



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

Girls Preparatory Charter School of the Bronx

School Evaluation Report 2012-13

Visit Date: May 16, 2013

Report Issued: October 4, 2013

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INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report includes four components. The first section, titled School Overview, provides descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. The second section provides background information on the conduct of the evaluation visit, including the date of the visit and information about the evaluation team and puts the visit in the context of the school's current charter cycle. The third section provides the school's 2011-12 Performance Review and Summaries, which gives an analysis of the attainment of the key academic goals in the school's Accountability Plan. Finally, a fourth section entitled School Evaluation Visit presents overall benchmark conclusions (in italics) and an analysis of evidence collected for each of the respective benchmarks. Following these sections, the report includes an appendix containing the Renewal Benchmarks.

For this report, the Institute only addressed the Benchmarks related to the core instructional program. The Institute limited the analysis to Use of Assessment Data, Curriculum, Pedagogy and Instructional Leadership because the visit was a follow up to one undertaken at the end of the 2011-12 school year and prompted by the Institute's concern about the school's performance on state assessments and the extent to which Girls Prep Bronx was meeting its key academic Accountability Plan goals. The Institute uses the Benchmarks' established criteria on a regular and ongoing basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

The report below provides detailed conclusions and evidence to support these conclusions in order to highlight areas of concern and provide focused feedback. In contrast to the format of reports issued in previous years, the Institute approaches this presentation as an exception report and deliberately emphasizes areas of concern. As such, limited detail and evidence about positive aspects of the program are not an indication that the Institute does not fully recognize evidence of program effectiveness.

Because of the inherent complexity of a school organization, this School Evaluation Report does not contain a single rating or comprehensive indicator that would specify at a glance the school's prospects for renewal. It does, however, summarize the various strengths of the school and note areas in need of improvement based on the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	September 9, 2008
Date Initial Charter Approved by Operation of Law	February 23, 2009
School Opening Date	August 31, 2009

Location

School Year(s)	Location(s)	Grades	District
2009-10 to Present	681 Kelly Street, Bronx NY	K-4	Bronx CSD 8

Current Mission Statement

The mission of Girls Prep is to prepare New York City's girls to graduate from college and succeed in life. Girls Prep girls will embody the core values of scholarship, merit, responsibility, and sisterhood and use these values to guide their choices. Girls Prep will graduate scholars who meet or exceed New York State Performance Standards and are active citizens who learn and serve in their community.

Current Key Design Elements

<i>Rigorous Academics:</i>
• Standards-aligned, challenging curricula or each subject;
• Use of assessment and classroom data to tailor instruction and ensure the success of all students;
• Extended school day and year; and
• Low student/teacher ratios.
<i>Vibrant School Culture:</i>
• Core Values-Scholarship, Merit, Citizenship, and Responsibility;
• Bi-weekly Unity Meetings to celebrate the students, school, and accomplishments; and
• Classrooms named after female role models.
<i>Well-Rounded Development:</i>
• Daily fitness and art classes; and
• Emphasis on leading a balanced, healthy life, with a healthy food policy for students.
<i>Growing Leaders from Within:</i>
• Fellows program apprentices new teachers;
• Leadership pipeline provides a clear path from Fellow to Principal; and
• Two teachers in each K-2 classroom;
<i>Families as Partners:</i>
• Home visits from teachers at the beginning of each school year;
• Requiring parents to sign-off daily on all homework assignments; and
• Engaging families in the life of the school through daily communication, events, and open doors.

School Characteristics¹

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Revised Chartered Enrollment	Actual Enrollment	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades	Days of Instruction
2009-10	144	130	132	K-1	K-1	184
2010-11	210	207	204	K-2	K-2	184
2011-12	273	280	296	K-3	K-3	184
2012-13	330	350	350	K-4	K-4	184

Demographics²

	2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 8 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 8 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 8 Enrollment
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	1	1
Black or African American	39	27	39	26	25	40
Hispanic	46	63	49	63	63	57
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	1	4	0	5	5	0
White	0	6	0	6	6	0
Multiracial	14	0	12	0	0	2
Special Populations						
Students with Disabilities ³	6	N/A	14	N/A	19.4 ⁴	15.4 ⁵
English Language Learners	7	12	8	12	12	8
Free/Reduced Lunch						
Eligible for Free Lunch	78	77	78	77	73	74
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	11	8	10	7	7	7

¹ Source: SUNY Charter Schools Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

² Source: New York State Report Cards, New York State Education Department.

³ District-level Students with Disabilities enrollment data are not available for 2010-11. SED released these district data for the first time in spring 2012. Please note that SED releases data up to a full year after the conclusion of any one school year. As such, the data presented in this table may differ from current information reported by the school and included in this report.

⁴ Based on the State's Empirical Analysis of Enrollment Targets.

⁵ Ibid.

Current Board of Trustees⁶

Board Member Name	Position/Committees
Boykin Curry IV	Chair
Lauren Frank	Co-Chair
Maria Zimmerman	Academic Committee
Sarah Bennison Machiels	Academic Committee
Laura Weil	Finance Committee
Melissanne Darrell	Parent Representative

School Leader(s)

School Year	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2009-10 to Present	Josie Carbone, Principal

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2009-10	First Year Visit	Institute	April 20, 2010
2011-12	Annual Visit	Institute	February 9-10, 2012
2012-13	Annual Visit	Institute	May 16, 2013

⁶ Source: Institute board information.

CONDUCT OF THE SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT

Specifications

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
May 16, 2013	Danielle Keen	Senior Evaluation Analyst
	Jenn David-Lang	External Consultant

Context of the Visit

Charter Cycle	
Charter Term	4 rd Year of Charter Term
Accountability Period ⁷	4 th Year of Four-Year Accountability Period
Anticipated Renewal Visit	Fall 2013

⁷ Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision in the last year of a Charter Term, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of the Charter Term. For initial renewals, the Accountability Period is the first four years of the Charter Term. For subsequent renewals, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous Charter Term through the next to last year of the current Charter Term.

2011-12 School Performance Review

Performance Summary

In 2011-12, the third year of Girls Preparatory Charter School of the Bronx's ("Girls Prep Bronx's") four-year Accountability Period and the first year that it administered the state testing program, the school did not meet its key Accountability Plan goal in English language Arts ("ELA") and came close to meeting its mathematics goal. As the school only administered the state tests to the third grade, the results are based on limited data. The school's science goal is not yet applicable, because the school had not yet administered the 4th grade science exam. The State Education Department has not yet determined if the school is in good standing with respect to meeting the requirements of the NCLB accountability system.

English Language Arts

Based on four of the five measures in its ELA goal, Girls Prep Bronx did not meet the goal, failing to meet any of the four measures. With 53 percent of the third graders performing at proficiency, the school was far from meeting the absolute target of 75 percent proficiency.⁸ The school did not meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set by the state. In comparison to demographically similar schools statewide, it performed worse than predicted and under-performed the local community school district. Because Girls Prep Bronx administered the test for the first time, a year-to-year growth measure was not available.

Mathematics

Based on four of the five measures in its math goal, Girls Prep Bronx came close to meeting the goal by meeting two of the measures and coming close to meeting a third. With 95 percent of the third graders performing at proficiency, the school met the absolute target of 75 percent proficiency.⁹ It outperformed the local community school district and performed better than predicted in comparison to demographically similar schools statewide, although it did not meet the criterion of scoring better than expected by at least a small Effect Size. The school did not meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set by the state. Because Girls Prep Bronx administered the test for the first time, a year-to-year growth target was not available.

⁸ For evaluating the goal's absolute measure, the Institute has again adapted SED's "time-adjusted" ELA score for 2011-12 as it had in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

⁹ For evaluating the goal's absolute measure, the Institute has again adapted SED's "time-adjusted" math cut score for 2011-12 as it had in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts

Girls Preparatory Charter School - Bronx



	2009-10 Grades Served:					MET	2010-11 Grades Served:					MET	2011-12 Grades Served: K-3					MET
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)			Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)			Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)					
	3	(0)	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)	(0)		3	51.4 (72)	53.2 (62)					
ABSOLUTE MEASURES 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.	4	(0)	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)	(0)				
	5	(0)	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)	(0)				
	6	(0)	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)	(0)				
	7	(0)	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)	(0)				
	8	(0)	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)	(0)				
	All	(0)	(0)	(0)		All	(0)	(0)	(0)		All	51.4 (72)	53.2 (62)		NO			
		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO						
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.														NO				
COMPARATIVE MEASURES 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison:						Comparison:						Comparison: Bronx District 8					
	Grades	School	District			Grades	School	District			Grades	School	District					
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at or above Level 3 on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size		% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size		% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size				
GROWTH MEASURE 5. The year-to-year school-wide cohort of students will meet the target of reducing by one-sixth the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates grade-level cohort met target.	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result			
	3					3					3	0						
	4					4					4	0						
	5					5					5	0						
	6					6					6	0						
	7					7					7	0						
	8					8					8	0						
	All					All					All	0						

TACSThe Institute uses SED's "time adjusted cut scores", or "TACS", for evaluating the designated measures in the respective years. Although a lower standard than that used before 2009-10, TACS provide continuity with the standard used in previous years. Data Sources: SED data; school data workbooks; the Institute's student test database.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Girls Preparatory Charter School - Bronx



	2009-10 Grades Served:				MET	2010-11 Grades Served:				MET	2011-12 Grades Served: K-3				MET	
	Grades	All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.	3	(0)	(0)	(0)	3	(0)	(0)	(0)	3	94.5 (73)	95.2 (62)	3	94.5 (73)	95.2 (62)	YES	
	4	(0)	(0)	(0)	4	(0)	(0)	(0)	4	(0)	(0)	4	(0)	(0)		
	5	(0)	(0)	(0)	5	(0)	(0)	(0)	5	(0)	(0)	5	(0)	(0)		
	6	(0)	(0)	(0)	6	(0)	(0)	(0)	6	(0)	(0)	6	(0)	(0)		
	7	(0)	(0)	(0)	7	(0)	(0)	(0)	7	(0)	(0)	7	(0)	(0)		
	8	(0)	(0)	(0)	8	(0)	(0)	(0)	8	(0)	(0)	8	(0)	(0)		
	All	(0)	(0)	(0)	All	(0)	(0)	(0)	All	94.5 (73)	95.2 (62)	All	94.5 (73)	95.2 (62)	YES	
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO	Grades	PI	AMO	NO	
	3				3				3	144	148	3	144	148		
	4				4				4			4				
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison:				Comparison:				Comparison:			Comparison:				
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District		
	3				3				3	56.5	50.1	3	56.5	50.1	YES	
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted level of students at or above Level 3 on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size
	73.7	53.4	49.6	0.20	73.7	53.4	49.6	0.20	73.7	53.4	49.6	0.20	73.7	53.4	49.6	0.20
	NO				NO				NO				NO			
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. The year-to-year school-wide cohort of students will meet the target of reducing by one-sixth the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates grade-level cohort met target.	Gr N	Base	Target	Result	Gr N	Base	Target	Result	Gr N	Base	Target	Result	Gr N	Base	Target	Result
	3				3				3				3			
	4				4				4				4			
	5				5				5				5			
	6				6				6				6			
	7				7				7				7			
	8				8				8				8			
All				All				All				All				

Use of Assessment Data

Girls Prep Bronx regularly administers a number of assessments; however, there is no comprehensive school-wide system for using data to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning.

- Girls Prep Bronx administers to all students the Terra Nova once and Fountas and Pinnell four times each year. Teachers also assess students using and the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) in Kindergarten and interim assessments (“IAs”) from the Achievement Network (“ANet”) four times throughout the year. The school also administers teacher-created assessments after each unit.
- ANet scores the school’s IAs externally, and teachers receive data reports two to three days after administration. Teachers then score extended responses, using a New York State Common Core-aligned rubric. Earlier this year, teachers received professional development on grading writing pieces and worked with other teachers on their grade teams to ensure consistency in grading extended IA responses. However, consistency in grading does not extend to other writing samples; teachers report creating their own rubrics to grade various writing products.
- Teachers regularly use results from the Fountas and Pinnell assessment to group students for small-group instruction. Working in grade teams, teachers analyze data reports provided by ANet and choose one objective to re-teach. Teachers create action plans and re-teach this objective during a newly implemented “re-teach week” which takes place four times yearly.
- Teachers report collecting additional qualitative and quantitative data on a regular basis. This data collection and resulting analysis occurs primarily between co-teachers as Girls Prep Bronx does not have school-wide expectations for using data to improve instruction outside of the ANet cycles.
- School leaders use assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness to the extent that they target extra coaching to those who struggle; however, assessment results do not factor into teacher evaluations.

Curriculum

Girls Prep Bronx’s curriculum framework supports teachers in their individual instructional planning; however, the curriculum is not vertically aligned.

- Teachers use scope and sequence documents designed by the Public Prep network and external curriculum consultants to design daily lesson plans. With these documents, teachers know what to teach and when to teach it.
- Curricular decisions are not based on student achievement goals. Instructional leaders report making changes based on their own preferences, rather than observed deficiencies in student mastery.
- School leaders do not communicate school-wide expectations for consistency in daily lesson planning – some teachers prepare individually while some grade teams write lesson plans collaboratively. The instructional leaders do not review lesson plans.

- The school does not provide opportunities for teachers to coordinate the curriculum vertically. Teachers do not regularly meet with teachers in other grades.

Pedagogy

While observed lessons include rigorous objectives and purposeful learning activities, many teachers lack the pedagogical skills to effectively implement these lessons.

- Throughout the school, teachers deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives aligned to the school's curriculum. Lesson plans are well-developed and include rich activities, opportunities for group work and multiple modalities and learning styles.
- Across the school, teachers miss opportunities to check for understanding. Most teachers do not circulate or review student writing during independent or group work time. In many classrooms, teachers ask students probing questions but do not allow sufficient time for students to contemplate the question before providing the answer themselves, thereby reducing the effectiveness of the lesson.
- Many teachers implement lessons either too quickly (leaving students confused) or too slowly (allowing them to become unengaged and missing opportunities for questioning or end-of-lesson assessments).
- Teachers have effective classroom management techniques and routines that create a consistent focus on academic achievement. Observers noted minimal student disruption and misbehavior.

Instructional Leadership

Girls Prep Bronx has not established an environment of high expectations for teacher performance nor communicated clear school-wide instructional goals.

- Teachers are unable to articulate instructional leaders' expectations for their performance.
- The instructional leadership is adequate to support the development of the teaching staff. In addition to the principal, the school employs an ELA and a math coach and contracts with several outside providers for professional development, including representatives from LitLife and Metamorphosis. School based instructional leaders meet bi-weekly to coordinate teacher coaching and professional development; though there have been no efforts to coordinate the activities of external providers.
- While instructional leaders observe teachers regularly, coaching and feedback is not sustained, systemic or proven to be effective. Teachers report having received coaching on a bi-weekly schedule early in the year but note that coaching tapered off as the year went on. Teachers report that they sometimes receive inconsistent feedback from classroom observations.
- Girls Prep Bronx does not implement a comprehensive professional development program that builds teachers' pedagogical skill. Although the school provides a wide range of professional development sessions and study groups, as well as individual stipends for professional development, these activities do not align to observed weaknesses in

instruction. Furthermore, there is no process to evaluate professional development and its effectiveness.

- Instructional leaders conduct teacher evaluations based on the Danielson rubric. While teachers report receiving substantial training on it, coaches do not consistently use the framework in their observation and feedback sessions during the course of the year.

State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks

Version 5.0, May 2012

Introduction

The State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks¹⁰ (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”) serve two primary functions at renewal:

- They provide a framework for the Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) to gather and evaluate evidence to determine whether a school has made an adequate case for renewal. In turn, this evidence assists the Institute in deciding if it can make the required legal and other findings in order to reach a positive recommendation for renewal. For example, the various benchmarks that the Institute uses to determine whether the school has had fiscally responsible practices in place during the last charter period allow the Institute to determine with greater precision whether the school will operate in a fiscally sound manner during the next charter period, a finding that the New York Charter Schools Act requires the SUNY Trustees to make.
- At the same time that the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks provide a framework for the Institute to collect and review evidence, they also provide the school with a guide to understanding the Institute’s evaluative criteria. As the Institute uses the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks (or some sub-set of them) as the framework for conducting its ongoing school evaluation visits, school leaders should be fully aware of the content of the Benchmarks at the time of renewal.

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks are organized into four inter-connected renewal questions that each school must answer when submitting a renewal application. The benchmarks further reflect the interwoven nature of schools from an academic, organizational, fiscal and/or legal perspective. For example, the Institute could reasonably place many of the academic benchmarks under the heading of organizational effectiveness. More generally, some redundancy exists because the Institute looks at the same issue from different perspectives.

Precisely how the Institute uses the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, during both the renewal process and throughout the charter period, is explained in greater detail in the *Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University of New York* (the

¹⁰ Research on public school reform, known as the effective schools movement, has embraced the premise that, given certain organizing and cultural characteristics, schools can teach all children the intended curriculum and hold them to high academic standards. Over the decades, the accumulated research into effective schools has yielded a set of common characteristics that all effective schools share. These characteristics are so consistently prevalent among successful schools that they have come to be known as the *Correlates of Effective Schools*. The Renewal Benchmarks adapt and elaborate on these correlates.

-Revised May 2012-

“SUNY Renewal Policies”), available on the Institute’s website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm. Responses to frequently asked questions about the Institute’s use of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks appear below:

- The Institute does not have a point system for recommending renewal. A school cannot simply tally up the number of positive benchmark statements in order to determine the Institute’s recommendation.
 - Some benchmarks are weighed more heavily than others. In particular, the Institute gives the greatest weight to how well the school has met its academic Accountability Plan goals.
 - Despite the fact that the Accountability Plan comprises only a single benchmark, a school’s performance on that benchmark is critical. In fact, it is so important that while the Institute may recommend non-renewal for fiscal and organizational failures (if sufficiently serious), excellence in these areas will not excuse poor academic performance.
- The Institute does not use every benchmark during every kind of renewal review, and how the benchmarks are used differs depending on a school’s circumstances. For example, the Qualitative Education Benchmarks (Benchmarks 1B-1F, 2C and 2D) are given far less weight in making a renewal decision on schools that the Institute has previously renewed. Similarly, less weight is accorded to these benchmarks during an initial renewal review where a school has consistently met its academic Accountability Plan goals.
 - The Institute also may not consider every indicator subsumed under a benchmark when determining if a school has met that benchmark, given the school’s stage of development or its previous track record.
- Aside from Benchmark 1A on academic Accountability Plan goals (which is singular in its importance), no school should fear that a failure to meet every element of every benchmark means that it is not in a position to make a case for renewal. To the contrary, the Institute has yet to see a school that performs perfectly in every respect. The Institute appreciates that the benchmarks set a very high standard collectively. While the Institute certainly hopes and expects that schools aim high, it is understood that a school’s reach will necessarily exceed its grasp in at least some aspects.

In this fifth edition of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, the Institute has made some revisions to the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, namely those benchmarks used for ongoing school evaluation visits, to streamline the collection of evidence. For example, the Institute has incorporated Student Order and Discipline into Pedagogy, and Professional Development into Instructional Leadership. The Institute has rewritten some of the overarching benchmark statements to capture the most salient aspects of school effectiveness, organizational viability, legal compliance, and fiscal soundness. Some of the bulleted indicators within benchmarks have been recast or eliminated. Finally, the Institute has added some indicators to align the benchmarks with changes in the Charter Schools Act (e.g., provisions in meeting enrollment and retention targets when assigned and abiding by the General Municipal Law).

It is important that the entire school community understand the renewal process. All members of a school's leadership team and board should carefully review both the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks and the SUNY Renewal Policies. Note that a renewal overview document for parents, teachers and community members is also available on the Institute's website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm. Please do not hesitate to contact the Institute with any questions.

State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks

	Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1A Academic Accountability Plan Goals	<p>Over the Accountability Period, the school has met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.</p> <p>The Institute determines the extent to which the school has met the Accountability Plan goals in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English language arts; • mathematics; • science; • social studies (high school only); • NCLB; • high school graduation and college preparation (if applicable); and • optional academic goals included by the school.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1B Use of Assessment Data	<p>The school has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school regularly administers valid and reliable assessments aligned to the school's curriculum and state performance standards; • the school has a valid and reliable process for scoring and analyzing assessments; • the school makes assessment data accessible to teachers, school leaders and board members; • teachers use assessment results to meet students' needs by adjusting classroom instruction, grouping students and/or identifying students for special intervention; • school leaders use assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness and to develop professional development and coaching strategies; and • the school regularly communicates to parents/guardians about their students' progress and growth.

<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1C</p> <p>Curriculum</p>	<p>The school's curriculum supports teachers in their instructional planning.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has a curriculum framework with student performance expectations that provides a fixed, underlying structure, aligned to state standards and across grades; • in addition to the framework, the school has supporting tools (i.e., curriculum maps or scope and sequence documents) that provide a bridge between the curriculum framework and lesson plans; • teachers know what to teach and when to teach it based on these documents; • the school has a process for selecting, developing and reviewing its curriculum documents and its resources for delivering the curriculum; and • teachers plan purposeful and focused lessons.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1D</p> <p>Pedagogy</p>	<p>High quality instruction is evident throughout the school.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives aligned to the school's curriculum; • teachers regularly and effectively use techniques to check for student understanding; • teachers include opportunities in their lessons to challenge students with questions and activities that develop depth of understanding and higher-order thinking and problem solving skills; • teachers maximize learning time (e.g., appropriate pacing, on-task student behavior, clear lesson focus and clear directions to students); transitions are efficient; and • teachers have effective classroom management techniques and routines that create a consistent focus on academic achievement.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1E</p> <p>Instructional Leadership</p>	<p>The school has strong instructional leadership.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school's leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge and pedagogical skills) and in which teachers believe that all students can succeed; • the instructional leadership is adequate to support the development of the teaching staff; • instructional leaders provide sustained, systemic and effective coaching and supervision that improves teachers' instructional effectiveness;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructional leaders provide opportunities and guidance for teachers to plan curriculum and instruction within and across grade levels; • instructional leaders implement a comprehensive professional development program that develops the competencies and skills of all teachers; • professional development activities are interrelated with classroom practice; • instructional leaders regularly conduct teacher evaluations with clear criteria that accurately identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses; and • instructional leaders hold teachers accountable for quality instruction and student achievement.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1F</p> <p>At-Risk Students</p>	<p>The school meets the educational needs of at-risk students.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school uses clear procedures for identifying at-risk students including students with disabilities, English language learners and those struggling academically; • the school has adequate intervention programs to meet the needs of at-risk students; • general education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the general education program; • the school adequately monitors the progress and success of at-risk students; • teachers are aware of their students' progress toward meeting IEP goals, achieving English proficiency or school-based goals for struggling students; • the school provides adequate training and professional development to identify at-risk students and to help teachers meet students' needs; and • the school provides opportunities for coordination between classroom teachers and at-risk program staff including the school nurse, if applicable.
	<p align="center">Renewal Question 2</p> <p align="center">Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?</p>

<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2A Mission & Key Design Elements	<p>The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school faithfully follows its mission; and • the school has implemented its key design elements.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2B Parents & Students	<p>Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school regularly communicates each child's academic performance results to families; • families are satisfied with the school; and • parents keep their children enrolled year-to-year.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2C Organizational Capacity	<p>The school organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has established an administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program; • the organizational structure establishes distinct lines of accountability with clearly defined roles and responsibilities; • the school has a clear student discipline system in place at the administrative level that is consistently applied; • the school retains quality staff; • the school has allocated sufficient resources to support the achievement of goals; • the school maintains adequate student enrollment; • the school has procedures in place to monitor its progress toward meeting enrollment and retention targets for special education students, ELLs and students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, and adjusts its recruitment efforts accordingly; and • the school regularly monitors and evaluates the school's programs and makes changes if necessary.

<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2D</p> <p>Board Oversight</p>	<p>The school board works effectively to achieve the school's Accountability Plan goals.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • board members possess adequate skills and have put in place structures and procedures with which to govern the school and oversee management of day-to-day operations in order to ensure the school's future as an academically successful, financially healthy and legally compliant organization; • the board requests and receives sufficient information to provide rigorous oversight of the school's program and finances; • it establishes clear priorities, objectives and long-range goals, (including Accountability Plan, fiscal, facilities and fundraising), and has in place benchmarks for tracking progress as well as a process for their regular review and revision; • the board successfully recruits, hires and retains key personnel, and provides them with sufficient resources to function effectively; • the board regularly evaluates its own performance and that of the school leaders and the management company (if applicable), holding them accountable for student achievement; and • the board effectively communicates with the school community including school leadership, staff, parents/guardians and students.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2E</p> <p>Governance</p>	<p>The board implements, maintains and abides by appropriate policies, systems and processes.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the board effectively communicates with its partner or management organizations as well as key contractors such as back-office service providers and ensures that it receives value in exchange for contracts and relationships it enters into and effectively monitors such relationships; • the board takes effective action when there are organizational, leadership, management, facilities or fiscal deficiencies; or where the management or partner organization fails to meet expectations; to correct those deficiencies and puts in place benchmarks for determining if the partner organization corrects them in a timely fashion; • the board regularly reviews and updates board and school policies as needed and has in place an orientation process for new members; • the board effectively recruits and selects new members in order to

	<p>maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the board implements a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with that set forth in the charter and with the General Municipal Law—and consistently abides by them throughout the term of the charter; the board generally avoids conflicts of interest; where not possible, the board manages those conflicts in a clear and transparent manner; the board implements a process for dealing with complaints consistent with that set forth in the charter, makes the complaint policy clear to all stakeholders, and follows the policy including acting on complaints in a timely fashion; the board abides by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee election and the removal and filling of vacancies; and the board holds all meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and records minutes for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2F</p> <p>Legal Requirements</p>	<p>The school substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school compiles a record of substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations including, but not limited to, submitting items to the Institute in a timely manner, and meeting teacher certification (including NCLB highly qualified status) and background check requirements, FOIL and Open Meetings Law; the school substantially complies with the terms of its charter and applicable laws, rules and regulations; the school abides by the terms of its monitoring plan; the school implements effective systems and controls to ensure that it meets legal and charter requirements; the school has an active and ongoing relationship with in-house or independent legal counsel who reviews and makes recommendations on relevant policies, documents, transactions and incidents and who also handles other legal matters as needed; and the school manages any litigation appropriately and provides litigation papers to insurers and the Institute in a timely manner.

	Renewal Question 3 Is the School Fiscally Sound?
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3A Budgeting and Long Range Planning	<p>The school operates pursuant to a long-range financial plan in which it creates realistic budgets that it monitors and adjusts when appropriate.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures; • board members, school management and staff contribute to the budget process, as appropriate; • the school frequently compares its long-range fiscal plan to actual progress and adjusts it to meet changing conditions; • the school routinely analyzes budget variances; the board addresses material variances and makes necessary revisions; and • actual expenses are equal to, or less than, actual revenue with no material exceptions.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3B Internal Controls	<p>The school maintains appropriate internal controls and procedures.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school follows a set of comprehensive written fiscal policies and procedures; • the school accurately records and appropriately documents transactions in accordance with management's direction, laws, regulations, grants and contracts; • the school safeguards its assets; • the school identifies/analyzes risks and takes mitigating actions; • the school has controls in place to ensure that management decisions are properly carried out and monitors and assesses controls to ensure their adequacy; • the school's trustees and employees adhere to a code of ethics; • the school ensures duties are appropriately segregated, or institutes compensating controls; • the school ensures that employees performing financial functions are appropriately qualified and adequately trained; • the school has systems in place to provide the appropriate information needed by staff and the board to make sound financial decisions and to fulfill compliance requirements; • a staff member of the school reviews grant agreements and restrictive gifts and monitors compliance with all stated

	<p>conditions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school prepares payroll according to appropriate state and federal regulations and school policy; • the school ensures that employees, trustees and volunteers who handle cash and investments are bonded to help assure the safeguarding of assets; and • the school takes corrective action in a timely manner to address any internal control or compliance deficiencies identified by its external auditor, the Institute, and/or the State Education Department or the Comptroller, if needed.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3C</p> <p>Financial Reporting</p>	<p>The school has complied with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and the State Education Department with required financial reports that are on time, complete and follow generally accepted accounting principles.</p> <p>The following reports have generally been filed in a timely, accurate and complete manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual financial statement audit reports including federal Single Audit report, if applicable; • annual budgets and cash flow statements; • un-audited quarterly reports of income, expenses, and enrollment; • bi-monthly enrollment reports to the district and, if applicable, to the State Education Department including proper documentation regarding the level of special education services provided to students; and • grant expenditure reports.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3D</p> <p>Financial Condition</p>	<p>The school maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. Critical financial needs of the school are not dependent on variable income (grants, donations and fundraising).</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school maintains sufficient cash on hand to pay current bills and those that are due shortly; • the school maintains adequate liquid reserves to fund expenses in the event of income loss (generally three months); • the school prepares and monitors cash flow projections; • If the school includes philanthropy in its budget, it monitors progress toward its development goals on a periodic basis; • If necessary, the school pursues district state aid intercepts with the state education department to ensure adequate per pupil funding; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.
	<p style="text-align: center;">Renewal Question 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If the School's Charter is Renewed, What are its Plans for the Term of the Next Charter Period, and are they Reasonable, Feasible and Achievable?</p>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4A</p> <p>Plans for the School's Structure</p>	<p>Key structural elements of the school, as defined in the exhibits of the Application for Charter Renewal, are reasonable, feasible and achievable.</p> <p>Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school is likely to fulfill its mission in the next charter period; the school has an enrollment plan that can support the school program; the school calendar and daily schedules clearly provide sufficient instructional time to meet all legal requirements, allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals and abide by its proposed budget; key design elements are consistent with the mission statement and are feasible given the school's budget and staffing; a curriculum framework for added grades aligns with the state's performance standards; and plans in the other required Exhibits indicate that the school's structure is likely to support the educational program.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4B</p> <p>Plans for the Educational Program</p>	<p>The school's plans for implementing the educational program allow it to meet its Accountability Plan goals.</p> <p>Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for those grades served during the last charter period, the school has plans for sustaining and (where possible) improving upon the student outcomes it has compiled during the last charter period including any adjustments or additions to the school's educational program; for a school that is seeking to add grades, the school is likely to meet its Accountability Plan goals and the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks at the new grade levels; and where the school will provide secondary school instruction, it has presented a set of requirements for graduation that students are likely to meet and that are consistent with the graduation

	standards set by the Board of Regents.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4C Plans for Board Oversight and Governance	<p>The school provides a reasonable, feasible and achievable plan for board oversight and governance.</p> <p>Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school trustees are likely to possess a range of experience, skills, and abilities sufficient to oversee the academic, organizational and fiscal performance of the school; • plans by the school board to orient new trustees to their roles and responsibilities, and, if appropriate, to participate in ongoing board training are likely to sustain the board's ability to carry out its responsibilities; • if the school plans to change an association with a partner or management organization in the term of a future charter, it has provided a clear rationale for the disassociation and an outline indicating how it will manage the functions previously associated with that partnering organization; and • if the school is either moving from self-management to a management structure or vice-versa, or is changing its charter management organization/educational service provider, its plans indicate that it will be managed in an effective, sound and viable manner including appropriate oversight of the academic and fiscal performance of the school or the management organization.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4D Fiscal & Facility Plans	<p>The school provides a reasonable, feasible and achievable fiscal plan including plans for an adequate facility.</p> <p>Based on the elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school's budgets adequately support staffing, enrollment and facility projections; • fiscal plans are based on the sound use of financial resources to support academic program needs; • fiscal plans are clear, accurate, complete and based on reasonable assumptions; • information on enrollment demand provides clear evidence for the reasonableness of projected enrollment; and • facility plans are likely to meet educational program needs.