

Core Question 3: Is the organization effective and well run?

The Governance and Leadership Performance Framework, outlined in Core Question 3, gauges the academic and operational leadership of schools. Core Question 3 consists of five indicators designed to measure schools on how well their school administration and board of directors comply with the terms of their charter agreement, applicable laws, and authorizer expectations.

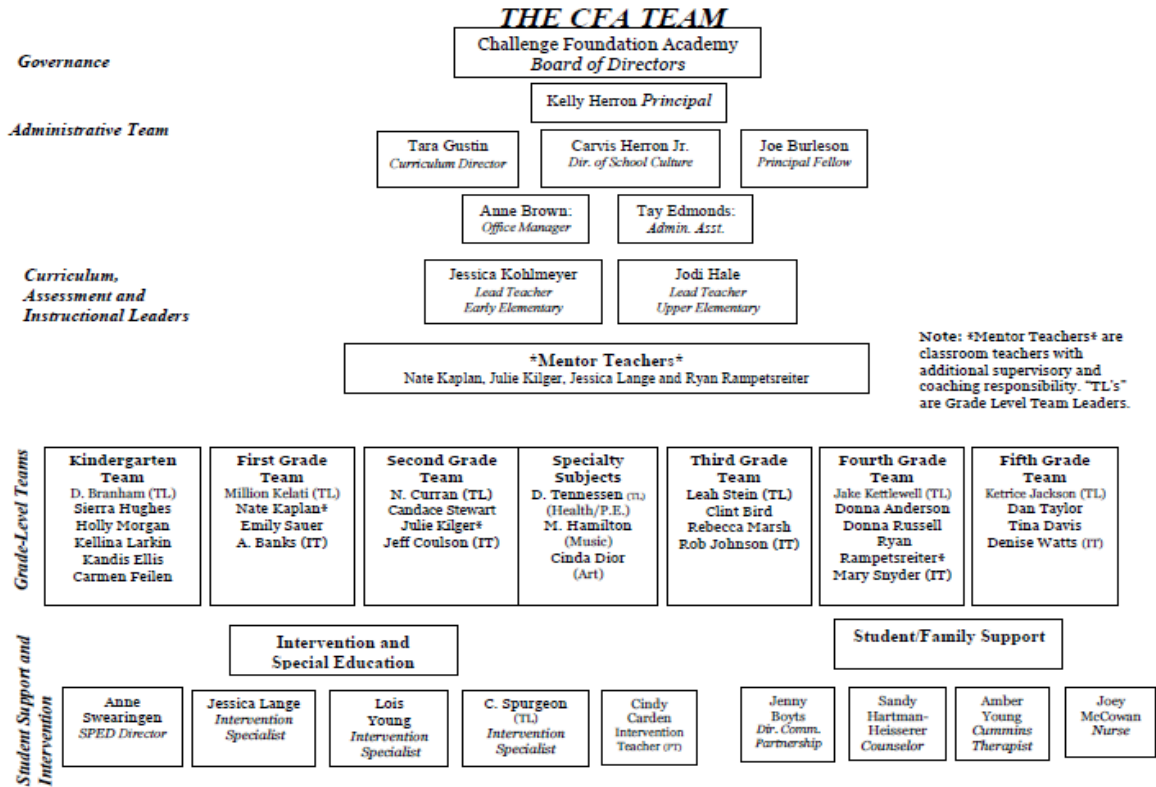
3.1. Is the school leader strong in his or her academic and organizational leadership?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard	The school leader presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Approaching standard	The school leader presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Meets standard	The school leader complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
	Exceeds standard	The school leader consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
3.1 Rating	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	ES						
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Demonstration of sufficient academic and leadership experience						ES
	Leadership stability in key administrative positions						MS
	Communication with internal and external stakeholders						ES
	Clarity of roles among schools and staff						MS
	Engagement in a continuous process of improvement and establishment of systems for addressing areas of deficiency in a timely manner						ES
	Consistency in providing information to and consulting with the schools' board of directors						ES

The School Director of Avondale Meadows Academy (AMA) has been with the school since its first year of operation in 2006. She began her career at AMA as a teacher, was promoted to Assistant Director, and, two years ago, to the Director role. The school leadership team, including the Director, Director of School Culture, Curriculum Director, Lead Teachers, and Mentor Teachers, demonstrated sufficient academic and operational expertise and has remained relatively stable over time. Roles and responsibilities are clearly delineated and the Director maintains methods for consistent oversight to monitor performance.

The Director consistently communicates with internal and external stakeholders, including the school staff, board of directors, Board Chair, Mayor’s Office (OEI), community partners, and families. She has developed several community partnerships (i.e. the YMCA, Ernst & Young, and a local farmer) to provide valuable services to the school, holds regular Parent University sessions that engage families in the student learning process, and meets regularly with the school Board Chair for feedback and support on school initiatives.

Organizational Chart

Challenge Foundation Academy Organizational Chart 2013-2014



AMA received an “A” accountability grade from the Indiana Department of Education for the 2012-2013 school year. Even though this is the highest grade possible, the Director immediately identified that reading was an area for improvement and implemented several school-wide initiatives to focus on reading growth for the 2013-2014 school year. She collected data regularly throughout the course of the year and was able to accurately report on significant reading improvements by the end of the year, corroborated by increased ISTEP+ scores on reading. She consistently engaged in reflection and analyzed school performance using a variety of metrics (including academic data, attendance, discipline, and teacher performance) and continuously searched for ways to improve the student experience at AMA.

The Director provided a thorough report to the board at every meeting that included sections on multiple measures of school performance (including those listed above). Information was consistently accurate, relevant, and timely. For all of these reasons, Avondale Meadows Academy is **exceeding standard** for school leadership.

3.2. Does the school satisfactorily comply with all its organizational structure and governance obligations?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard	The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Approaching standard	The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Meets standard	The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
	Exceeds standard	The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
3.2 Rating	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	AS						
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Submission of all required compliance documentation in a timely manner as set forth by the Mayor's Office, including but not limited to: meeting minutes and schedules, board member information, compliance reports and employee documentation						DNMS
	Compliance with the terms of its charter, including amendments, school policies and regulations, and applicable federal and state laws						MS
	Proactive and productive collaboration with its board and/or management organization (if applicable) in meeting governance obligations						AS
	Active participation in scheduled meetings with OEI, including the submission of required documentation by deadlines						MS

During the 2013-2014 school year, Avondale Meadows Academy failed to meet many deadlines for submitting compliance documents to OEI. There was a transition in the Office Manager position mid-year, which led to a brief period of confusion regarding compliance responsibilities. By the end of the year roles and expectations were clarified to ensure more timely submission. Although compliance documentation was often late, AMA worked with the board and an Educational Service Provider, Community Charter Network (CCN), to ensure it was eventually submitted.

Aside from compliance documentation, AMA maintained compliance with all material sections of its charter and submitted amendments when necessary. Additionally, the School Director was consistently and actively engaged in meetings with OEI. However, due to the significant concerns with compliance reporting, AMA **does not meet standard** for compliance obligations.

3.3. Is the school's board active, knowledgeable, and does it abide by appropriate policies, systems, and processes in its oversight?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard	The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Approaching standard	The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.					
	Meets standard	The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
	Exceeds standard	The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.					
3.3 Rating	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	ES						
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Timely communication of organizational, leadership, academic, fiscal, or facility deficiencies to the Mayor's Office; or when the school's management company (if applicable) fails to meet its obligations as set forth in the charter						MS
	Clear understanding of the mission and vision of the school						ES
	Adherence to board policies and procedures, including those established in the by-laws, and revision of policies and procedures, as necessary						MS
	Recruitment and selection of members that are knowledgeable, represent diverse skill sets, and act in the best interest of the school and establishment of systems for member orientation and training						ES
	Effective and transparent management of conflicts of interest						ES
	Collaboration with school leadership that is fair, timely, consistent, and transparent in handling complaints or concerns						ES
	Adherence to its charter agreement as it pertains to governance structure						MS
	Holding of all meetings in accordance with Indiana Open Door Law						MS

For the 2013-2014 school year, a new chair was elected to serve on AMA's board. The full board consisted of directors with skills and experience in business, finance, healthcare, education, and community representation. Additionally, in an effort to ensure alignment, two representatives from AMA's educational service provider, Team CFA, sat on the board.

The board experienced significant issues with Team CFA, including a disagreement over the lease for AMA’s replication school, Vision Academy. In January, recognizing the inability to reach consensus, the board voted to disaffiliate with Team CFA and immediately began the process of rebranding the school, including changing the name from Challenge Foundation Academy to Avondale Meadows Academy. During this process, both the Board Chair and Team CFA were open and transparent with the Mayor’s Office regarding the disagreement and concern over future partnership.

Through meeting minutes and notes, it is clear that all directors on the AMA board understood and supported the mission and vision of the school during the 2013-2014 school year. Several discussions between all board members reflected the prioritization of the students, staff, families, and community of AMA. Not only did the board monitor academic progress of students, they also reallocated money so that all students could attend field trips, negotiated a healthcare benefits package to ensure staff didn’t experience any setbacks, and used community feedback to select the new school name. Directors were rarely absent from meetings and consistently engaged in discussing school performance. They all regularly participated in meetings and offered expertise and support where appropriate.

Skill Sets Represented on Board

Finance		Education	
Business		Legal	
Community		Healthcare	
ESP			

Board Overview

Avondale Meadows Academy, Inc. holds the charter for Avondale Meadows Academy.

8 **majority**
Members # Required for Quorum

The AMA board meets monthly.

The board formerly contracted with Team CFA, an educational service provider, and currently partners with the Community Charter Network, another educational service provider.

In governance operations, the board maintained compliance with its bylaws throughout the course of the year, with a formal review of the bylaws occurring in April. The majority of meetings were held as scheduled and the board regularly met quorum. All meetings abided by Indiana Open Door Law. For the reasons explained above, AMA is exceeding standard for board governance.

3.4. Does the school's board work to foster a school environment that is viable and effective?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
3.4 Rating	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	MS						
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Regular communication with school leadership and/or its management company						ES
	Annual utilization of a performance based evaluation to assess its own performance, that of the school leader, and management organization (if applicable)						AS
	Collaboration with the school leader to establish clear objectives, priorities, and goals						ES
	Interaction with school leader that is conducive to the success of the school, including requesting and disseminating information in a timely manner, providing continuous and constructive feedback, and engaging the school leader in school improvement plans						ES

The AMA board held monthly meetings at which all stakeholders, including the School Director, CCN, and Team CFA, provided updated reports. Between meetings, the Board Chair held additional meetings with the various stakeholders to monitor topics discussed at board meetings and to provide oversight and support. Additionally, the board established three committees: Executive, Finance, and Governance, to provide continual support for board oversight.

Annually, the Board Chair worked collaboratively with the School Director to develop an extensive set of goals for the school year. The Director then reported on progress towards those goals at board meetings and during meetings with the Board Chair throughout the year. At the end of the year, the Director was evaluated on whether or not she met the established goals. Although the board did not employ a formal evaluation for itself, Team CFA, or CCN, it did demonstrate informal methods for assessing performance for all three. For example, the development of board committees and the decision to disaffiliate from Team CFA demonstrate the board's ability to be reflective and accountable. Additionally, meeting minutes and notes demonstrated



routine discussions and questioning around reports from CCN that ensured AMA was on track to meet performance targets. Although the board and CCN are meeting their respective obligations and continuing to develop, the board and school would benefit from establishing a more formal system for evaluating itself and that of CCN.

All meetings and observed interactions between the board, school staff, Team CFA, and CCN were held in a professional and respectful manner. When disagreements occurred, board members engaged in productive discussions that promoted mutual respect and a positive environment.

For the reasons explained above, AMA is meeting standard for school and board environment.

3.5. Does the school comply with applicable laws, regulations, and provisions of the charter agreement relating to the safety and security of the facility?							
Indicator Targets	Does not meet standard		The school presents concerns in a majority of the sub-indicators with no evidence of a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Approaching standard		The school presents concerns in a minimal number of the sub-indicators and may or may not have a credible plan to address the issues.				
	Meets standard		The school complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
	Exceeds standard		The school consistently and effectively complies with and presents no concerns in the sub-indicators below.				
3.5 Rating	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	MS						
Sub-indicator Ratings	Sub-indicators						Rating
	Health and safety code requirements						MS
	Facility accessibility						MS
	Updated safety and emergency management plans						MS
	A facility that is well suited to meet the curricular and social needs of the students, faculty, and members of the community						MS

In 2013-14, AMA's facility met all health and safety code requirements and provided a safe environment conducive to learning. The facility's design, size, maintenance, security, equipment and furniture were all adequate to meet the school's needs. The school was accessible to all, including people with physical disabilities. The Mayor's Office monitoring of AMA's compliance with health and safety code requirements did not reveal any significant concerns related to these obligations. Accordingly, the school is meeting standard for this indicator for 2013-14.