

Glossary of Terms	Definition
Ad Hoc Committees	Latin phrase meaning "for this purpose". Ad Hoc committees are typically used in charter school governance in terms of establishing a temporary committee to address a certain issue at the school.
Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)	Term used under the No Child Left Behind federal law that requires each state to submit a plan for meeting the goal of all students achieving proficiency in reading and math by 2014. In Colorado, proficient for the purpose of AYP includes partially proficient, proficient, and advanced on the state CSAP exams. To find out more about Colorado's plan, visit the CDE AYP webpage at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/ayp/index.asp .
Amendment 23	An amendment to the Colorado constitution passed in 2000. This amendment increases spending on K-12 education by at least inflation plus one percent each year for ten years and then at least inflation in subsequent years. Some elements of Amendment 23 expire in 2010 or 2011.
American College Test (ACT)	A standardized, curriculum based, college entrance exam. All 11th grade public school students in Colorado must take the Colorado ACT.
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	The ADA prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in employment, state and local government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation - this includes public schools.
At-Will Employment	An employment relationship whereby either party can break the agreement without liability.
Board Member Terms	Charter schools establish their board member terms in their bylaws. These terms are typically two to three years and often are staggered to ensure effective leadership and succession planning.
Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)	Collaborative efforts by school districts (often rural) that have pooled their resources to provide specific services to their member district schools. The important question to ask is what BOCES does a district belong to and for what projects. Some districts may be in a BOCES only for Title I funds.
Board Policy	Policy guides a governing board's decision-making and sets a framework for operations.
Bylaws	Rules that govern the organization structure and operations pertaining to the board including holding meetings, the process for electing the board of directors, the selection of officers, and often a definition of standing board committees. The bylaws also establish the duties and powers of the organization's board of directors.
Charter Contract	A charter contract defines the obligations and relationship between the charter school governing board and the authorizing entity. This operating contract is a term agreement. Charter terms are often 5 years, but can be varying lengths. At the end of a charter contract term, the charter school and authorizer go through a renewal process.
Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI)	The Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI) is an evaluation service for self improvement provided by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Schools of Choice Unit. The service is voluntary and independent of other evaluations such as those required for charter renewal and accreditation. Participating schools receive a comprehensive review of the school's strength and weaknesses based on the Standards and Indicators for School Improvement. To find out more, visit the CDE Schools of Choice website at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/cssi.htm .
Children's Internet Protection Act	A federal law to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school or library computers. There are specific guidelines for schools to follow under the act and more details can be found at: http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/cipa.html .
Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA)	A state law designed to ensure that students are reading at grade level by third grade, or if they are below grade level, are put on an Individual Literacy Plan (ILP). Charter schools are required to comply with CBLA requirements, including the use of a state approved early literacy assessment for all students in grades K-3.

Colorado Charter School Act	Enacted in 1993, the Colorado Charter School Act defines the law for charter schools developed and operating within the state. Read the entire Act online at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/chact.htm .
Colorado Charter School Institute	A statewide charter school authorizer in Colorado. The mission of the Charter School Institute is to foster high-quality public school choices offered through Institute charter schools, including particularly, schools for at-risk students. Find out more at: http://www.csi.state.co.us/ .
Colorado Department of Education (CDE)	CDE is the administrative arm of the Colorado State Board of Education. CDE serves Colorado's 178 local school districts, providing them with leadership, consultation and administrative services on a statewide and regional basis. CDE's Schools of Choice Unit provides start up and implementation funding to charter schools as well as technical assistance. For more information visit the CDE charter schools webpage at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/index.htm .
Colorado Growth Model	The Colorado Growth Model provides a common understanding of how individual students and groups of students progress from year to year toward meeting state standards, based on where each individual student begins using prior year CSAP results. Find out more at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/growthmodel.html .
Colorado League of Charter Schools (CLCS)	A non-profit membership association for charter schools in Colorado. The League is committed to helping charter schools reach higher levels of student performance and overall success by providing information and resources, including technical support, advocacy, and public relations assistance. Find out more at: http://www.coloradoleague.org .
Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP)	Assessment program that is administered throughout Colorado to all students in grades 3-10. The CSAP is designed to measure student performance on the Colorado Model Content Standards and tests in four subjects: Reading, Mathematics, Writing, and Science.
Colorado Student Assessment Program-Alternate (CSAP-A)	CSAP-Alternate. The assessment for a small percentage (less than 1%) of students with Individual Education Plans (IEP) that need significant support in order to progress in their learning.
Data Management System	System (typically web-based) that stores school information from disparate sources, such as student information systems, test publishers, formative assessments and other electronic sources, allowing for quick student analysis of multiple indicators.
Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA 2)	This is a diagnostic and progress monitoring assessment for early literacy. DRA2 is one of the state approved early literacy assessments for grades K-3. All public schools must administer one of the state approved assessment under the Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA).
Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)	This is a diagnostic and progress monitoring assessment for early literacy. DIBELS is one of the state approved early literacy assessments for grades K-3. All public schools must administer one of the state approved assessment under the Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA).
Educational Improvement Plan	A plan used to report on the progress of the charter school's educational program usually developed on an annual basis. Some charter schools also refer to it as a School Improvement Plan.
Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA)	The act identifies the rules in Colorado adopted by the State Board of Education to implement the federal Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This includes rules and laws related to special education. More information can be found online at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/download/pdf/ECEARules_Effective12-30-07.pdf .
Executive Session	This is the statutory exception and opportunity for a public board to take their meeting behind closed doors to conduct legally sensitive topics. An executive session is permitted only during a regular or special board meeting and must have the topic for the executive session posted for the public and cite the legal basis for the executive session. There needs to be a vote by the board to go into executive session. Executive sessions must be recorded electronically and the recording kept for 90 days.

Ex-Officio	The ex-officio member of a charter school board does not have the power to vote in board decisions. Also referred to as a non-voting member. This is often times a charter school administrator.
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	A federal law that protects the privacy interests of students. This gives parents rights to access their student's data and information as well as protects the sharing of student level data from without parental consent. More information can be found on the CDE website at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/Ferpa.htm .
Formative Assessment	An assessment, other than CSAP, that is standards based and can be used to measure student growth. These types of assessments enable schools to measure student performance multiple times throughout the year and receive quick results that aid in making data-based instructional decisions during the school year. Commonly used formative assessments include Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and Scantron.
Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)	Public school districts and public schools must comply with the federal mandate under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education.
Individual Education Plan (IEP)	An official plan for students with disabilities that qualify for Special Education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
Individual Literacy Plan (ILP)	State law requires an ILP for any student not reading at grade level by third grade (the state law is the Colorado Basic Literacy Act). ILPs follow students until they are reading at grade level or until 12th grade.
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	A federal law intended to provide financial aid to states to ensure a free appropriate public education for children with disabilities.
Local Education Agency (LEA)	In Colorado, an LEA is a school district or the Charter School Institute.
Mission Statement	A short and concise statement that defines the purpose of the charter school.
National Alliance of Public Charter Schools (The Alliance)	The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools is a national nonprofit organization committed to advancing the charter school movement. The goal is to increase the number of high-quality charter schools available to all families, particularly in disadvantaged communities that lack access to quality public schools. The Alliance provides assistance to state charter school associations and resource centers, develops and advocates for improved public policies, and serves as the united voice for this large and diverse movement. For more information, go to: http://www.publiccharters.org .
National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA)	A national membership association designed to support quality authorizing practices for charter schools across the nation. More information is available at: http://www.qualitycharters.org/ .
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001(NCLB)	A federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school. NCLB is built on four principles: accountability for results, more choices for parents, greater local control and flexibility, and an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research.
Non-voting member	A non-voting member of a charter school board does not have the power to vote in board decisions. Also referred to as the ex-officio member. This is often times a charter school administrator.
Per Pupil Revenue (PPR)	Amount of funding that is determined on an annual basis for public school pupils. The number of pupils funded is based on a count on the school day nearest to October 1 of each year. To find out more, visit the Colorado Department of Education School Finance website at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/generalinfo.htm .
Performance Management	The understanding of student achievement results and data to support instructional improvement and student success. There are various systems including student information systems, formative assessments and data management systems that help support schools in developing a sound performance management framework and strategy.
Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)	This is a diagnostic and progress monitoring assessment for early literacy. PALS is one of the state approved early literacy assessments for grades K-3. All public schools must administer one of the state approved assessment under the Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA).

Policy Governance (Carver)	The policy governance model was developed by John Carver and is a model of governance that separates issues of organizational purpose (ENDS) from all other organizational issues (MEANS), placing primary importance on those Ends. This model is designed for boards to focus on accomplishment and let the administration use whatever means to get there as long as it doesn't violate the board's pre-stated conditions (Executive Limitations). To find out more about policy governance, visit: http://www.carvergovernance.com/index.html .
Public Charter School Program (PCSP)	A federal program that provides financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of charter schools, and the dissemination of information on charter schools. More information is available at: http://www.ed.gov/programs/charter/index.html .
Public School Finance Act	Established the formula to determine state and local funding for each school district and the Charter School Institute. This bill is passed on an annual basis and includes pupil funding and charter school capital construction funds.
Quorum	The minimum number needed for the board of an organization to conduct business. This number is defined in the charter school's bylaws and is often the majority in attendance.
Response to Intervention (Rtl)	Response to Intervention is a framework that promotes a well-integrated system connecting general, compensatory, gifted, and special education in providing high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention that is matched to students' academic, social-emotional, and behavioral needs.
Roberts Rules of Order	A set of rules for conducting meetings, allowing for everyone to be heard and guiding decision-making.
School Accountability Reports (SAR)	The Colorado Department of Education prepares these reports for every school in the state. These reports include a performance rating (based on status measures) and a growth rating (based on growth measures) along with other data points about the school. This report is also referred to as the SAR.
School Accreditation Plan	A school's plan to meet accreditation guidelines established by their authorizer/district. Authorizers/districts submit an accreditation plan that is approved by the state board of education and that is the basis for guidelines to accredit schools in their district, including charter schools. To find out more about Colorado's accreditation process, visit the CDE website at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/index_accredit.htm . You can also obtain your district's/authorizer's accreditation plan by contacting them directly.
School Advisory Council (SAC)	Charter schools established after July 1, 2000 must have a School Advisory Council in place according to Colorado Revised Statute 22-7-106-107. In the statute, there are specific guidelines and recommendations regarding the creation, composition, and meetings of SACs. School Advisory Councils at charter schools report to the school's board of directors. Often times these councils are charged with conducting family and staff surveys as well as establishing school improvement plans. Guidance is available on the CDE School of Choice website at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/guidebook/gov/pdf/AccountabilityHandout.pdf . To read the entire statute, go to: http://www.michie.com/Colorado/lpext.dll/cocode/2/339cb/33a33/34136/341ab/341d3?f=templates&fn=document-frame.htm&2.0 and http://www.michie.com/Colorado/lpext.dll/cocode/2/339cb/33a33/34136/341ab/341e4?f=templates&fn=document-frame.htm&2.0 .
Section 504	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973—a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Charter schools must comply with all requirements.
Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Research-based, Time-phased (SMART) Goals	A term often used to help with effective goal-setting.
Standing Committees	Typically those charter school board committees established in the school's bylaws or by policy, and therefore permanent committees of the school.

State Board of Education	The State Board of Education is an elected board charged with general supervision of all public schools in Colorado. While many decisions regarding charter schools are at the school or district/authorizer level, the State Board of Education approves charter school waivers and also hears charter school appeals after the denial of a charter application by a district/authorizer. More information about the State Board of Education can be found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/index_sbe.htm .
State Education Agency (SEA)	In Colorado, this is the Colorado Department of Education.
Steering Committee	An established group that is working on developing a charter school.
Student Information System (SIS)	A SIS is a software program that collects and stores items such as student contact and demographic information, grades, attendance, and program participation into a database sitting either on a local school network or online. Commonly used SISs in Colorado include Infinite Campus and PowerSchool.
Sunshine Law	Colorado's statute regarding open government- both as to open meetings and open records. Colorado's Sunshine Law applies to charter school governing boards as a local public body. This means that three or more charter school board members meeting to discuss board business is considered a meeting. To comply with this law, charter schools must post notice of these meetings at least 24 hours in advance and record minutes of the meetings that are posted for the public in a timely manner. If the board needs to go into executive session, the topic must be announced with a citation to the authorizing law and two-thirds vote is required to move into executive session. Executive sessions must be recorded electronically and those recordings kept for 90 days. To find out more about this law, visit the CDE Schools of Choice website at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/guidebook/gov/pdf/OpenMeetings-RecordsMemo0306.pdf .
SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)	SWOT is a strategic planning method to evaluate a school's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Charter school boards often conduct a SWOT with various constituencies (staff, parents, and board) to help inform school planning and improvement.
Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR)	A constitutional amendment that limits revenue growth for state and local governments in Colorado and to require that any tax increase in any state or local government (counties, cities, towns, school districts and special districts) must be approved by the voters of the affected government. Charter annual revenue and spending growth is limited by its percentage of growth in pupil enrollment plus the rate (percentage) of inflation. The impact includes limitations on charter schools signing multi-year financial obligations without voter approval. Charter schools need to include a relatively standard clause in longer term agreements that identifies the need for annual appropriations.
Vision Statement	Focuses on what the charter school intends to be and what the impact will be on the students. It expresses the ideal, long-term impact, scope and scale of the school. The vision articulates "what" the school hopes to be, but not "how" the school will reach that vision.
Waivers	The term waiver can be in reference to either state statutes being waived through state board or the waiver of local school district policies at the district level. Charter schools receive certain waivers from state laws and regulations or local laws and regulations. The State Board of Education has a list of automatic waivers approved for charter schools. These and other state waivers are submitted to the State Board of Education by the district/authorizer within ten days of submission and the State Board of Education approves the waivers within 45 days. A charter school may also seek waivers from the district/authorizer; contact your authorizer to find out more about that process. To find out more about state waivers, visit the CDE Schools of Choice website at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/waivers.htm .