

Empowerment Schools | Reference Guide



empowerment schools

NYC Department of Education | The power to achieve.

Congratulations!

You've been selected to lead an Empowerment School!

This reference guide is intended to serve as a companion to your Performance Agreement and provides additional information about the key components of empowerment and accountability, including:

- A summary of educational, fiscal, staffing and administrative empowerment;
- An overview of Empowerment Schools network affiliation;
- An overview of the DOE support structure; and
- An explanation of academic and non-academic accountabilities.



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Introduction

Empowerment Schools are premised on the fundamental belief that schools will only succeed at the highest levels if school leaders are given greater authority to design their own paths to success. As a key component of the continuing Children First reforms, Empowerment School principals will have increased flexibility and authority and will be at the vanguard of a new, thoughtful approach to accountability that, once fully implemented, will apply across New York City. In addition, they will benefit from a newly designed support system geared to meet their needs.

Empowerment School principals have substantially increased power to make key decisions affecting their school community and greater control over their resources. In lieu of some services previously provided by the DOE, schools will now have spending discretion over substantially greater funds, a portion of which consists of new discretionary funding and a portion of which consists of funds previously restricted to certain targeted uses that may now be spent in a manner that, in the principal's judgment, best serves the school's educational objectives. These amounts will vary depending on the number of students served by the school.

Empowerment School principals will also be free to develop or purchase professional development services from external vendors, universities, or the DOE; implement the DOE core curriculum or propose an alternative for approval; choose which schools to affiliate with; participate in the hiring and evaluation of a dedicated DOE support team; and benefit from reduced reporting and paperwork requirements.

This reference guide provides specific information about the empowerment granted to principals, support provided by the DOE, and detailed information about the accountability system and Quality Review process. The DOE looks forward to supporting your efforts to increase student achievement as an Empowerment School principal.

Empowerment

The empowerments granted to Empowerment School leaders under the Performance Agreement fall into four main areas:

- Educational Programming
- Resource Management
- Staffing Management
- Administrative Exemptions

Educational Programming

Empowerment School leaders will be given substantially increased decision-making authority over key educational decisions including, but not limited to:

Professional Development

As an Empowerment School principal, you will be in charge of developing and carrying out a professional development plan for your school based on your assessment of the needs of your school community. To do this you will have the freedom and flexibility to design, schedule and implement pre-service and in-service professional development opportunities within your school community and, if you choose, in conjunction with other schools in your network. Empowerment Schools may buy professional development services from an external vendor or university or from the DOE. The list of DOE's professional development services for purchase will be available mid-summer.

Principals are able to develop, or purchase, professional development in the following areas which include, but are not limited to:

- All Core Content Areas
- Health Education & Family Living
- Fitness & Physical Education
- Gifted/Talented & Enrichment
- Instructional Technology
- Library Services
- Special Education
- ELL
- Arts
- Early Childhood Education (K-3)
- Parent Coordinator Development / Parent Engagement¹
- Youth Development, including Prevention & Intervention, Guidance, and Attendance

¹ Empowerment Schools will continue to have Parent Coordinators. However principals may develop or purchase their own Parent Coordinator professional development in alignment with their overall staff development plan.

Curriculum

Empowerment schools will have the opportunity to implement the DOE curriculum or propose an alternative for approval. The process for proposing an alternative curriculum will be further outlined in subsequent documentation and provided to all Empowerment School principals.

Periodic Assessment

Empowerment Schools will be given three choices for periodic assessments:

- The standard DOE assessment system: The DOE will partner with an external vendor to provide materials and support for periodic assessments. Additional details will be provided later this summer;
- A customized version of the standard system that adjusts the assessments to follow the curriculum and sequence in use in a particular school; or
- A school-designed system of assessments.

Please see the Accountability section of this guide for a detailed overview of how a school may exercise the option to design its own periodic assessment strategies.

Scheduling

You will have the ability to set your school's daily and annual schedule within the constraints of all collective bargaining agreements, laws and regulations and in coordination with the Office of Pupil Transportation. Any increased costs that result from a change to the daily or annual school calendar must be funded out of the school's budget.

Scheduling flexibility extends to:

- School Day
- Extended Day Programming (Note that Extended Day programming must abide by the new UFT contract providing an additional 150 instructional minutes/week, or 37.5 minutes per day, four days a week at the end of the school day, in the absence of an SBO)
- School Year
- Summer Programs

Special Education & ELL

Empowerment School leaders will be given flexibility in providing instructional support and resources for Special Education and ELL students in compliance with all federal, state and local mandates and regulations that currently apply. In conjunction with their Network Special Services Manager (see the section on Support from the DOE for more details about this position), school leaders will be able to develop and implement innovative new approaches (including smaller cohorts and specific outcome goals) in order to better serve special needs students.

Other Programs

Empowerment Schools will be able to develop and implement alternative support structures in order to best meet their students' needs or purchase programs, including, but not limited to Summer Success Academy², Saturday Prep Academy and select Student Intervention programs including Early Grade Intervention, Struggling Middle School Students, and Grade Three Academic intervention.

New Teacher Induction (Mentoring)

Empowerment Schools will be given the choice to opt out of the DOE's New Teacher Induction program and instead institute their own programs, either on a school- or network-wide basis.

Resource Management

In lieu of some services previously provided by Central or Regional DOE, Empowerment Schools are granted additional discretionary funding as well as reduced restrictions on other select funds as detailed below. The additional funding for Empowerment Schools comes from a portion of "devolved" dollars previously expended on behalf of schools for things such as instructional support. Empowerment School principals now have the choice of whether to "buy-back" these services from the DOE or use the funds in some other way that best supports their students' achievement. In addition, some of the proportionate central and regional funds have been used to fund the Empowerment Schools' dedicated support team, which is described in the Support from the DOE section of this guide.

In addition to increased discretion over funding, Empowerment School principals also benefit from a procurement process that has been simplified in order to facilitate the purchase of services from vendors of choice.

Funding Changes

Empowerment Schools will be granted additional control over specific elements of their budget. Many DOE mandates directing the use of specific funds will be lifted, and schools will also receive new, discretionary funds. Together these two sources of flexible funds will enable Empowerment School principals to purchase services back from the DOE where the Department provides a service that meets principal's needs or opt to purchase the support their school requires from outside vendors.

Released Funds	New Funds
These may include but are not limited to monies previously allocated for:	Pending final funding decisions, all Empowerment Schools will receive:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fixed amount of new funding (\$75,000)³
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Grade, 3rd Grade, and Middle School intervention (if applicable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An additional per student allocation

² Beginning Summer 2007

³ On average, the fixed plus per capita allocation will equal \$150,000. However, this number may vary by school size.

Procurement Changes

Changes to Procurement Card Purchasing Limit

The procurement card limit for Empowerment Schools has been increased from \$2,500 to \$5,000. All applicable regulations and procedures still apply.

Purchasing Services from External Vendors

The DOE Division of Contracts and Purchasing is accelerating and streamlining the process by which vendors that provide services (not goods) to DOE schools can be pre-qualified and have their contracts registered with the City. In advance of this reform, Empowerment Schools are authorized to purchase up to \$25,000 of services from one or more vendors that do not currently have contracts registered with the City for that service. Relevant contracting law requires that selection of any vendor must be free of fraud, favoritism or corruption and conform to the standard of "best value". Empowerment School Principals will be required to document their selection process and choice of vendor in conformance with that "best value" standard. The DOE Division of Contracts and Purchasing will monitor the total amount of contracts awarded to any such vendors. In the event that a VENDEX filing or other procedural action becomes necessary, the Division will contact the vendor directly.

Empowerment School principals will have the support of the network team (explained in detail in the Support from the DOE section below) throughout the procurement process and should consult with them should they have any questions.

Guidelines for purchasing services up to \$25,000 from vendors are as follows:

1. Utilizing vendors who have registered contracts meets the "best value" standard, thus minimizing principals' requirement to document the rationale for selection. Information on contracted professional services vendors is located at: <http://www.nycenet.edu/Offices/DCP/ProfessionalServices/ContractAbstracts>.
2. To assure compliance with the "best value" standard for selection of any service provider that does not have a contract registered with the City, principals should solicit proposals from more than one vendor and document the vendor responses and the rationale for their choice of vendor. Comparing the services and terms offered with those of vendors that have registered contracts and written or e-mailed submissions are the best method for documenting such solicitation. Selection of a vendor without a contract imposes a greater burden on the principal to document determination of "best value".
3. A principal has the authority to approve the purchase of services without doing a competitive solicitation, in particular when there is only one vendor available to provide the desired service. Such selection should be carefully documented as described in Attachment A, explaining the reason for the exception and the unique nature of the particular vendor, why a competitive solicitation did not take place, and how the prices were determined to be fair and reasonable.

To engage the services of a contractor for \$25,000 or less, principals must file a standard form purchase order. Principals should *not* sign any other forms or contracts related to these purchases without consulting their network business manager.

Similar guidelines apply for services valued in excess of \$25,000; however, the following approvals are required:

- \$25,000 to \$100,000 – Executive Director, Contracts and Purchasing
- Over \$100,000 – Chancellor’s Committee on Contracts

In the case of any approval over \$25,000, the degree of budgetary detail provided should be commensurate to the amount of funding being requested.

Staffing Management

As outlined in the Performance Agreement, Empowerment School leaders will be granted additional flexibility and participation in the management of select staff, including but not limited to:

DOE Network Support Team:

- Participation in the selection and evaluation of the network support team leader
- Evaluation of network support team members
- Acting as a group with their network colleagues, principals may exercise the option to reward members of the support team with cash bonuses, funded in part from their school budgets, and based on their level of satisfaction

For information about the roles of network support leaders and team members, please see the Support from the DOE section of this Reference Guide.

Administrative Exemptions

As per the Performance Contract, Empowerment School leaders will be exempted from select administrative obligations, including but not limited to:

- DOE reporting requirements and information requests (unless required by law or requested by the Empowerment Schools CEO)⁴
- Attendance at DOE meetings or events (unless required by law or requested by the Empowerment Schools CEO)
- Pre-approval requirements for instructional materials purchases
- Select Chancellor’s Regulations (schools may petition the Empowerment Schools CEO for waivers)

⁴ Please note that Empowerment Schools must still use a number of DOE information systems including, but not limited to, ATS, CAPS, HSST, SIS, OORS, and once operational, the new Achievement Management System.

Networks

Empowerment Schools will be organized into networks numbering approximately twenty schools. Networks will share the following responsibilities, opportunities, and empowerment decisions:

- Selecting and evaluating a network support team leader.
- Deciding whether or not to reward the members of the network support team with cash bonuses funded in part by the schools' budget and based on the school leaders' level of satisfaction.
- Choosing the frequency and agenda of network meetings.
- Collaborating to construct professional development programs.
- Benefiting from the opportunity to earn extra credit on their Progress Report for schools whose networks achieve progress for students scoring in the bottom third in the network.

Empowerment Schools can also choose to affiliate with other select schools within their network around an educational focus in order to learn and grow from their peers' experiences.

After signing the Performance Agreement, you will be provided with a list of all other Empowerment Schools and Empowerment School principals. In late June, all Empowerment School principals will meet to create networks and begin the process of selecting a support team leader from a list of candidates. Further details about this process will be provided to you shortly.

Support from the DOE

Empowerment Schools will receive significant, principal-focused support from the DOE, with the goal of enabling principals to drive student achievement while providing them with personalized service. This innovative support will come in two forms: a customized training program aligned to the Empowerment Schools accountability framework and a dedicated support team that is attuned to schools' specific needs. In a few instances, the Regions and/or ROCs will also continue to provide select streamlined services to Empowerment Schools.

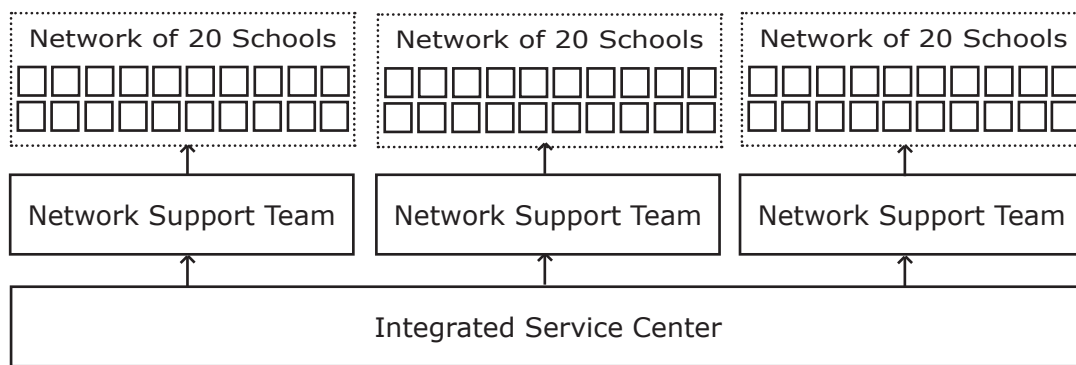
Empowerment Schools Intensive

In a collaborative partnership with the Office of Accountability and the Empowerment Schools, the Leadership Academy has developed a pioneering program for principals and school-based teams called the Empowerment Schools Intensive (ESI). This voluntary program is designed to orient principals to their new authority this summer. Then, through the school-year in monthly afternoon sessions led by network support teams, principals will be provided continued support with a special focus on integrating the new accountability tools.

Empowerment Schools Support Structure

The two primary organizations supporting any given empowerment school will be

1. A Network Support Staff; and
2. The Empowerment Schools' Integrated Service Center.



Network Support Team

As described above, Empowerment Schools will organize into networks of approximately 20 schools. Each network will in turn have a dedicated 5-member support staff (to become a 4 member team in future years). This team will serve as a conduit to and from both the Integrated Service Center and the rest of the DOE and will provide personalized support as described below.

The Network Support Team will:

- Provide specialized guidance in each members' area of expertise, and general consultative support, liaising with other team members and the Integrated Service Center as necessary;
- Tackle unanticipated problems and help get them solved or assist the principal in creatively developing a home-grown solution;
- Determine when to bring in additional resources and/or expertise from the system;
- Follow up relentlessly when the system doesn't respond or performs unsatisfactorily, and "filter" or "block" other requests that may burden principals;
- Help Empowerment School principals to be successful in their new environment through leadership development and support in meeting academic targets; and
- Capture and disseminate knowledge from and to schools. This includes best practices at school and support organization levels.

The Network Support Team will include the following members:

1. Network Leader: The general manager of the network.
2. Achievement Manager (2 in 06/07; 1 thereafter): Serve as principal's partner(s), mentor(s), aide(s), resource(s) on everything related to student achievement including: supporting the principal and school in using data to identify learning needs, creating concrete plans to address student learning needs, identifying and disseminating best practices for the classrooms.
3. Business Support Manager: Helps principal to resolve issues pertaining to facilities, HR transactions, labor relations, contracts/vendor relations, procurement, budget building, budget management, benefits, IT needs, or grant administration.
4. Special Services Manager: Provides "at elbow" support and "on call" expertise on all issues related to high needs students (e.g. students in temporary housing/STH, high poverty, over-age/under-credited), Special Education, ELL, transfers, suspensions, and discipline. Supports problem solving for issues related to guidance, mandated counseling, attendance, relationships with Community-Based Organizations, crisis intervention, and other aspects of creating a positive school culture.

The Network Leader will be responsible for the hiring of other support team members and will assist the Empowerment Schools Chief Executive with policy formation.

While the evaluation process for Network Team Leaders and team members is still in development, principals will have significant input into evaluation, including the decision to retain, award bonuses, and if necessary, dismiss and replace. As noted in the Staffing Management section above, principals, acting as a group with their network colleagues, will be authorized to reward high-performing team members with bonuses at their discretion.

Integrated Service Center

The Integrated Service Center will function as a solution-generating call center responsible for managing successful intake, execution, and closure of network team's needs and requests. It will facilitate mandated services (such as compliance reporting) and support development of market solutions for new services requested by principals.

The service center will include:

- Operations Support: Budget, Grants, Contract, Human Resources and Information Technology experts.
- Compliance Support: Regulations concerning Special Ed, ELL, etc.
- Academic and Intervention Support: Special Ed technical expertise, Special Ed Placement expertise, Health support, and Suspension support.
- Support for Requested Services: Teaching and learning expertise, youth development expertise.
- Market team: Services delivery support and quality assurance.

Continued Support from Regions & Regional Operations Centers

Although Empowerment Schools are no longer part of the current Regional support structure, some services will still be provided, free-of-charge, to Empowerment Schools by their former Region and/or ROC such as test administration, Impact school support, CBO contract management, and some compliance management.

The Empowerment Schools Market Team will work closely with central offices and Regions offering services for sale to ensure that these services are provided in an efficient, streamlined manner. DOE services will be purchased through FAMIS. The list of DOE services available for purchase and their corresponding prices are expected to be available in late July.

Accountabilities

Academic Accountabilities

As part of the DOE's comprehensive accountability initiative, all New York City schools will receive a graded Progress Report and a Quality Score. This continuation of the Children First school reforms will help educators harness information to drive high-quality teaching and learning and give parents the information they need to evaluate schools and assess their children's progress. Empowerment Schools will be at the forefront of the accountability initiative, as outlined below.

Progress Reports

All New York City schools will receive a Progress Report with an A, B, C, D, or F letter grade beginning in Summer 2007. The Progress Report is designed to measure each school's contribution to student academic progress, no matter where each child begins his or her journey to proficiency and beyond. The Report does not focus on the capacities students bring with them on the first day but rather on the capacities students develop as a result of attending the school.

There are three broad categories of academic outcomes for which schools will be held accountable:

- *Student Performance*: percent of elementary and middle school students at proficiency levels 3 or 4 (grades 3-8); percent of entering high school students receiving each type of diploma after four and six years (HS).
- *Student Progress*: Average gains in ELA and math proficiency (grades 3-8) and in credit accumulation and Regents tests passed (HS) as students move from one grade to the next at the school. The progress measures are sensitive enough to capture and award credit for student progress within as well as across proficiency levels, e.g., credit will be awarded for progress from low Level 2 to high Level 2, as well as from high Level 2 to low Level 3. This category will receive the most weight.
- *School Environment*: Attendance, safety, and student/parent/teacher engagement and satisfaction as measured by surveys.

As to each of these categories, schools will be graded based on:

- The school's outcome in the current year.
- A comparison of the school's current outcome to its performance during the prior three-year period.
- A comparison of the school's performance in the current year to that of "peer schools," i.e., schools with similar populations (based on free lunch, demographics, ELL, Special Ed, and mobility). This criterion will receive the most weight.
- Whether the school met improvement targets set for that year in the preceding year's Progress Report.

The overall grade will be based on a comparison of a school's overall performance on all of these criteria to the performance of all schools in the City in the recent past. To get an A, a school will have to perform as well as the top 15% of the City's public schools in 2002-2005; to get a B, a school will have to perform as well as the next 40%; to get a C, the next 30%; a D, the next 10%, and an F, the bottom 5%. By pegging grades to historic system-wide performance, we ensure that a grade of A truly denotes excellence. There is no limit to the number of schools that can achieve an A in each criterion.

Empowerment Schools will receive Progress Reports in Summer 2006. These Reports will have information about the school's academic outcomes during the 2005-06 school year and performance targets for the 2006-07 school year but will not have an overall grade. Each school's performance targets will be based on improvement levels that recent NYC experience show to be within reach of schools with similar populations.

Empowerment Schools will receive their first graded Progress Reports in Summer 2007, which will also contain performance targets for the following (2007-08) school year. (Please note that all NYC schools will receive graded Progress Reports in Summer 2007 with performance targets for the 2007-08 school year.)

For more details about the Progress Report grading system, please see Attachment B.

Quality Review

All New York Schools will receive a Quality Score of + (well developed), ✓ (proficient), or Ø (undeveloped), based on an individual onsite Quality Review. The Quality Review has been developed to assist schools in raising student achievement. It is designed to measure a school's progress in using available information and ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of instruction to improve the learning of all children and groups of children. The process also provides:

- A structured opportunity for review and constructive feedback;
- Support and encouragement for the school's ongoing self-evaluation; and
- A springboard for school improvement planning.

Schools will be evaluated according to their own stated goals and the DOE's Quality Review rubric, which captures schools' success in:

- Gathering Data on All Students' Outcomes and Capacities
- Planning and Setting Goals for Individual Students, Classrooms, and the School
- Aligning Instruction
- Building and Aligning Capacity
- Monitoring and Revising Plans and Goals

Schools will be scored as either Well-Developed, Proficient or Underdeveloped. Please see Attachment C for the rubric and scoring system used by Quality Reviewers.

Principals and faculty may be assured that the reviewers coming into their schools are independent, free from personal bias and have significant school leadership experience that equips them for effective school review and evaluation. All reviewers will sign, and are committed to, a Code of Conduct that will guide their work and assure consistency.

Approximately 100 DOE schools received Quality Reviews in April-June 2006 as part of a pilot program. All New York City schools will receive a Quality Review during the 2006-07 school year. Most of these Reviews will follow the three-day format used in the Spring 2006 pilot. Most Empowerment Schools will follow a more extensive (approximately 5-day) review process to be piloted during the 2006-07 school year.

Progress Report Consequences and Impact of Quality Review

The consequences that flow from schools' Progress Report grades and Quality Review scores are described in detail in Attachment D. In summary, these consequences are as follows:

Schools receiving an overall grade of "A" and a Quality Score of "Well-Developed" or "Proficient" will receive financial rewards and automatically become empowerment illustration sites for other schools seeking to emulate their success.

Schools receiving an overall grade of "D" or "F" will be subject to school improvement measures and target setting and, if no progress is made over time, possible leadership change, restructuring, or closure. The same is true for schools receiving a "C" for three years in a row. Decisions among these outcomes will be based in part on:

- Whether the school's Progress Report grade is an F, D, or C (for three consecutive years).
- The school's Quality Review score.
- Whether the school's grade or Quality Score has improved or worsened recently.

In summary, an Empowerment School is accountable for receiving an overall grade of A or B, or for improving from a C within three years. In order to avoid negative consequences, an Empowerment School is accountable each year for performing better than 15% of all NYC public schools during the recent past. Over the course of the four-year agreement term, schools must outperform the bottom 45% of those schools for at least one year.

The consequences described apply to all New York City schools.

Academic Accountability Resources

As part of the DOE's new accountability system, all schools will have a robust set of diagnostic assessment tools that will enable them, over the entire course of the school year, to identify students' strengths and weaknesses on the literacy and math skills and sub-skills that are part of the state standards. These tools will enable teachers to more effectively differentiate and target instruction and improve progress and outcomes and enable principals to identify teacher professional development needs.

Starting this September for Empowerment Schools (and starting in September 2007 for all other schools), schools must implement one of three options for periodic assessments:

- A set of three (HS) or five (grades 3-8) assessments annually. This standard set of assessments will align with NY state learning standards and with the literacy (including writing) and math curriculum and scope and sequence in use in the greatest number of DOE schools⁵; or
- A customized version of the standard system that adjusts the assessments to follow the curriculum and sequence in use in a particular school; or
- A school-designed system of assessments (including potentially qualitative or portfolio assessments) with a capacity comparable to the standard DOE system to differentiate and compare different students' literacy and math skills and sub-skills and to trace progress throughout the school year⁶.

The available options will ensure that periodic assessments and the associated diagnostic tools:

- Provide all teachers, students, and parents with frequent, reliable information on student capacities and progress on important literacy and math skills, and
- Align with each school's curriculum and instructional program.

As part of the 2006-07 pilot of the new standard DOE assessment system, extensive training and support will be available to aid principals and teachers in the use of assessments to enhance learning, and in customizing and designing assessments to match the school's needs. Additional training will be provided in the use of all data, including that generated by the Progress Reports and Quality Reviews, to individualize and improve learning for all children.

Non-Academic Accountabilities

With respect to non-academic performance in areas of safety, student enrollment, fiscal integrity, or compliance, Empowerment Schools will be measured annually, although the DOE reserves the right to intervene frequently if necessary. At the end of each year, the DOE will review information relating to the following:

- Maintaining a safe learning environment and complying with all safety-related regulations
- Complying with all DOE enrollment, transfer and discharge policies
- Spending consistent with your school's allocated budget

⁵ Students in grades K-2 will continue as before to receive qualitative ECLAS and DIBELS assessments. Administration of these assessments will be made less time consuming through the use of handheld devices to record student answers.

⁶ To exercise this option, schools complete a one-page application that describes their alternative assessment system and demonstrates that the alternative is as rigorous as the DOE's basic system and aligns with state standards. Applications may be submitted to the Chief Accountability Officer. The DOE is committed to supporting schools to facilitate both the customization and design-your-own options, and is already working with groups of schools toward that end.

- Complying with procurement laws and procedures
- Reporting data timely and accurately
- Complying with all other applicable laws, contracts and regulations
- Fulfilling requirements related to the evaluation and provision of services to students with disabilities and the identification and provision of instructional programming to ELL students

A material deviation in any of these areas will result in immediate consequences.

Attachment A

Sole Sourcing Purchasing & Documentation Guidelines

When purchasing services from an external vendor, the preference should be to use a provider already under contract with the DOE. However, if there are no existing contracts for the services being sought, and the principal determines that there is only one particular vendor that provides the desired service, the principal has the authority to approve that purchase without doing a competitive solicitation, given that documentation of best value is provided.

As detailed below, documentation should be retained explaining the reason for the exception and the unique nature of the particular vendor, why a competitive solicitation did not take place, and how the prices were determined to be fair and reasonable. Again, Empowerment School principals should consult with their network team if they have any questions.

1. In a written statement, indicate the Requestor/Point of Contact for the desired services, including title, phone, fax and email. The introduction should read as follows: "An Exception to Bid is requested/authorized by (requestor or Principal) in the amount of (\$ cost) for (nature of services) for (period or duration of service).

Documentation should be submitted to the appropriate parties as listed under #4 below.

2. Regarding the Program, indicate:
 - Why an already contracted DOE vendor could not perform these services satisfactorily.
 - What is unique about the provider
 - The benefits of having whatever distinguishes the provider as unique
 - What research was done to determine that the provider offers the DOE "best value"
3. Regarding cost, indicate:
 - What is included in the cost? (a detailed cost breakdown and what is included in these costs should be attached)
 - How was it determined and substantiated that the cost is fair and reasonable.
 - What assurances do we have that we are getting a fair and reasonable price? The Department should demand and receive the lowest price offered for these services by the vendor.
4. Once adequate documentation has been compiled, it should be submitted to the appropriate approving party as listed below.
 - Under \$25,000 – Principal (A standard form purchase order should be utilized to engage the services of a contractor for \$25,000 or less.) Principals should not sign any other forms or contracts related to these purchases without consulting their network business manager.

Similar guidelines apply for services valued in excess of \$25,000; however, the following approvals are required:

- \$25,000 to \$100,000 – Executive Director, Contracts and Purchasing
- Over \$100,000 – Chancellor’s Committee on Contracts

In the case of any approval over \$25,000, the degree of budgetary detail provided should be commensurate to the amount of funding being requested.

Attachment B

Academic Accountability: Progress Report Scoring

As is described in the text of the Reference Guide, the Progress Report has various measures of School Environment, Student Performance and Student Progress. In determining the overall Progress Report grade, more weight will be given to measures of Student Progress than to measures of Student Performance or School Environment. Substantial weight will be given to how well a school's outcomes compare to outcomes in schools with similar student populations. Attention will be given to average achievement gains by all students in a school and by students in the school's bottom one-third of academic performance. Extra credit (outcomes can raise schools' grades but cannot lower them) will be given for exemplary gains by ELL students, students in the City's bottom one-third of academic performance, and Special Education students.

The system for calculating a school's overall grade is still being developed. It will work roughly as follows: For each category on the Progress Report, the range of outcomes city-wide during the recent past, e.g., 2003-04 to 2005-06, will be identified and used as a reference criterion for that category.⁷ That range will be divided into a 100-point scale, and each school will receive a number grade of 1-100 for that category depending upon where its *current* outcome places the school on the *historical* reference range. For example, if schools with an attendance rate of 94% were at the 80th percentile of all schools on attendance during the reference period, then a school with an attendance rate of 94% in the current year will receive a score of 80 for that category.

To arrive at an overall score, the 1 to 100 score for all categories on the Progress Report will be averaged, subject to the weights described above. For example, a hypothetical school that received a score of 82, 83, or 84 in each category on the Progress Report might have an average score of 83. A grade of A, B, C, D or F will be assigned to each school based on how its overall average compares to the averages of all NY City schools during the reference period, e.g., 2003-04 to 2005-06.

The following table shows how the 2003-06 averages of all City schools may be used to grade each school:

A	School's current overall average score is in the top 15% of the 2003-06 averages of all City schools. ⁸
B	School's current overall average score is in the next 40% of the 2003-06 averages of all City schools.
C	School's current overall average score is in the next 30% of the 2003-06 averages of all City schools.
D	School's current overall average score is in the next 10% of the 2003-06 averages of all City schools.
F	School's current overall average score is in the lowest 5% of the averages of all City schools.

⁷ Reference criteria will be revised approximately every five years based on recent experience among New York City schools. Criteria based on the state ELA and Math tests may be changed sooner due to the State's recent modifications to those tests.

⁸ Elementary and middle schools will be treated as one group for this purpose (because both are measured by the same criteria), and high schools will be treated as a separate group (because they are measured by different criteria). Because averaging of many scores tends to compress outcomes into the middle ranges, it is possible that an average score of, for example, 83 (or even somewhat lower) will place a school in the top 15% of averages for all schools.

To receive an overall grade of F under this system, a school would have to perform in the bottom 5% of all schools in the City on many categories measured by the Progress Report and in the bottom 15% of the City on almost all categories.

Some schools in every group of “peer schools” – i.e., in every group of schools with similar populations (based on free lunch, demographics, ELL, Special Ed, and possibly mobility) – will likely receive overall grades of A, B. Schools in all peer groups could potentially receive overall grades of C, D and F.

Attachment C

Academic Accountability: Quality Review Rubric & Scoring

Quality Review Evaluation Rubric & Score Sheet

[Note: This rubric is subject to modest change based on feedback currently being received from schools and reviewers who took part in a Spring 2006 Quality Review pilot.]

During the Quality Review process, conclusions will be made on five aspects of the work of each school. This will enable the reviewers to evaluate the quality of the education provided in general and in terms of the DOE's Quality Indicators.

Reviewers evaluate the key aspects of the school's work using criteria linked to how well the school aligns with the five areas of the DOE's Quality Criteria.

+	Applies to schools where efforts to improve student achievement are characterized, overall, by strengths. There are very few weaknesses, and any that exist do not diminish the students' experience. Although an evaluation of (+) represents a high standard of quality, it is a standard that is achievable by all schools. It implies that the school may appropriately continue its current approaches to improving student outcomes without significant adjustment. However, all schools are expected to continue to take advantage of all opportunities to improve; (+) schools are particularly encouraged to share their know-how and success with other schools. The Quality Indicator for the program provided is <i>well developed</i> .
✓	Applies to schools where efforts to improve student achievement are characterized by a number of strengths. Weaknesses exist, but neither singly nor collectively, do these have a significant adverse impact on the student experience. An evaluation of (✓) may be appropriate in a number of circumstances. The school's approach to improving student outcomes may make for a productive student experience overall, but it may not apply consistently to most or all students. Typically, the school's academic-improvement practices will be characterized by strengths but one or more weaknesses will reduce the overall quality of the practices. The Quality Indicator for the program provided is <i>proficient</i> .
∅	Applies to schools where efforts to improve student achievement are characterized by weaknesses that require immediate and significant corrective action by the school. Some, if not all, staff responsible for improving student achievement require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out necessary actions to enhance the effectiveness of the school's efforts to improve student outcomes. There may be some strengths, but these are overshadowed by the impact of the weaknesses. The Quality Indicator for the program provided is <i>undeveloped</i> .

Efforts are made to keep evaluation of each criterion separate from that of the others. The goal is a frequency distribution across all criteria. By examining patterns of evaluations across all indicators, reviewers can determine whether strengths or weaknesses are localized or replicated across a school. This information can help the school's staff to focus on the underlying causes of weaknesses and identify appropriate responses. In subsequent Quality Reviews, prior evaluations tied to particular quality criteria, as well as the pattern of evaluations across criteria, can provide a baseline for deciding whether changes in practice have had a localized or perhaps a more general effect.

Quality Statements

The following quality statements illustrate the characteristics that reviewers will evaluate schools on during the Quality Review process.

Quality Statement 1: Gather and Utilize Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather data and use it to understand what each student knows and is able to do and to monitor and facilitate the student's progress over time.

Quality Statement 2: Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently use available data to understand each student's next learning step. Through collaborative planning and student and parent engagement, they set high goals for improving teaching practice and accelerating each student's learning.

Quality Statement 3: Align Instruction: The school aligns its instructional activity and resources around its focused plans for accelerating learning for each student.

Quality Statement 4: Build and Align Capacity: The development of instructional leadership, staff, and capacity are aligned around the school's collaboratively established goals for accelerating the learning of each student.

Quality Statement 5: Monitor and Revise: The school has built-in structures for evaluating each student's progress throughout the year, recognizing weaknesses in its plans and teaching practices, and flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerated learning.

Attachment D

Academic Accountability: Rewards & Consequences Overview

This document details the rewards and consequences that may flow from the Academic Accountability components of the Empowerment Schools Performance Agreement. Rewards and consequences will result from a combination of the Progress Report Grade (A-F) and the Quality Review Score (Well Developed (+); Proficient (✓), Undeveloped (Ø)). Progress Report Grades are referred to below as "Grades." Quality Review Scores are referred to as Quality Scores or Q-Scores.

Empowerment Schools are responsible for achieving a Grade of A, B, or C each year and for not receiving a Grade of C for three consecutive years. Empowerment Schools are also responsible for achieving a Quality Score of Well Developed (+) or Proficient (✓).

Schools that receive a Grade of D or F (or a grade of C in three consecutive years) are subject to consequences, including the use of intervention teams and target setting, leadership changes, or school closure.

Grade and Score Distribution

The distribution of Grades each year in New York City's schools is expected to be roughly as follows:

A – 15%

B – 40%

C – 30%

D – 10%

F – 5%

The distribution of Quality Scores is expected to be roughly as follows:

+ – 25%

✓ – 50%

Ø – 25%

Summary of Rewards & Consequences

Schools Attaining a Grade of A

In any year, a school that attains a Progress Report Grade of A and a Quality Score of + or ✓ is eligible to receive rewards, as described in Table 1.

Table 1: Rewards for "A" Schools		
<i>Grade</i>	<i>Q-Score</i>	<i>Reward in any given year</i>
A	+ / Well Developed	- (up to 1% increase of per capita student budget) x (# of students on register 10/31 of prior year). - Expenditure of increase at school's discretion. - School automatically becomes a citywide demo site.
A	✓ / Proficient	
A	∅ / Undeveloped	- No rewards or consequences.

Schools Receiving a Grade B or C

Schools receiving a Grade of B will not face consequences and are not eligible to receive rewards. The same is true for schools receiving a Grade of C for no more than two consecutive years.

Schools Receiving a Grade D or F

Schools receiving a Grade of D or F in any given year will be subject to consequences, as described in Tables 2-4 below.

Year 1:

Table 2: Consequences for Schools Receiving a Grade of D and a Quality Score of +, ✓ or ∅ in Year 1 or receiving a Grade of F and a Quality Score of + or ✓ in Year 1	
<i>End of Year 1</i>	
Grade D; Q-Score + ✓ ∅ Grade F; Q-Score + ✓	These schools will be subject to structured academic planning and target setting signed off on by the Office of Accountability.

Table 3: Consequences for Schools with a Grade of F and a Quality Score of ∅ in Year 1	
<i>End of Year 1</i>	
Grade F; Q-Score ∅	These schools may potentially undergo a leadership change or close.

Years 2-4:

The progression of consequences will be based on the year-by-year improvement, stability, or decline in the school's Grade and/or Quality Score, as described in Table 4 below.

	<i>End of Year 2</i>	<i>End of Year 3</i>	<i>End of Year 4</i>
All "D" or "F" schools that improve Grade ↑, Q-Score ↑ Grade ↑, Q-Score ↔ Grade ↔, Q-Score ↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured academic planning and setting of targets approved by Accountability; or Change in leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional structured academic planning and setting of targets approved by Accountability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School restructuring or closure, with exemptions based on conditions set at the time of leadership change.
All "D" or "F" schools that stay the same Grade ↔, Q-Score ↔ Grade ↑, Q-Score ↓ Grade ↓, Q-Score ↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured academic planning and setting of targets approved by Accountability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School restructuring or closure.
All "D" or "F" schools that lose ground Grade ↓, Q-Score ↓ Grade ↓, Q-Score ↔ Grade ↔, Q-Score ↓ Grade or Q-Score ↓↓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured academic planning and setting of targets approved by Accountability; Possible loss of autonomy over curriculum, professional development, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School restructuring or closure.

Schools Receiving Three Consecutive Grades of C Three Consecutive Grades of C

	<i>Year of Third Consecutive C</i>	<i>Year of Fourth Consecutive C</i>
Three Consecutive Grades of C	School will be subject to Year 1 Grade D consequences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured academic planning and setting of targets approved by Accountability. 	School will be subject to Year 2 consequences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured academic planning and setting of targets approved by Accountability; or Change in leadership.