the statewide accountability indicators are not fully representative of student performance at the school, the Department may review additional valid and reliable data demonstrating the progress the school has made in demonstrating academic progress. The most compelling evidence will point to consistent performance improvements over the charter term. In addition, while the Department will consider other assessment data as supplementary evidence for a school’s performance, it will not supplant state assessment results with other assessment results. The charter school may supply additional sources of data to support the Department’s review of proven provider and/or charter school expansion requests. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. A student’s attendance record during the current school year is a stronger indicator of a student’s engagement phase than a student’s attendance record from the previous school year. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Touch points include in-class attendance; completed or attempted assignments, assessment, and/or courses; student-initiated counselor or teacher contacts; attending work or internships; and attending appointments with partner organizations or wraparound services. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Obligations and circumstances outside of school include current or prior court involvement, including adjudication; documented need to work to support family; homelessness or housing insecurity; pregnant and/or parenting teen/young adult; food insecurity and/or lacks access to basic life necessities (i.e., student identified in the low-income group); current or prior drug or alcohol abuse or concerns; current or prior foster care placement/Department of Children and Families (DCF) custody; documented current or prior victim of in-person or cyber bullying; prior undiagnosed learning disability; social-emotional Individualized Educational Plan (IEP); immigration status (undocumented)/ refugees; child of a teen parent; affidavit from a qualified clinical staff or mental health professional or mental health concerns; and students with limited or interrupted education (SLIFE). If the school determined to recognize an obligation and/or circumstance that is not listed here, then the Department will validate the obligation and/or circumstance with a reasonable explanation. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)