

XAVIER CHARTER SCHOOL

Final Report
Programmatic Audit Site Visit
Conducted April 25-26, 2011



Idaho Charter School Network

Prepared by
Idaho Charter School Network
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XAVIER CHARTER SCHOOL

Address: 1218 N. College Road W.
Twin Falls, Idaho 88301

School Phone: 208-734-3947

School website:
<http://www.xaviercharter.org>

Date School Opened: September 2007

Authorized by: State of Idaho Public Charter
School Commission

Administrator: Thad Biggers, Interim Principal
tbiggers@xaviercharter.org

Programmatic Audit Site Visit Team:

Diane Demarest, Executive Director, Idaho Charter School Network

Kelly Weaver, teacher, Idaho Charter School Network Project Assistant

Mike Gibson, Principal, ARTEC Charter School

Mel Wiseman, Retired Superintendent, Shoshone, Idaho

Lori Howard, State Department of Education, Office of School Choice

ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

School Year represented by this data:	2010-2011	
Enrollment		
Range of grades offered:	K-12	
	711	
Students newly enrolled	711	
Students who exited	89	
Total Students enrolled	622	
Waiting List	123	
Student demographics		
Ethnicity:		
Caucasian	540	87%
Hispanic	40	6%
Black	3	.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	25	4%
Multi-racial		
Native American	3	.5%
Other		
Total Number of Students enrolled:	622	
	Number	Percent
Free and reduced lunch	211	34%
Students with IEP	17	3%
English Language Learners		
Other special populations		
Staff Make Up:	Number	
Head of School/ Principal	On Adm Leave	
Asst. to the Principal	1	
Certified teachers	29	
Non-certified teachers/Education Assts.	15	
Office/Administrative staff	6	
Business Services: Paragon Schools		

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

We submit this report to Xavier Charter School (Xavier) and the Idaho Charter School Network (ICSN) as a summary of our observations. We recognize that in our brief visit, covering two days, we were only able to see a cross-section of the school's full program. During this visit the team focused its attention on all four of the goals of the accountability plan. In all areas, the team endeavored to triangulate data from several sources to provide evidence of discrete performance indicators. The team focuses on validating the self-study conducted by the school and provide evidence of agreement or variance from the self-study.

We wish to express our gratitude to Xavier Charter School for extending hospitality and openness to us during our visit. They provided the team with an array of organized documents and artifacts as evidence of their progress in the areas identified in the Accountability Plan. We commend Principal, Thad Biggers and his team for their attention to organization of all documents in preparation for this site visit. Additionally we would like to thank all members of the school community - students, parents and board members - who took an active role in the site visit by providing documentation, attending focus group discussions, inviting the team into their classrooms or providing interviews.

To validate the performance of Xavier Charter School in all areas of school administration and performance relevant to the Accountability Plan, the site team conducted interviews and observations and reviewed school documents and records. The ICSN Accountability Plan for Idaho Public Charter Schools has four goals related to quality indicators for the operation of a charter school. Xavier Charter School invited an outside team to the school to assess the school's performance on the four goals of the Accountability Plan; namely,

- 1) Governance and Administrative Obligation
- 2) Quality academic program,
- 3) Stakeholder support, involvement and satisfaction, and
- 4) Continuous school improvement.

Our general impression is that XAVIER adequately fulfills the necessary governance and administrative obligations as provided in the state and federal law in fulfillment of their charter and in the execution of a classical-centered educational program. The team worked to validate the self-study provided by XAVIER and expresses the consensus of the team in the following documents. The stakeholders, including the board, parents, students and the school staff and leadership are very optimistic about the future of XAVIER after a difficult year; still the team has some concerns as they move forward, particularly in relationship to governance, bringing in a new administrator and the relationship between Paragon and the school. Our team is grateful for the opportunity to visit and we submit our report in a spirit of collegiality and in the quest for educational excellence.

Leadership Team at Xavier Charter School:

XAVIER Director:

Cindy Fulcher – on
administrative leave at
the time of the visit

Thad Biggers, Asst.
Principal in charge

XAVIER Board of Directors:

Teresa Berry, Chair
Shawn Willsey, Treasurer
Joan Hurlock, Director
Emily Huber, Director
Gerado Munoz, Director

Xavier Charter School

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of Xavier Public Charter School is to instill in its students a love of perpetual learning, an aspiration for personal achievement and the capacity to become cooperative contributors to society. Xavier's philosophy lies with the strong belief that all children can learn. It is their goal to prepare each student with personal tools that will assist them in life's choices. They do so by addressing the Whole Child – Body, Mind and Spirit.

It was very evident to the site visit team that Xavier Charter School is working diligently to live fully into its mission; however, they have faced a number of significant challenges this year that have side-tracked the board and leadership from this work in order to deal with the issues that were before them. *The board has struggled this year with division over a number of key issues. The most serious one has been the disciplinary action of the principal. What began as a concern quickly escalated into a full blown legal proceeding which at the time of this audit was nearing a conclusion. The principal was on leave since October leaving a part time assistant principal in charge of all aspects of the school operations.* We summarize for XAVIER the following commendations:

The leadership of Xavier has accomplished a major milestone in taking occupancy of their new building. The well appointed building is currently being leased. The assistant principal has been functioning as the school's sole administrator since October when Ms. Fulcher was placed on administrative leave. The team recognizes the contributions of Mr. Biggers in keeping the program moving forward and sustaining teacher and student engagement despite a very difficult year. The academic program remains strong with a high commitment to the Core Knowledge Sequence and Classical methods. The fine arts program is also very strong with exemplary student performance in music and dance and abundant student visual art work around the school.

Based on observations and research conducted over two and days, the team had an opportunity to learn a great deal about the school; however, the group is also keenly aware that such a visit, while informative, offers a limited view of the school's characteristics. The collection of this data provides the basis for the recommendations to the board and educational leaders that are summarized below:

The team feels that it is essential for the board to come to some consensus on the issues that they are divided on and create some guiding documents that will help them move forward. These include but are not limited to clear vision statement, understanding of the role of fine arts in the school, conflict of interest and commitment statements for the board and a board manual. The sustainability of the school will hinge largely on the strength of the governance and the boards choice for the next administrator. This change provides the board with an opportunity to restructure the relationship between the board and the administration and to increase transparency in all their activities. Additionally, the team recommends that the board and leadership outline a process for creating a strategic plan to guide future growth.

A team consisting of the administrator, two teachers, and two board members completed the self-study for the school. The visit team gathered a variety of data to validate the school's self-study and offer the following commendations and recommendations.

Goal One: The charter school will fulfill all governance and administrative obligations as provided in state and federal law and in the school's charter.

Purpose/Intent of Goal: Ensure that the charter is currently meeting all legal requirements including being aware of and abiding by current and relevant state and federal statutes, creating and maintaining an effective governance structure, filling required reports in a timely and accurate manner, maintaining a fiscally sound budget and practices, and providing strong administrative leadership for the school.

Six areas of governance were reviewed including: documents, relevant federal and state laws and procedures, governance structure, financials, administrative leadership and federal and state reporting and testing requirements. Xavier has contracted with Paragon Schools for a number of business services, including, according to their contract, fiscal and budgetary operations, board training, and human resources. During the previous audit the administration reported these services to be very satisfactory. The administrator was key in the communications between the school and Paragon. Following the dismissal of the principal there seemed to be a less than satisfactory relationship between the board and Paragon resulting in tension and absence of communication.

Overall Xavier Charter School has continued to meet the standard in a number of areas; however, a rating is assigned for each of the six areas of governance and administrative obligation so that strengths and opportunities are more readily discerned.

OBJECTIVES	SELF STUDY SCORE	TEAM SCORE	COMMENT
a) School retains all legal documents pertaining to opening, operating, and reporting progress on the charter. These documents are accessible to or held by all people who would likely use them to perform their job duties.			
1. Access to legal documents	4	3	<i>Charter and by-laws updates were available. Gather source documents from Paragon.</i>
2. Personnel files	3	3	<i>The team appreciated the attention to detail that the school demonstrated in their preparation for the visit. All files should be appropriately secured in a fireproof locking cabinet. A system to archive former students is needed.</i>
3. School filing system for student data	3.5	2	<i>Increase security of files and increase organization of files. The team recommends a checklist in each file and an audit of the files to insure they are fully complete.</i>

b) School is aware of and in compliance with current relevant state and federal laws.	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1. Charter is knowledgeable about newly passed and existing legislation and state procedures	3	2	<i>Plan to attend the post legislative tour and new superintendents' meeting in the fall. Identify a board member who can take on the responsibility of keeping the board updated.</i>
2. Leadership has a reliable way to address legal obligations.	4	3	<i>Xavier was previously dependent on Paragon for legal advice. This became a conflict of interest in the last year leaving them without this advisor at board meetings. They have retained Diane Tappen, an experienced educational law advisor. The board needs to adjust the budget to allow for additional legal support.</i>

c) School maintains effective governance structure.	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1. Charter has bylaws that include major obligations, procedures regarding governing structure, guidelines for elections, dismissals, and other changes in the governing structure	4	2	<i>A comprehensive board manual would inform the board's discussions and decisions with ready access for consistent implementation of policies. Instituting a communication policy would be beneficial as well as a clear commitment letter for board members.</i>
2. School has a policy or procedure manual of their own or an adopted version from another district with waivers if necessary	3	3	<i>Student handbooks reflect current policies. All policies have not been reviewed but there is a plan to review all policies every three years. Needs to be fully implemented. All reviewed and adopted policies should be dated and signed. Procedures for all financial operations need to be developed.</i>
3. Conflicts of interest policy in place.	3.5	2	<i>Board members are sworn in but do not have a written statement outlining</i>

			<i>conflict or interest or ethical behavior.</i>
4. Charter has strategic goals that align with the mission or vision of the school.	4	2	<i>Facility has been the most pressing goal for the board and the building has been completed. At the present time several issues divide the board with regard to the expressed mission of the school especially surrounding the arts and the resources needed to carry out this robust program component. The school continues to rely on their charter for educational goals.</i>
5. Governing Board of directors are well trained for their responsibilities.	2.5	2	<i>The board has relied on Paragon for training per their contract; however, there is currently no plan for orienting or training new members. A plan for ongoing training and induction of new board members should be created along with training on finance. The turnover on the board has been difficult along with stakeholder activities attempting to unseat several members. This has contributed significantly to the disruption of governance at Xavier. Regrouping and training of the board should be a top priority. Develop a comprehensive board manual.</i>
6. Roles of the administrator and the Board	3.5	2	<i>After going through a difficult separation with founding principal, it is essential that the board develops a guiding document to articulate the roles of the administrator and the board and put in place clear measures of accountability. Strong HR policies are suggested.</i>
7. Board conducts self-evaluations	2	1	<i>The board is encouraged to consider a formal board evaluation and obtain support from an outside consultant to strengthen the functioning of the board.</i>
8. Board holds administrator accountable to its mission or vision.	4	2	<i>The board has demonstrated the ability to hold accountable their administrator under very difficult circumstances. Had the communication and policies been more clear and present, perhaps this difficulty could have been averted. The team recommends that the board give considerable attention to their processes for accountability. There is some discord among the board in their interpretation of the charter and the</i>

			<i>emphasis on fine arts. The board was not of one opinion in their assessment of contracted services.</i>
9. Board positions are systematically filled.	3.5	2	<i>Several openings on the board at this time. The by-laws outline procedures but they are having difficulty identifying strong candidates after this troubling year. Need to recruit outside talent to the board and insure transparency.</i>

d) School is financially solvent and stable in the use of its resources	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1. School budget is comprehensive, balanced and adequate to support the mission of the school.	3.5	3	<i>The board has not developed a 5 year budget and the high cost of the building may be putting a strain on the budget. The team encourages the board and administration to take a very careful look at the overall budget and project ahead as well as take into consideration the impact of the legislative changes as well as their contracted services.</i>
2. Enrollment is stable.	3	2	<i>Strong waiting list in K-8 continuing to stabilize high school enrollment. The school had 89 students exit during the turmoil. The change in principal will have an unpredicted impact on enrollment.</i>
3. Financial Obligations (loans)	4	3	<i>In consideration of purchasing the building in the future, the board will need to budget for ongoing maintenance of the physical plant. Enrollment must remain high to cover lease. Unanticipated expenses could handicap the school without a large fund balance.</i>
4. Facility Plan: The school leases or owns a facility that meets the needs of their student body and program and is within their means.	3	2	<i>Current new facility is leased by the school. They hope to construct phase II of the project which will house additional classrooms and an auditorium. There is no evidence at this time about the ability of the school to finance such a project. The current site is well appointed but</i>

			<i>they are short a few classrooms and need to use the gym for PE, dance and lunch.</i>
5. Management and reporting of the budget	3.5	1	<i>While Xavier received an unqualified opinion on their fiscal audit last year there is little evidence that the board regularly oversees the financial obligations of the school. Monthly review and approval of the bills is not documented. The relationship with contracted services for business management left many details less evident. Some board members and administration felt they had sufficient details while others did not. Paragon representative was not at the audit as they were in the process of renegotiating the contract.</i>
6. Active Fundraising Plan supports school operations and sustainability.	3	3	<i>The school has engaged in considerable fund raising but they feel a need for additional communication between fund raising committee and board.</i>
7. Staff benefits (health insurance, increasing salaries to retain teachers, less discipline problems than public schools, workman's compensation, flexible instructional design, life insurance, etc.)	4	4	<i>No complaints or concerns were voiced by staff regarding benefits.</i>
e) School has strong administrative leadership	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1. The administrator is aware of and actively engaged in implementing the mission or vision of the school	4	4	<i>Mr. Biggers and the staff continue to staff focused on the classical method with high expectations for academic performance and character development. Clarity about the relative importance of fine arts needs to be addressed.</i> <i>The disposition of the principal following the hearing was not evident at the time of the audit but since has been decided. Ms. Fulcher</i>

			<i>will not be returning to Xavier.</i>
2. Administrator adequately allocates resources (time, money, materials, etc.) to achieve mission and goals of school.	3	1	<i>Mr. Biggers has been functioning as acting principal since early fall when Ms. Fulcher was placed on leave. While all parties did not anticipate it would result in a full year in this role, it has been overwhelming as he continued to teach part time. This issue should have been addressed by mid-year when Ms. Fulcher did not return. The board did not support the school with adequate administration during this year.</i>
3. Administrator is aware of areas that need improvement within the school and reports these needs to the Board along with strategies on how to fulfill these needs	3	4	<i>The administrative team is commended for continuing their work during this very difficult year. Mr. Biggers did a commendable job in holding the staff together with only part time hours. The team recognizes his amazing contribution. A pattern with the previous administrator suggests that the board and administrator relationship is one that would benefit from consultation.</i>
4. Administrator is actively engaged in school-community relations that benefit the school	3.5	2	<i>While there were positive relationship built at the establishment of the school, the events of this year, the media coverage and deliberations have not been positive for the school or charter community.</i>
5. Administrator shows strong leadership skills that connect the Board to the school and its staff.	3.5	1	<i>In reflecting on the relationship between the administrator and the board, the team believes that Paragon was situated between the two and that there was a lack of clarity among all parties. Discord between the administrator and the board that was not completely evident in the last audit, came in to full view during the early months of this school year. Mr. Biggers has worked hard to rebuild the trusting</i>

			<i>relationship under very difficult circumstances but recognizes that communication has sometimes been intentionally limited.</i>
6. Administrator effectively evaluates school personnel	4	4	<i>Evaluation format well aligned to Danielson framework. Not all are completed at this time due to absence of full time principal.</i>

g) School files all required state and federal reports and completes required state tests in a timely and accurate manner	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1. Compliance with Idaho State Department of Education reporting and testing dates	4	4	
2. Compliance regarding grants received	4	4	
3. Accreditation	4	4	<i>Xavier participated in a Northwest Assoc of Accredited Schools accreditation process.</i>
4. Implementation of school improvement or strategic plan	4	4	<i>The school is engaged in continual improvement related to academics and culture. A comprehensive strategic plan is needed to integrate all areas of the school.</i>
Total Points	108.5	81 31 Items Avg Score 2.6	Percent Agreement: 75%

The team found a 76% level of agreement between the self-study and the programmatic visit and an average score of 2.6 for the areas covered in Goal One. This indicates that overall the team assessed the function of the school in Goal One to be considerable lower than their self-assessment. Additionally, an average score of 2.6 place Xavier in the category of ‘Progressing Evidence’. There are a number of recommendations by the team that may improve the performance of the school in the area of governance and the resolution of the principal status will also have a likely positive impact on many areas. Some disagreement among board members and between the board and staff about the relative importance of the fine arts program and the allocation of resources to that program seemed evident. Staffing, space and budget as well as student effort to the fine arts, while included in the charter as a characteristic of the school, seems to be more highly valued by some stakeholders than by others. The team strongly advises that the board obtain consultation and work to strengthen governance to support the sustainability of the school.

Goal One Commendations:

- Enrollment in K-8 very stable but some impact of this year's events noted.
- Using new facility very well, creatively meeting all students' needs.
- Obtained the services of legal expert.
- Mr. Biggers and the staff have held things together under very difficult circumstances.
- The board has worked hard to get through this difficult year but the team finds they are not united in their purpose or vision.

Goal One Recommendations:

- All staff and student records should be reviewed for completeness and secured in locked, fire-proof cabinet.
- As you begin an administrator search, the team urges the board to:
 - Work with a trainer to get processes for communication in place.
 - Articulate board and administrator responsibilities and measures for accountability
 - Create clear policies and procedures for HR
 - Create a board handbook and orientation for new members.
 - Come to a consensus about board member obligations, conflict of interest and commitment.
- Come to complete understanding of relationship with Paragon. Hire internally as needed to fill functions.
- Follow up on board self evaluation/strengths assessment and consider annual board evaluation.
- Commit procedures of the school to an operations manual. I.e. how payroll or purchasing is completed.
- Develop a finance committee to increase segregation of duties and thorough practices of oversight.
- Create a five year budget and strategic plan that includes attention to all areas of school operations, academic performance and future building needs.

Goal Two: The charter school will demonstrate a successful academic program. Goal 2 includes the areas of school culture, curriculum & instruction, and assessment and reporting.

INFRASTRUCTURE (School Culture): The intent of this portion of Goal 2 is to ensure that the charter has proper infrastructure to enable students and staff to achieve educational goals.

- a) School is faithful to its charter, its stated mission and is making progress toward stated academic goals.

- b) School has clearly stated measurable program-related goals that reflect high expectations for students and staff; the academic program aligns with the charter document. Charter staff demonstrates reflective teaching practices

Observations: Based on teacher, parent and student interviews, and classroom observation episodes, it is apparent that the teachers and leadership of the school are working hard to implement the academic, character development and fine arts intentions of the charter. Xavier Charter School has a robust program and highly engaged teaching staff. They are anticipating several staff changes in the coming year that will need to be carefully address, particularly among mathematics faculty and the rebuilding of the administrative team.

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
a) School is faithful to its charter, its stated mission and is making progress toward stated academic goals.			
1. Facility adequacy	3	3	<i>The new facility is beautiful with well appointed library, science, art and music rooms. Classrooms are bright and roomy. With only phase I of the building completed, the multi-purpose room is used for gym, dance and cafeteria functions. The scheduling is a challenge. Next year they will be short several classrooms.</i>
2. Attendance requirements	4	4	<i>96% attendance is required and achieved.</i>
3. School-wide academic plan	4	4	<i>Academic plan is robust and includes classical education, fine arts and character education at all grade levels.</i>
4. Educational Goals	4	4	<i>The charter has very specific measurable goals for student achievement. Xavier made AYP for 2009-2010 but 2011 data not available</i>
5. Assessment of Progress	4	4	<i>Teachers use a number of classroom assessments in addition to standardized tests. ISAT data very strong with 99% of all students testing. Student portfolios are identifies in the charter but the team did not have an opportunity to</i>
6. Methods of Evaluation and Communication of Progress	4	3	

			<i>review during this visit.</i>
7. Professional Development	3	2.5	<i>High collaboration among teaching staff. They remain focused in spite of the leadership challenges this year. There is not comprehensive PD plan and several new teachers will be hired next year. Anticipate Singapore Math training this summer.</i>
8. School Safety	3.5	3.5	<i>The school is described by students as a very safe environment. The new building is open and readily supervised by staff including the front office.</i>
9. School Climate/Culture	3	3	<i>Xavier uses Great Expectations as their character program and teachers can describe the expectations clearly. They seem to be consistently implemented. Students wear uniforms and generally this is well enforced. Pictures of the 'correct' uniform looks are posted. Older students feel an obligation to set a good example for younger students.</i>
10. Research-based Instructional Strategies	4	4	<i>Core Knowledge Sequence and Classical instruction is implemented throughout the school. Fine Arts teachers are highly qualified. Use Singapore Math and Read Naturally and Saxton for phonics. Upper grades offering a number of AP and Concurrent credit opportunities.</i>
11. School progress with Idaho State Achievement Standards	4	4	<i>Students performing well above targets in 2009-2010 with 99% of all students testing.</i>

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
b) Charter staff demonstrates reflective teaching practices			
1. Curriculum: : Reading, Writing, Math, Science, History, Geography	4	4	<i>Anticipating more training on Singapore Math this year. Teachers</i>

			<i>would like additional training on Read Naturally curriculum. Follow Core Knowledge Sequence.</i>
2. Evaluation: Teachers	4	2	<i>Clear expectations but not all completed due to admin shortage.</i>
3. Teacher Collaboration	3	3	<i>Teachers are working hard in teams to increase AP offerings. Some discord over administrator leaving though they understand the situation. Many were very committed to her vision and this has caused some divisions. Teachers remain very committed to the school. Additional planning for teacher PD and collaboration recommended.</i>
Total Points	51.5	48 14 Items Avg Score 3.4	Percent Agreement 93%

GOAL 2 represents the strongest area for XAVIER in the programmatic audit. The team reached a 93% agreement with the school's self study and an average score of 3.4 on 14 Items in Goal 2. Evidence of a strong academic program is underscored by meeting AYP, implementation of Core Knowledge Sequence, Classical practices and array of AP classes at high school level. The team was not provided with alignment documents or individual student portfolios to review. Evidence of some goals such as 90% of students participating in yearly community service or 95% of all students developing and maintaining career portfolios were not readily available to the team. We offer the following commendations and recommendations to the school:

Goal 2 Commendations: The team would like to commend XAVIER in the following areas:

- Settling in to the new building and creating an exciting learning environment.
- Meeting high expectations for attendance.
- Use every space available for instruction and student activities.
- Culture is very positive offering students a safe and engaging environment.
- Meeting AYP. Students very aware of their personal progress.
- Students report that the work is very challenging especially AP classes.
- Students and parents have high regard for the fine arts opportunities. Exciting to see students actively engaged in dance and music and high level arts projects.
- Teachers very collaborative even though there isn't abundant planned time for collaboration.
- Great classroom mgt and fully engaged students.

- Commend Dance Teacher of the Year Cindy Jones.

Recommendations: The team respectfully recommends to XAVIER that they:

- Consider additional opportunities for staff to shape the professional development plan for the year. Expand professional development opportunities and outside resources to continue to enrich teacher experience outside the scope of the building.
- Pursue curriculum alignment for K-8 in Core Knowledge Sequence both vertical and horizontal. .
- Pursue Title 2 funds to support professional development.
- Continue to explore additional AP offerings.
- Form a committee to oversee and assess school culture. Some students feel there isn't always fair implementation of the rules.
- Clarify everyone's understanding of the Fine Arts program and equitable distribution of resources.

Goal Three: The charter school will show and plan for strong stakeholder support, involvement and satisfaction

Purpose/Intent of this Goal: Ensure the charter has stakeholders who are supportive, well informed and involved in the charter school. Stakeholders: def. Board, administration, teachers, students, parents, PTA, community

	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
The charter school will show and plan for strong stakeholder support, involvement, and satisfaction			
1. Stakeholders participate and contribute to school mission	3	2	<i>Parents are active in supporting the activities of the school and participating to support their students. The participation of the community and some stakeholders has been divisive and caused division among the board.</i>
2. Communication with stakeholders	3	3	<i>Clarify opportunities for stakeholders to participate in open meetings. Greater transparency on the board and re-establish trust and</i>

			<i>positive communication after change in administration.</i>
3. Stakeholder satisfaction and engagement.	3.5	1	<i>Parents we met with are largely satisfied with program for students. The departure of 89 students suggests that there were many unsatisfied stakeholders. The board should monitor carefully following this difficult year.</i>
4. Plan for Improvement	3	2	<i>At the time of this audit there appeared a number of very significant areas which require concerted board attention to improve as noted in Goal 1. Keeping in mind the relationship with all stakeholders as they rebuild will be critical.</i>
Total Scores	12.5	8 4 Items Avg Score 2.0	Percent Agreement: 64%

Goal Three assesses stakeholder engagement and satisfaction. Overall we found that the parents we spoke with are satisfied and engaged. They especially appreciate the teachers and program. This has been a very difficult year for the school with proceedings to dismiss the principal, a resulting shortage of administrative staff and public media attention that was not positive. As stakeholders split into groups of those for and against the dismissal of the founding principal, impact was felt on the board and among the staff and students. It appears to the team that in spite of these challenges, the staff has been able to stay focused on the students and the mission. The board has a great deal of work to do in coming together to strengthen their governance and rebuild trust among all stakeholders. Building on the strengths of the current staff and establishing a strong administrative team for the coming year will be essential for the sustainability of the school.

Commendations: The team would like to commend XAVIER in the following areas:

- Parents are generally satisfied with academic and character program as well as fine arts.
- Parents feel well informed about their child’s progress and activities happening in the school.
- Active PFA and fundraising committee.
- Students are doing outstanding work and there is much to celebrate.

Recommendations: The team respectfully recommends to XAVIER that they:

- Might consider utilizing outside resource to get a different perspective on stakeholder surveys.
- Continue to pursue community member for board development.
- Consider additional outreach to broader community to build the positive visibility of the school.
- Work on relationship with other charter schools in the region.
- Set a goal of high transparency of the board and leadership. Gets the board on the same page regarding the mission and the role of all stakeholders.

Goal Four: The charter school will plan for short and long term continuous improvement.

Purpose/Intent of this Goal: Ensure the charter clearly recognizes where growth is essential.

The charter school will plan for short and long term continuous school improvement	<u>Self Study Score</u>	<u>Team Score</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1. The school has a five-year <u>Strategic Plan</u> and actively uses it to direct its efforts and measure its progress.	1	1	<i>Comprehensive strategic planning should be developed with input from all stakeholder groups.</i>
2. School leadership is reflective and uses data to drive improvement.	4	3	<i>Mr. Biggers can offer a very useful perspective of strategies to continue improvement after weathering this difficult year.</i>
3. Continuous Improvement is planned, monitored and accomplished.	4	1	<i>The coming year presents the opportunity to evidence the continuous improvement of the school.</i>
Total Scores	9.0	5 3 Items Avg Score 1.7	Percent Agreement: 55%

GOAL 4 refers to the school's efforts for continuous improvement. In the early years of the school's operation there was a strong demeanor of data informed decision making and continuous improvement. Teachers continue to keep this in mind as they develop their classes and monitor student achievement. It is currently the broader leadership that needs to

seek improvement and put in place mechanisms that will move the whole organization forward. High student achievement, and student and teacher retention is not sustainable if the board doesn't also continue to improve and function effectively. We support and encourage their continued efforts in this direction.

Goal 4: Commendations: The team would like to commend XAVIER on the following:

- Strong student achievement and data driven decisions at the classroom level.
- Open to programmatic team and good participation by stakeholders.

Recommendations: The team respectfully recommends that XAVIER:

- Continue opportunities for reflection and feedback as well as data informed decision making.
- Begin to develop a comprehensive strategic plan with the input of all stakeholders.
- Engage in open evaluation processes at all levels – board, director and teachers and consider the use of an outside evaluator.
- Board development plan will have positive impact school-wide as governance continues to be strengthened.

Goal	Score Level of Agreement	Commendations	Recommendations
<p>1. Governance: <i>The Charter School will fulfill all governance and administrative obligations as provided in state & federal law and in the school's charters.</i></p>	<p>75% Agreement</p> <p>Average Score 2.6</p> <p>Progressing Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment in K-8 very stable but some impact of this year's events noted. • Using new facility very well, creatively meeting all students' needs. • Obtained the services of legal expert. • Mr. Biggers and the staff have held things together under very difficult circumstances. • The board has worked hard to get through this difficult year but the team finds they are not united in their purpose or vision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and student records should be reviewed for completeness and secured in locked, fire-proof cabinet. • As you begin an administrator search, the team urges the board to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with a trainer to get processes for communication in place. ○ Articulate board and administrator responsibilities and measures for accountability ○ Create clear policies and procedures for HR ○ Create a board handbook and orientation for new members. ○ Come to a consensus about board member obligations, conflict of interest and commitment. • Come to complete understanding of relationship with Paragon. Hire internally as needed to fill functions. • Follow up on board self evaluation/strengths assessment and consider annual board evaluation. • Commit procedures of the school to an operations manual. I.e. how payroll or purchasing is completed. • Develop a finance committee to increase

			<p>segregation of duties and thorough practices of oversight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a five year budget and strategic plan that includes attention to all areas of school operations, academic performance and future building needs.
<p>2. Academic Program: <i>The charter school will demonstrate a successful academic program</i></p>	<p>94% Agreement</p> <p>Average Score 3.4</p> <p>Exemplary Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Settling in to the new building and creating an exciting learning environment. • Meeting high expectations for attendance. • Use every space available for instruction and student activities. • Culture is very positive offering students a safe and engaging environment. • Meeting AYP. Students very aware of their personal progress. • Students report that the work is very challenging especially AP classes. • Students and parents have high regard for the fine arts opportunities. Exciting to see students actively engaged in dance and music and high level arts projects. • Teachers very collaborative even though there isn't abundant planned time for collaboration. • Great classroom mgt and fully engaged students. • Commend Dance Teacher of the Year Cindy Jones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider additional opportunities for staff to shape the professional development plan for the year. Expand professional development opportunities and outside resources to continue to enrich teacher experience outside the scope of the building. • Pursue curriculum alignment for K-8 in Core Knowledge Sequence both vertical and horizontal. • Pursue Title 2 funds to support professional development. • Continue to explore additional AP offerings. • Form a committee to oversee and assess school culture. Some students feel there isn't always fair implementation of the rules. • Clarify everyone's understanding of the Fine Arts program and equitable distribution of resources.
<p>3. Stakeholder Support: <i>The charter school will show and plan for strong stakeholder support, involvement and satisfaction</i></p>	<p>64% Agreement</p> <p>Average Score 2.0</p> <p>Progressing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are generally satisfied with academic and character program as well as fine arts. • Parents feel well informed about their child's progress and activities happening in the school. • Active PFA and fundraising committee. • Students are doing outstanding work and there is much to celebrate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider utilizing outside resource to get a different perspective on stakeholder surveys. • Continue to pursue community member for board development. • Consider additional outreach to broader community to build the positive visibility of the school. • Work on relationship with other charter schools in

	Evidence		<p>the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set a goal of high transparency of the board and leadership. Work to get the board on the same page regarding the mission and the role of all stakeholders.
<p>4. Continuous Improvement: <i>The charter school will plan for short and long term continuous improvement.</i></p>	<p>55% Agreement</p> <p>Average Score 1.7</p> <p>Not Enough Evidence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong student achievement and data driven decisions at the classroom level. Open to programmatic team and good participation by stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue opportunities for reflection and feedback as well as data informed decision making. Begin to develop a comprehensive strategic plan with the input of all stakeholders. Engage in open evaluation processes at all levels – board, director and teachers and consider the use of an outside evaluator. Board development plan will have positive impact school-wide as governance continues to be strengthened.