

# Accountability and Impact

Maryland Alliance of Public Charter Schools  
**August 1, 2021**

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EducationBoardPartners

great boards. great schools.



**Education Board Partners** is the only national nonprofit organization dedicated exclusively to strengthening nonprofit boards in education. We focus our work to ensure **quality, equity** and **accountability**.

We are a team of teachers and educational leaders who believe **every child** deserves the opportunity to attend an excellent public school.



# Key Drivers

- Agree on the definition of academic excellence.
- Understand how student achievement is measured at the school.
- Regularly reviewing indicators of student success to measure progress toward school goals.



Charter schools are **ALLOWED** to be **FLEXIBLE** in how they operate in exchange for being **ACCOUNTABLE** for their results.





# Agenda

1	Welcome, Agenda, and Objectives
2	Temperature Check
3	Focus on Student Achievement
4	Goals and Progress Monitoring
5	Design Your Dashboard
6	Using Your Dashboard
7	Things to Consider



# Objectives

1. Define and identify board level academic dashboards.
1. Understand the steps boards and school leaders can take to build an effective dashboard.
1. Explain how to use dashboards to inform board decisions.



# Temperature Check





# Something to think about...

- What is your current comfort-level with reviewing academic data?
- What resources could help strengthen your confidence in this area?
- How has your board monitored academic performance in the past?



# Standards for Effective Governance



Focus relentlessly on student achievement



Recruit and retain an exceptional leader



Invest in exemplary governance



Act strategically and be accountable



Raise and use resources wisely



Commit steadfastly to compliance

**Center People, Culture and Equity**

# Focus relentlessly on student achievement

Standard 1



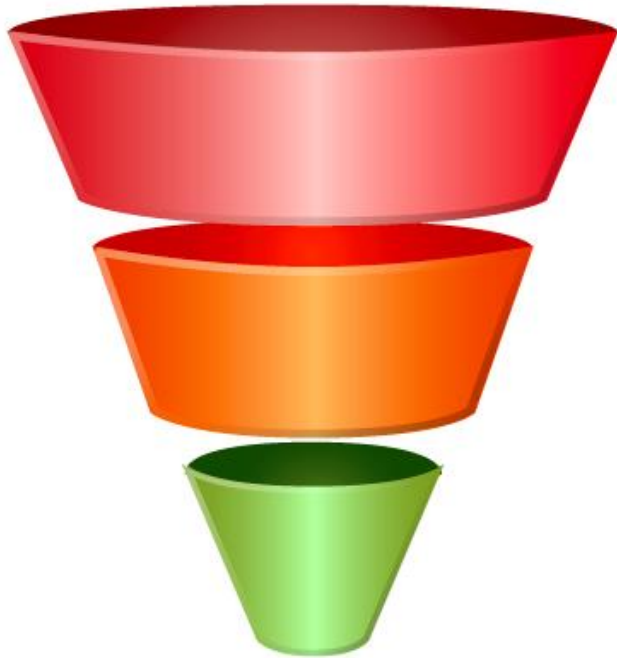
# Focus relentlessly on student achievement

- Govern to fulfill the mission of the school and the promises of the contract
- Know whether students are on track to achieve at high levels





# How much data is too much?



*Board members are not expected  
to immerse themselves  
in all of the school's data*





# Use a dashboard to stay on track



- Include the metrics you want to monitor about the health of the school on a monthly basis (e.g., enrollment, benchmark assessments, attendance, discipline, etc.).
- Populated by the school staff. Then reviewed and discussed in depth by board committees, and brought forward for board discussion when issues arise.
- Entire dashboard is shared with board materials.
- Use the data to drive discussions and decisions!

# Benefits of Using a Dashboard

Track progress toward goals and understand system dynamics

Maintain a governance perspective and save time by reviewing highlights

Bring board members up to speed and expand their comfort zones

Identify patterns and anomalies

Reinforce board oversight by linking to structure and process

Spot potential problems

## Dashboards DO...

## Dashboards DO NOT...

Tell boards whether the school is on track to meet academic goals

Provide nuanced explanations or causal information

Display a few of the most important metrics for student success

Include all data available

Communicate data visually and simply show progress toward goals

Include detailed analyses or lower level information

Contain appropriate data to inform decision-making

Make recommendations or suggest policy changes

Provide data that allow boards to measure past, current and future progress

Provide data that only look back in time

# Why Boards Need Academic Dashboards

- Evaluate whether the school leader is driving the organization to achieve sufficient academic results
- Approve a budget that addresses the school's most pressing programmatic needs
- Provide a chance for the board to work with the school leader to agree on the definition of student success (e.g. goals)
- Build understanding for how the school is currently measuring academic progress
- Identify key successes and challenges at the school in real time



# Goals and Progress Monitoring





Why do we need a  
Model Human-Centered  
Design?

...more New  
of Oregon



## Step One: Goals

But there is one key step that must happen before you can get to the visuals – goal setting.



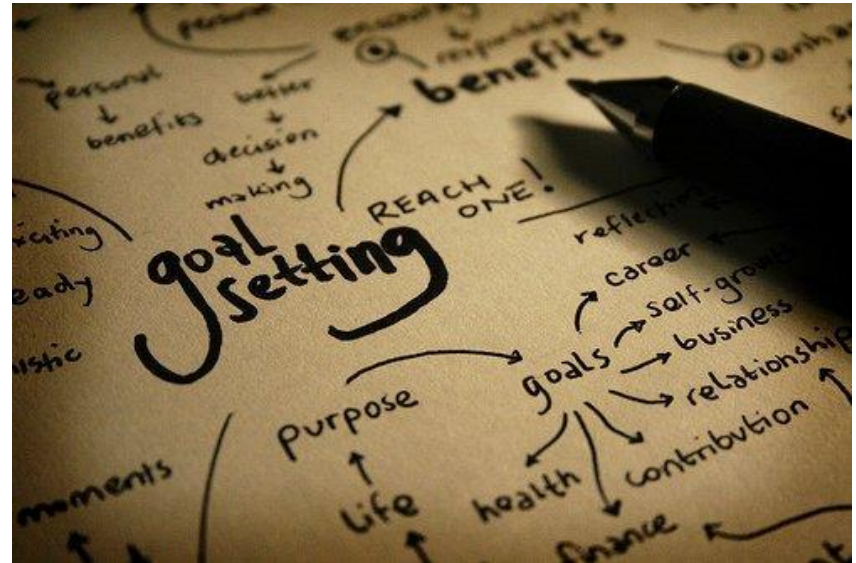
# Setting Annual Academic Goals

Task	School Leader	Academic/School Performance Committee	Full Board
Set long-term and annual academic goals	Leads the process and presents draft to academic/school performance committee for discussion	Reviews, asks questions, discusses metrics, and collaborates to determine whether the metrics will provide the board with the data it needs to inform its decisions; then provides recommendations of academic goals for full board approval	Discusses and approves academic goals, in the context of overall strategy
Monitor academic results against set goals	Leads school staff in populating dashboard, highlights progress, interprets results	Reviews progress, provides feedback on presentation of data, prepares regular updates for the board (at least two per year)	Reviews data summary. Are the students on track to achieve annual goals? Is the school leader leading toward sufficient results?



# Strong Goals

- **Mission-specific:** What is your school's specific focus?
- **Accountability:** What matters to your authorizers? What does the public value?
- **Priorities:** What are your major concerns or key areas of academic focus based upon prior outcomes?



# S M A R T I E



Specific




Measurable



Attainable



Relevant



Time Based



Inclusive



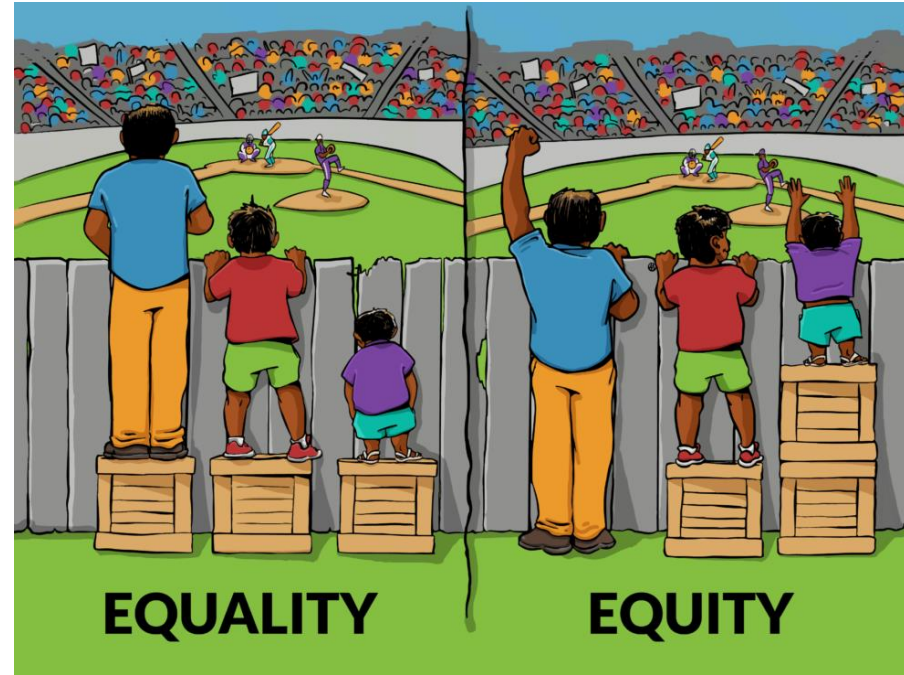
Equitable



# SMART, Inclusive and Equitable

**INCLUSIVE** | brings traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

**EQUITABLE** | includes an element of fairness or justice that seeks to address systemic injustice, inequity, or oppression.





# Key Dashboard Metrics

- Benchmark Assessments
- Monthly Attendance
- Monthly Discipline
- Mobility/Enrollment
- Parent Engagement
- Special Education Services
- Suspensions/Expulsions
- Other Data Specific to School Model



# Monitor Annual Progress – Metrics

**Formative** assessments monitor student learning in the midst of the learning process to provide ongoing feedback.

**Summative** assessments evaluate student learning at the end of a unit (or even a full year).

# Measuring Progress Toward Goals

- Do you have an assessment that you can use to track progress toward this goal over time?
- How many times per year will you be able to provide updates on progress toward this goal?
- Are these assessments aligned with curriculum and/or standards?
- Do these assessments produce valid results?

# Tips for Creating Strong Metrics

- Pick metrics that dovetail with information that the school is **already tracking**.
- Make sure the **school leader has the resources, time, and people** to track the metrics the board wants to monitor.
- Don't insist upon dashboard **metrics that are impossible** for school staff to track consistently and accurately.
- A **reporting calendar** can help hone metrics and prepare board members.



# Reporting Calendar: School ABC Assessment Chart

Assessment	September	December	April	June	July
PARCC Reading					X
Interim Assessment	X	X	X	X	
End-of-Course				X	





**Case Study**





# Case Study Schools

	Capital Science and Technology PCS	Parkview Bilingual PCS
<b>Years of Operation</b>	14	3
<b>Campuses</b>	2	1
<b>Grade Levels Served</b>	5 - 12	PK - 4
<b>% Low Income</b>	80%	50%
<b>Curriculum Emphasis</b>	STEM focus	Language Immersion
<b>Past Performance</b>	High school strong, middle school struggling in math	Performing very well in English Language Arts (ELA) and in math
<b>Special Concerns</b>	Low-income subgroup scores 15% below city average	Wants to find a way to report on mission-specific measures



# Sample Annual Academic Goals

<b>Capital Science and Technology PCS By July 1, 2021:</b>	<b>Parkview Bilingual PCS By July 1, 2021:</b>
<p>At least 75% of Capital Science and Technology PCS middle school students will be proficient in mathematics, as measured by the PARCC assessment. (Priority Goal)</p>	<p>Parkview Bilingual will rank in the top 10% of schools in the District of Columbia, as measured by the Public Charter School Board's Performance Management Framework. (Accountability goal)</p>
<p>At least 50% of 12th-grade students will be scoring at or above the national average of 500 on the reading and mathematics portions of the SAT assessment.</p>	<p>At least 85% of 3rd-grade students at Parkview Elementary will be reading on or above grade level, as measured by the Fountas &amp; Pinnell literacy assessment. (Mission Goal)</p>



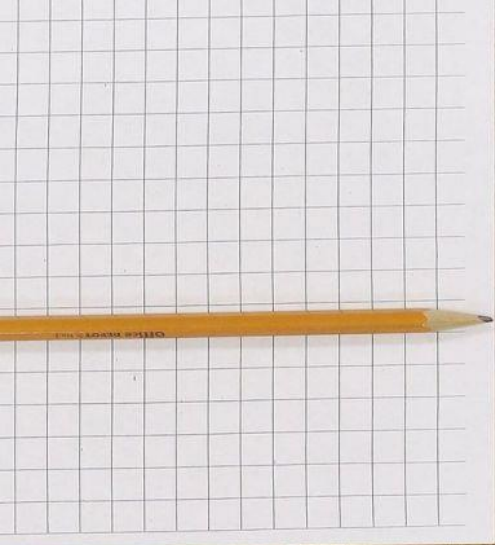
# Sample Annual Academic Goals (cont.)

<b>Capital Science and Technology PCS By July 1, 2021:</b>	<b>Parkview Bilingual PCS By July 1, 2021:</b>
56% of Capital Science and Technology PCS low-income students will be proficient in mathematics, as measured by the DC-CAS assessment (a 15% increase from the 2012 level of 41%). (Priority Goal)	From September of 2014 to June of 2015, 80% of all Parkview Elementary students in 1st through 4th grade will demonstrate at least one year of progress in reading level, as measured by the Developmental Reading Assessment.
Capital Science and Technology PCS students will meet the academic goals in the charter, enabling the school to submit a successful application for renewal from the authorizer. (Accountability Goal)	70% of 5th-grade students will score proficient or advanced on Parkview's assessment of Spanish Proficiency. (Mission Goal)



# Dashboard Design





Handwritten mathematical work on graph paper:

$$-2.5(1+2n) - 1.5n$$

$$-2.5 + 4n - 1.5n$$

$$-2.5 + 2.5n$$
  

$$\begin{array}{r} 50 \\ \times 9 \\ \hline 450 \end{array}$$
  

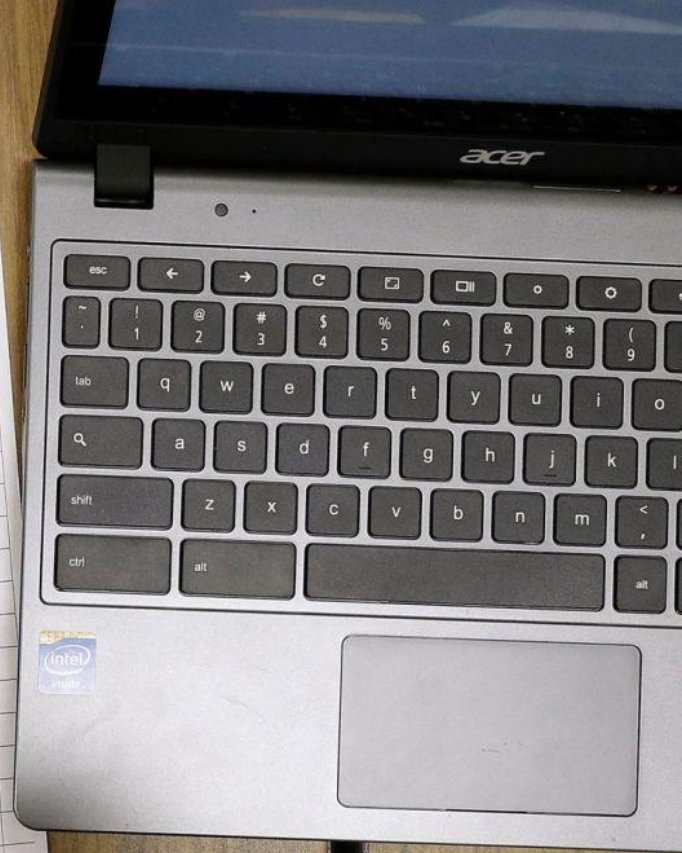
$$\begin{array}{r} 50 \\ \times 50 \\ \hline 2500 \end{array}$$
  

$$\begin{array}{r} 50 \\ \times 250 \\ \hline 12500 \end{array}$$
  

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \\ \times 10 \\ \hline 100 \end{array}$$
  

$$\begin{array}{r} 14.5 \\ \times 15.20 \\ \hline 220.40 \end{array}$$
  

$$\begin{array}{r} 31000 \\ \times 1000 \\ \hline 31000000 \end{array}$$
  

$$\begin{array}{r} 1.35 \\ \times 102 \\ \hline 137.70 \end{array}$$


# Design Considerations

- Keep it **concise**: The school performance committee members will delve more deeply into the details behind the metrics. The full board should focus on whether the school is on track to meet each goal.
- Keep it **simple**: Information on the dashboard should be accessible to board members whether or not they have statistical or academic expertise.



# Design Considerations (cont.)

- Keep it **visually appealing**. Select a design that can — independent of text — answer the questions.
- Keep it **focused**: Each visual element on the dashboard should clearly answer one or — at a maximum — two questions.



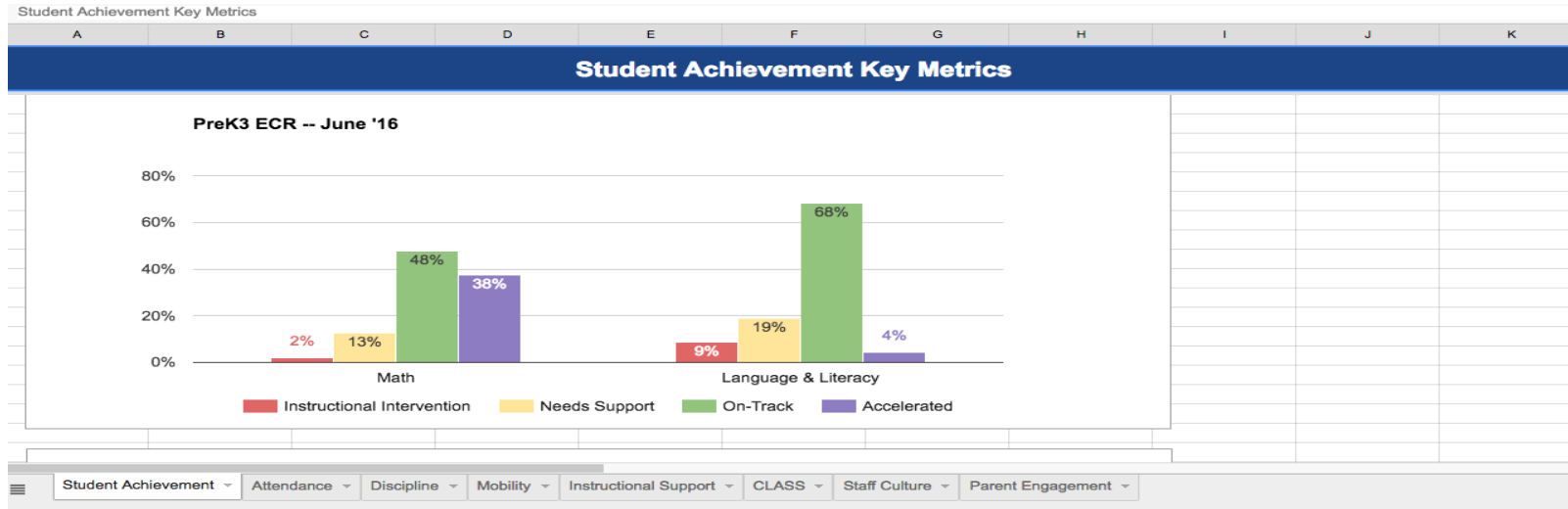
# Dashboards and Technology

- Consider staff expertise, available software, and ease of making updates when choosing the technology to create the dashboard.
- Choose consistent colors and fonts throughout the dashboard, and – if possible – assign each color to have some visual significance.

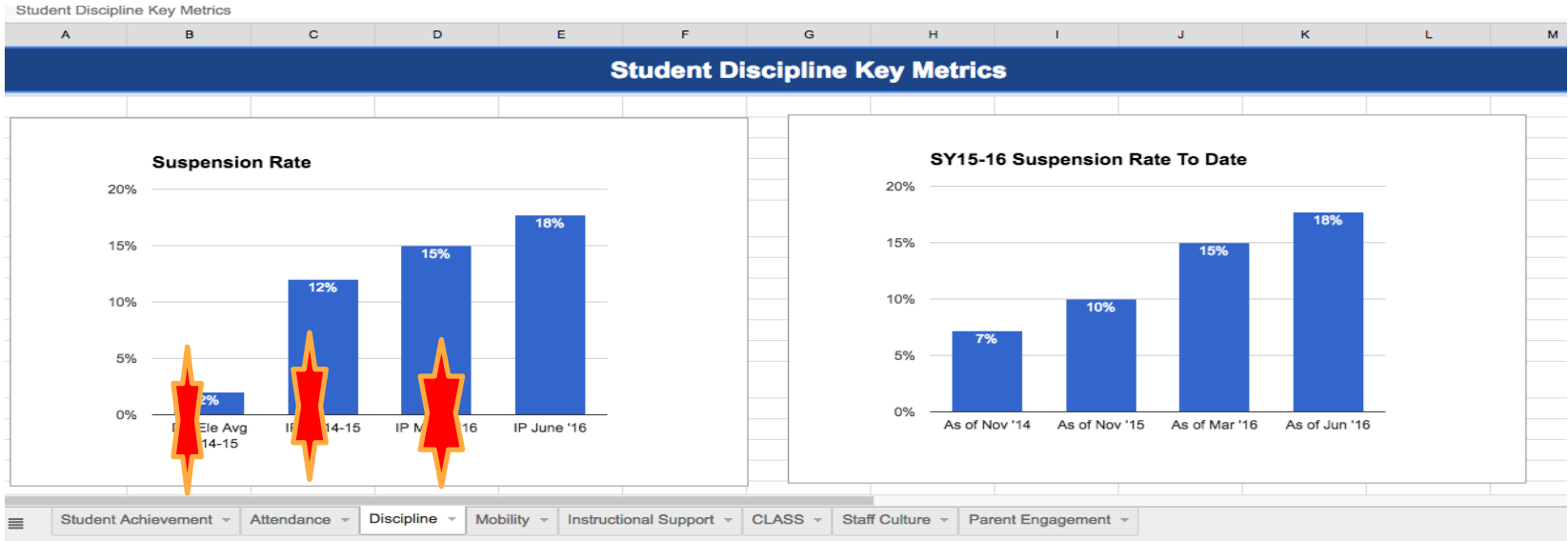




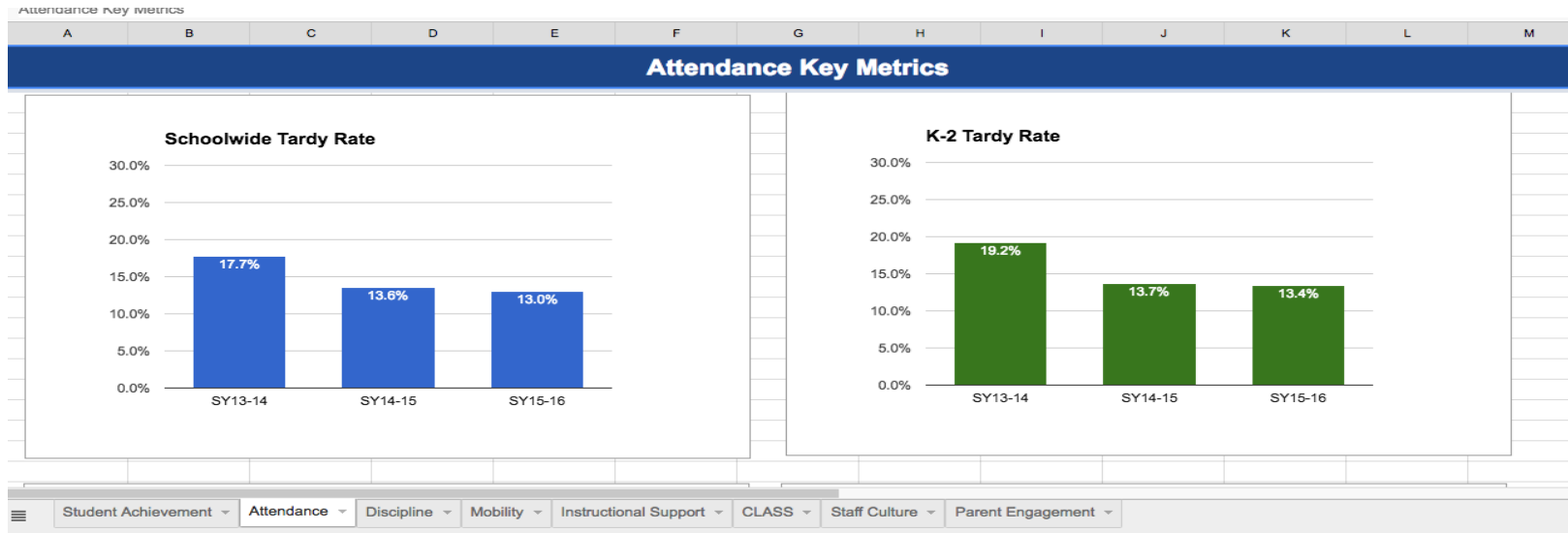
# Dashboard Snapshot



# Dashboard Snapshot



# Dashboard Snapshot



# Leveraging the Dashboard





# Track Your Progress

- Commit to creating a tracker with board and committee goals
- Month by month work plan
- Quarterly goals check in
- Monthly/quarterly goals check-in with school leader



# Sharing the Dashboard



## Board

- Include academic dashboard regularly in board packet
- Create a culture of accountability for goals
- Review academic data twice a year, even if there aren't any updates.



## Academic Committee

- Review the academic dashboard first at committee meeting
- Examine more detailed data at committee meeting to track progress towards goal, any course corrections and if interventions are working.



## School Leader

- Review the academic dashboard first at committee meeting
- Examine more detailed data at committee meeting to track progress towards goal, any course corrections and if interventions are working.



# Sharing the Dashboard



## Board

- Receive a dashboard briefing sheet that pairs the visual data with clear narration
- Briefing sheet includes explanations of the changes or lack of changes regarding a few data points



## Academic Committee

- Committee members share insights during the board meeting
- Highlight areas of success, sound alarms, and inform the board of mid-course interventions that may be needed during the year

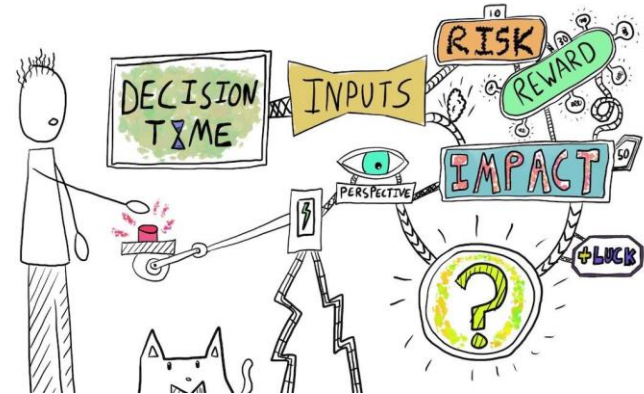


## School Leader

- Share insights during the board meeting
- Highlight areas of success, sound alarms, and inform the board of mid-course interventions that may be needed during the year

# Dashboards and Decision Making

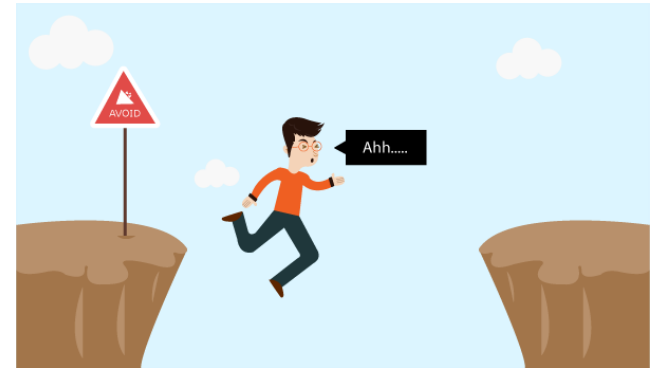
- Determine whether the school leader is driving the school toward achieving “sufficient” results.
- Approve a budget that appropriately funds the program in ways that support the school in achieving its goals.



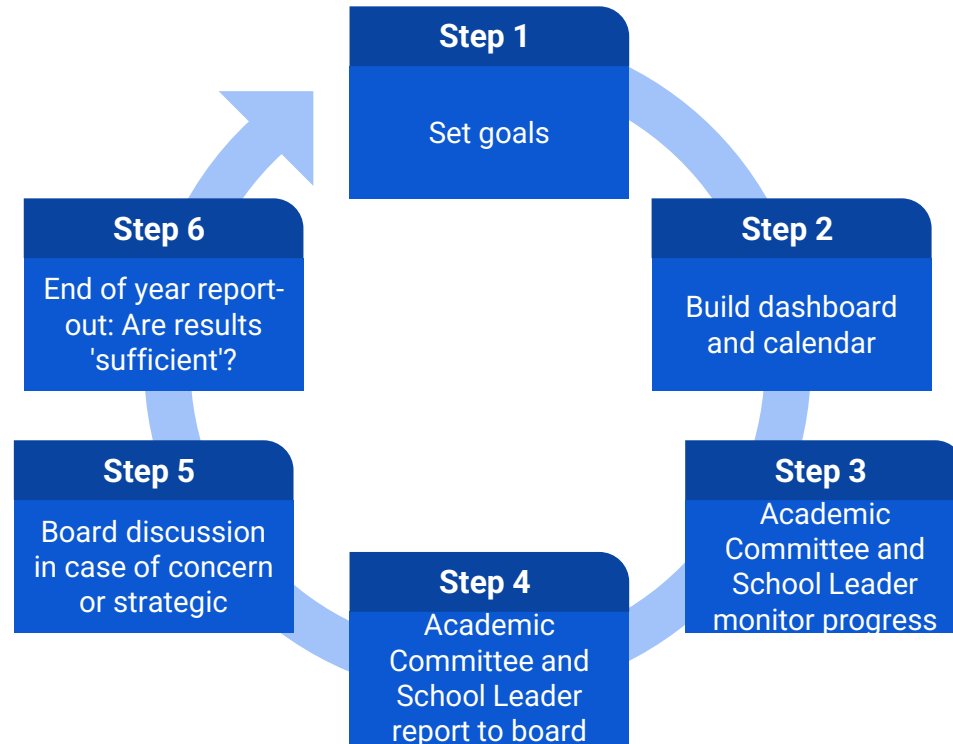
# Dashboards and Decision Making

Make sure to avoid common pitfalls when using an academic dashboard:

- Timing of data release and board decisions **does not line up.**
- Beware of **knee-jerk reactions** to dashboard information and results.
- The academic dashboard is **NOT a formal school leader evaluation** and should not be construed as such.
- The school performance committee is **not the only committee** that can use this dashboard to inform its work.



# Modifying Your Dashboard



# Accountability

Accountability at the top can build a powerful cultural norm.

Consider how hard it is for the school leader to hold the full board accountable, when they are simultaneously accountable to the board.

The board chair has to candidly, honestly, and fearlessly share the board's concerns relating to the school leader or school's performance.





# Reflections and Close



# Reflection & Commitment

- What was a significant learning for you?
- When reflecting about accountability and progress monitoring, where is your board strongest? Where is there room for improvement and growth?
- As a result of what you learned, what are 2-3 actions you can take to improve your board's accountability measures?



# Looking for more information?

**For more information, resources and questions please visit:**

<https://mdcharters.org/renewal-on-demand>

## **RENEWAL RESOURCES FOR MARYLAND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS**

This website is a Maryland Alliance for Public Charter Schools (MAPCS) curated page, developed specifically for Maryland Public Charter Schools operators and administrators. More resources are coming soon. Please bookmark this page and check back periodically for updated renewal resources.

# Questions?

For any questions, please contact:

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