

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT
**HENRY JOHNSON CHARTER
SCHOOL**

VISIT DATE: MARCH 20-21, 2018
REPORT DATE: MAY 8, 2018

SUNY Charter Schools Institute

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Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

A collection of colorful pencils and paper clips on a dark grey background. The pencils are arranged diagonally from the top left to the bottom right, showing a variety of colors including green, blue, red, pink, orange, yellow, green, orange, blue, purple, and brown. Some pencils are sharpened, while others are not. Paper clips in various colors (orange, green, pink, blue, black) are scattered around the pencils, some attached to them and others lying separately.

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INTRODUCTION & SCHOOL BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school visit on March 20-21, 2018. While the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all the State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”) near the end of a charter term, most mid-cycle school evaluation visits focus on a subset of these benchmarks. This subset, the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, addresses the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization. It provides a framework for examining the quality of the educational program, focusing on teaching and learning (i.e., curriculum, instruction, assessment, and services for at-risk students), as well as leadership, organizational capacity, and board oversight. The Institute uses the established criteria on a regular basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

Appendix A to the report contains a School Overview with descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. It also provides background information on the conduct of the visit, including information about the evaluation team, and puts the visit in the context of the school’s current charter cycle. Appendix B displays the performance summary that contains the school’s performance on the required measures under its ELA and mathematics goals. Appendix C displays the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

This report does not contain an overall rating or comprehensive indicator that would specify at a glance the school’s prospects for renewal. Rather, it summarizes various strengths of the school and notes areas in need of improvement based on the Qualitative Education Benchmarks. The Institute intends this selection of information to be an exception report in order to highlight areas of concern. As such, limited detail about positive elements of the educational program is not an indication that the Institute does not recognize other indicators of program effectiveness.

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INTRODUCTION & SCHOOL BACKGROUND

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

The SUNY Trustees approved the original charter for Henry Johnson Charter School (“Henry Johnson”) on May 24, 2005. The school took two planning years prior to opening, largely due to facility delays. The school opened its doors in the fall of 2007, initially serving 116 students in Kindergarten and 1st grade. The school currently enrolls 338 students in Kindergarten – 4th grade and is located in the Albany City School District (the “district”) in a privately-owned facility at 30 Watervliet Ave, Albany, NY.

Henry Johnson is in the third year of its third charter term. The school previously partnered with the Albany Charter Schools Network primarily for instructional coaching support, but terminated the agreement at the start of the current school year, citing sufficient in-house coaching support.

Henry Johnson’s mission states:



The mission of the Henry Johnson Charter School is to ensure that all students reach the highest levels of scholastic achievement in an environment that instills character, virtue, and ‘habits of mind’ that ensure success both within and outside the classroom: diligence, courage, respect, self-reliance, duty, and responsibility.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2016-17 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

During the 2016-17 school year, the third year of Henry Johnson's five year Accountability Period,¹ the school did not meet either of its key academic Accountability Plan goals in English language arts ("ELA") or mathematics after having not met them the previous year. The school did not meet its science goal and met its No Child Left Behind ("NCLB") goal.

ELA

Henry Johnson did not meet its ELA goal in 2016-17, after not meeting the goal in 2015-16 and meeting the goal in 2014-15. The school exceeded the target for only one of five measures included in its Accountability Plan in 2016-17. That year, the school's performance exceeded the district for the third consecutive year, with 32% of the school's 3rd and 4th grade students enrolled in at least their second year scoring at or above proficiency on the state's ELA exam. However, the school failed to meet the target for its comparative effect size measure for the second year in a row. Although Henry Johnson's effect size of 0.05 indicates the school performed slightly higher than expected compared to schools throughout the state enrolling similar concentrations of economically disadvantaged students, the school did not meet the target of 0.3 to indicate performance that is higher than expected to a meaningful degree. Henry Johnson's 4th grade students posted a mean growth percentile of 36 in 2016-17, falling far below the target of the state's median of 50 for the second consecutive year. This record of growth signals that the school struggles to catch students up to the performance of statewide peers and to grade level expectations.

MATHEMATICS

Henry Johnson did not meet its mathematics goal in 2016-17, after not meeting the goal in 2015-16 and coming close to meeting it in 2014-15. The school exceeded the target for only one of five measures included in its Accountability Plan in 2016-17. With only 20% of its 3rd and 4th grade students enrolled in at least their second year scoring at or above proficiency, the school marginally outperformed the district and fell far below the absolute target of 75%. The school failed to meet the target for its comparative effect size measure for the third consecutive year and posted a negative effect size for the second year in a row. In comparison to demographically similar schools across the state, Henry Johnson performed lower than expected in 2016-17. After posting a growth score that fell below the target in 2015-16, the school met the target in 2016-17 when it posted a mean growth percentile of 50. Notwithstanding, given the school's low absolute proficiency, this level of growth is not sufficient to move all students to proficiency before they leave the school.

1. Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision before student achievement results for the final year of a charter term become available, the Accountability Period ends with the school year prior to the final year of the charter term. For a school in a subsequent charter term, the Accountability Period covers the final year of the previous charter term and ends with the school year prior to the final year of the current charter term.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

SCIENCE

After meeting its science goal in 2014-15 and 2015-16, Henry Johnson failed to meet the goal in 2016-17. The school's 4th grade students enrolled in at least their second year posted an average proficiency rate of 65%, falling 10 percentage points below the absolute target of 75% and only narrowly exceeding the district's comparative performance by two points. Notably, the percentage of the school's students scoring at or above proficiency on the science exam declined for the third consecutive year in 2016-17.

NCLB

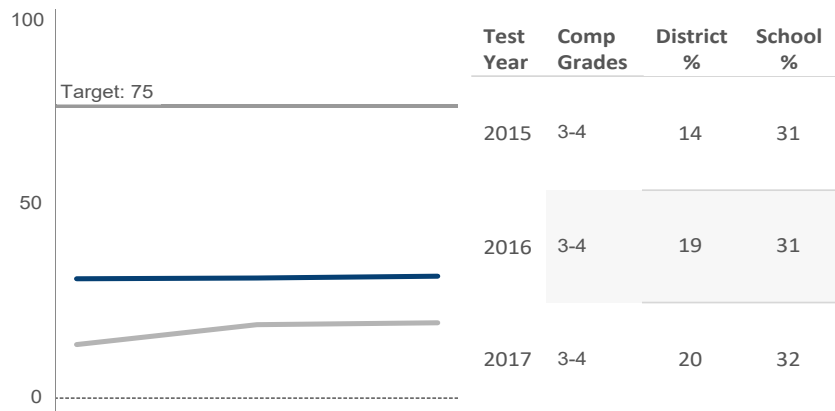
Henry Johnson met its NCLB goal in 2016-17, as the school was not identified as a focus charter school or as requiring a local assistance plan under the state's accountability system.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

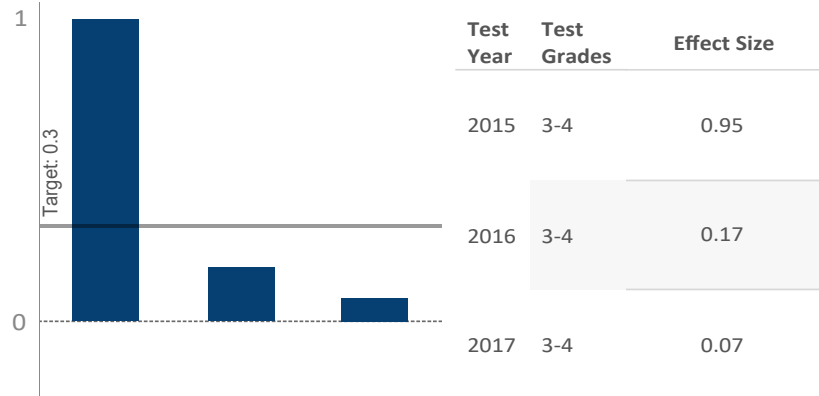
HENRY JOHNSON CHARTER SCHOOL

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

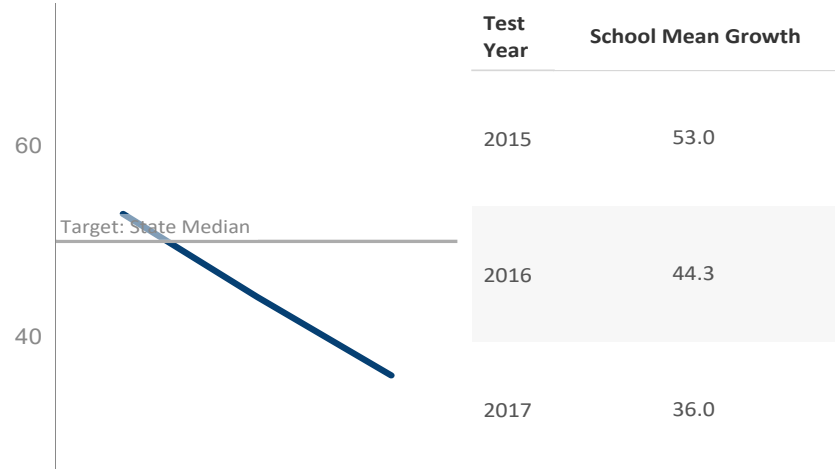
Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in ELA will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



Comparative Measure: Effect Size. Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance by an effect size of 0.3 or above in **ELA** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile in **ELA**.

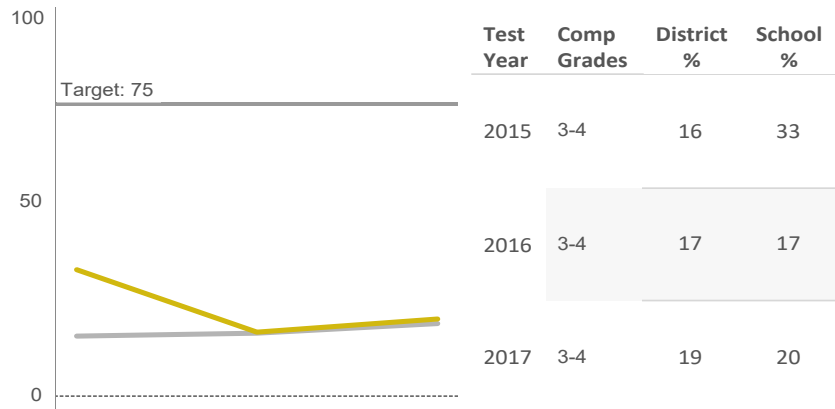


ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

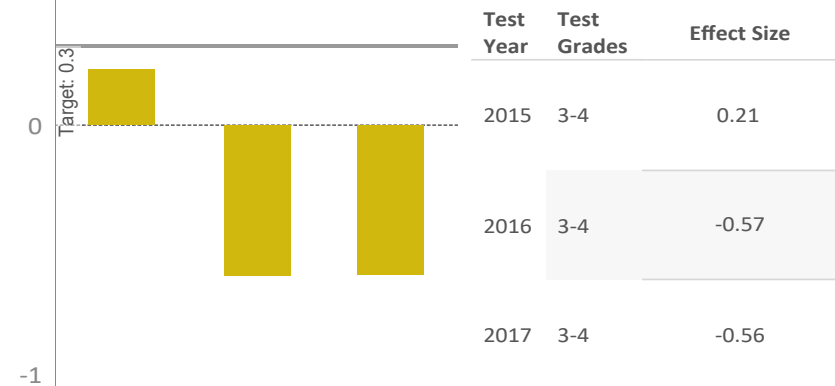
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MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

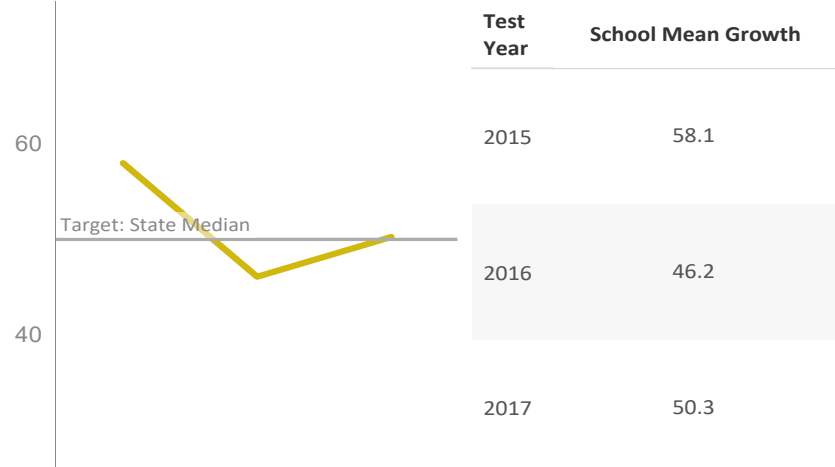
Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in mathematics will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



Comparative Measure: Effect Size. Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance by an effect size of 0.3 or above in **mathematics** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile in **mathematics**.

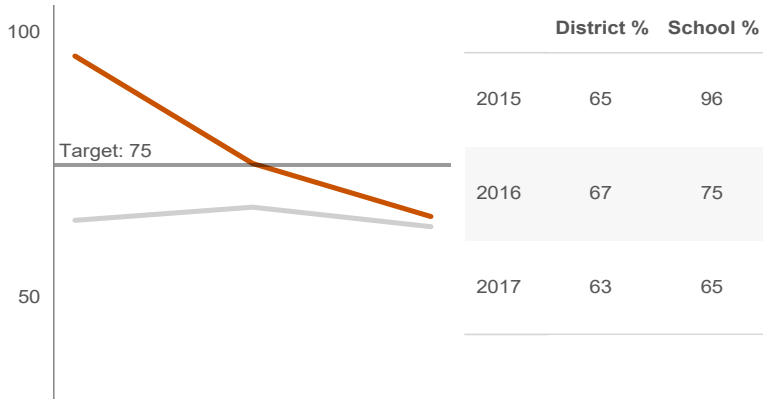


ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

HENRY JOHNSON CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

Science: Comparative Measure. Each year, the percentage of students at the school in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in **science** will exceed that of students in the same tested grades in the district.



SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE

	2015	2016	2017
Enrollment Receiving Mandated Academic Services	9	13	0
Tested on State Exam	1	3	0
School Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	s	s	
District Percent Proficient	1.0	1.0	

	2015	2016	2017
ELL Enrollment	5	5	7
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	5	4	7
School Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress on NYSESLAT	s	s	28.6

The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and ELLs above is not tied to separate goals in the school's formal Accountability Plan.

The NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, is a standardized state exam.

"Making Progress" is defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into five categories/proficiency levels: Entering; Emerging; Transitioning; Expanding; and, Commanding.

In order to comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations on reporting education outcome data, the Institute does not report assessment results for groups containing five or fewer students and indicates this with an "s."

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BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

QUALITATIVE BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, grounded in the body of research from the Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University,² describe the elements in place at schools that are highly effective at providing students from low-income backgrounds the instruction, content, knowledge, and skills necessary to produce strong academic performance. The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks describe the elements an effective school must have in place at the time of renewal.³

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1B

DOES HENRY JOHNSON HAVE AN ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT IMPROVES INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING?

Despite the fact that more than 70% of students are not proficient on ELA and mathematics state assessments, leaders do not act urgently to utilize assessments to make strategic schoolwide decisions. The school collects various student data but does not have an systematic process for analyzing results to adjust instruction to meet the wide range of learners effectively.

- The school regularly administers assessments but lacks sufficient oversight to ensure that the assessment content and scoring process are valid and reliable. Henry Johnson administers the Fountas & Pinnell (“F&P”) reading assessment at least three times per year to all grades. The instructional coach and academic intervention services (“AIS”) coordinator train teachers to administer the F&P, but the school does not have a system to ensure the continued reliability of assessment administration over time, limiting the validity of the data. Instructional leaders expect teachers to administer a formative or summative assessment every two weeks, and teachers create these assessments by modifying EngageNY materials or by using released state assessment questions. While the source of the teacher-created assessments means the school’s assessment suite has the potential to be valid, the school lacks a process to ensure that all assessments align to the rigor and pacing of state standards. Teachers score writing assessments using the state assessment rubric, but the school lacks a consistent process to norm teachers on scoring so that data is reliable. In some instances, teachers’ grades assigned to writing do not accurately reflect the quality of student work.
- Although Henry Johnson has a process for adjusting instruction based on assessment data, teachers do not effectively use assessment results to meet students’ needs. For most assessments, teachers group students based on four score ranges. For students in the bottom two score ranges, teachers analyze students’ work to determine the

2. An extensive body of research identifying and confirming the correlates of effective schools exists dating back four decades. Selected sources include:

<https://www.gao.gov/assets/80/77488.pdf>; and https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/fryer/files/dobbie_fryer_hcz_01062015_1.pdf.

3. Additional details regarding the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks is available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/suny-renewal-benchmarks/.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

standards students did not master. Teachers then provide small group intervention to these students during the scheduled intervention blocks. While teachers consistently use this process to analyze assessments, there is no evidence that it is strategic and that groupings meet individual students' needs. Teachers and leaders cannot articulate the reasoning for assigning students to four score ranges. Leaders are not clear how the ranges align to overall student mastery of state standards and how the school effectively meets the needs of students in all of the four score ranges. The school relies on the intervention block to meet students' needs rather than supporting teachers to utilize effective strategies during content blocks and regular instruction.

- Instructional leaders do not consistently use assessment results to support teachers or make schoolwide decisions. The principal and instructional coaches primarily monitor F&P data during the school year to determine whether students meet grade level achievement goals. Leaders then support teachers in their assessment analysis. However, leaders rely primarily on classroom observation data and state assessment data to determine coaching strategies, design professional development topics, and make schoolwide decisions. In the absence of utilizing the multitude of formative and summative assessment data from throughout the year, leaders are limited in their ability to target support for teachers and ensure teachers effectively meet students' needs.

DOES HENRY JOHNSON'S CURRICULUM SUPPORT TEACHERS IN THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING?

Henry Johnson provides teachers with curricular resources to support instructional planning. Despite leaders recognizing students' low proficiency rate on the state assessments, the school does not systematically review the curriculum or lesson plans to ensure that leaders and teachers support the varied needs of students at each grade level. The school lacks a system to store and maintain materials from previous years so that the school can maintain a historical record of previous material, and adapt and improve curriculum based on data.

- Henry Johnson has a curricular framework and supporting tools that align to state standards. The school primarily relies on EngageNY for mathematics and ELA curricula and uses multiple other supplementary sources. The ELA modules embed the social studies curriculum through each unit, and the school uses Interactive Science for science. Teachers modify these materials for their courses. At the beginning of the school year, the instructional coaches adapt the scope and sequence documents from EngageNY to create a pacing guide and provide this to teachers. As such, teachers know what to teach and when to teach it.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- The school lacks a systematic process to review curriculum. Teachers and instructional coaches make adjustments to pacing guides throughout the school year based on students' performance. However, beyond reviewing pacing guides, school leaders do not consistently review the curricula that teachers have modified. Henry Johnson does not have a system to store teachers' assessments and curricular materials. As such, rather than adapting curricula used in previous years, each year new teachers modify the original EngageNY and commercial curricula. Additionally, leaders do not provide oversight to ensure that teachers strategically make adjustments to lesson plans based on particular students' needs.
- Although Henry Johnson has a framework for lesson planning, leaders do not hold teachers accountable for planning high quality lessons. The school provides a lesson plan template and expects teachers to complete each section based on the EngageNY or commercial curricula. However, instructional leaders do not hold all teachers accountable for submitting lesson plans, lack clear expectations for how curricular content should be modified to meet students' needs, and do not consistently provide meaningful, content related feedback. Lesson plans lack differentiation of the curricular resources to meet the needs of individual students.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1D

IS HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION EVIDENT THROUGHOUT HENRY JOHNSON?

Instruction at Henry Johnson fails to develop students' critical thinking skills and deep understanding of content. The school does not sufficiently develop inexperienced teachers and does not effectively utilize its model of two teachers in each classroom to deliver high quality instruction and effective supports. As shown in the chart below, during the evaluation visit, Institute team members conducted 19 classroom observations following a defined protocol used in all school evaluation visits. The Institute was unable to observe multiple classrooms in all subjects because the provided schedule did not consistently match with actual classroom instruction.

		G R A D E					
		K	1	2	3	4	Total
CONTENT AREA	ELA	2	1		2	1	6
	Math	2	2	2	4	2	12
	Science					1	1
	Total	4	3	2	6	4	19

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- Teachers at Henry Johnson deliver lessons with activities aligned to objectives and state standards (15 of 19 lessons observed). Lesson objectives generally build on students' previous skills and knowledge. The school's model intentionally places at least two teachers in every classroom. However, the school does not strategically utilize co-teaching models to provide supports to students. In most classrooms the co-teacher's role is unclear or the co-teacher circulates to monitor behavior but does not provide meaningful or differentiated academic support. Leaders inconsistently provide training on co-teaching models, and so the majority of teachers' implementation of co-teaching is "one teach, one assist," which is ineffective in reaching the diverse range of learners at the school. Rather than provide teachers training and hold them accountable for implementing effective models, leaders plan to replace the current model with a lead teacher and assistant teacher model.
- Few teachers effectively monitor student understanding throughout the lesson (5 of 19 lessons observed). Teachers infrequently ask questions to gauge whole class understanding of the content. While some teachers use techniques like hand signals to assess whole class understanding, they do not hold all students accountable for showing an answer. Teachers ask questions that are low rigor or procedural, hindering teachers' ability to effectively glean whether students have mastered a concept. Teachers primarily rely on a few student volunteers to answer questions and continue to the next portion of the lesson without knowing the level of student understanding across the class. During independent work, few teachers monitor student work but those that do simply explain the answer to the students, failing to collect meaningful information about student understanding.
- There are few opportunities in lessons for students to engage in higher order thinking (1 of 19 lessons observed). Classwork and teachers' questioning are rote and procedural and often allow for only one correct answer. In one class, the teacher did not accept a student's correct strategy because it was different from the strategy taught in the lesson. Teachers and leaders hold students to low expectations and do not push students to produce high quality academic work. Most assignments meet only the lowest rigor level of state standards and do not require students to apply knowledge or think critically. One teacher intentionally does not ask higher order thinking questions during whole group instruction but rather waits to ask during intervention blocks, so as not to "overwhelm" struggling students. While some teachers attempt student centered instruction by asking students to show their work on the board, teachers do not ensure all students sufficiently elaborate on and defend their thinking. Although school leaders recognize teachers' need for support to engage students in higher order thinking, they have not yet taken action to provide this support effectively.

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BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- This year, school leaders prioritized teachers utilizing effective classroom management techniques, and this is evident in classrooms (14 of 19 lessons observed). Teachers consistently use similar classroom management strategies across classrooms. Teachers maximize learning time by using clear routines and procedures, timing work activities, and narrating positive behavior. Students are focused on the lesson tasks and teachers are prepared with their lesson materials to ensure a focus on academics.



BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1E

DOES HENRY JOHNSON HAVE STRONG INSTRUCTION LEADERSHIP?

Henry Johnson lacks the instructional leadership capacity to develop teachers' skills in a manner that ensures students meet the rigor of state standards. Leaders do not communicate clear expectations for teacher performance and student achievement. Professional development does not effectively develop teachers' competencies, and coaching is ineffective.

- Although school leaders set the expectation for an increase of student proficiency on state assessments by up to 25%, these expectations are not evident across the school. Instructional leaders have clearly communicated students' performance target for F&P assessments, but teachers cannot articulate schoolwide expectations for achievement on teacher created or state assessments. Additionally, instructional leaders do not hold teachers accountable for ensuring students produce high quality work. Instructional coaches work with teachers to set a professional development goal for the year, but goals inconsistently align to areas that directly improve student achievement.
- The instructional leadership team has enough staff to support teachers, but currently, the principal lacks effective oversight of the instructional coaches, and instructional coaches lack the capacity to provide effective coaching. The instructional leadership team consists of the principal and two instructional coaches. This school year the principal changed the coaching model such that coaches work with teachers by grade band rather than content area. Teachers report that this structure allows coaches to follow up on action steps and provide coaching more consistently. The school sustains this coaching model, as they engage in an observation and feedback cycle with teachers at least one time per month. However, coaching support is not sufficiently frequent or differentiated based on teachers' experience and level of need. Leaders are not consistently responsive to daily data. Instructional coaches do not use schoolwide goals or assessment data to determine the coaching focus, hindering teachers' individual skill development toward a common schoolwide achievement goal. While the action steps that instructional coaches provide are meaningful and align to teachers' goals, coaches do not fully develop teachers to their greatest capacity over time. Action steps for each coaching cycle do not consistently build upon one another and coaches do not consistently ensure mastery of previous action steps.
- Henry Johnson's professional development program insufficiently develops teachers' competencies and skills. Based on classroom observations last school year, the instructional coaches recognized a need to improve teachers' classroom management.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

As a result, during the school's two weeks of summer professional development, the instructional coaches provided effective training on creating and utilizing routines and procedures to improve classroom management and schoolwide discipline. However, the school's professional development calendar does not allow sustained professional development throughout the year. During the school year, teachers engage in two full day whole staff professional development sessions. Rather than using data that identifies teachers' and students' needs, leaders determined the frequency of these sessions simply to align with the local school district. Teachers formally meet daily in professional learning communities ("PLCs"). However, the school does not utilize the PLC sessions as an opportunity to develop teachers' skills, instead treating it as a curriculum meeting without clear expectations for what teachers should produce during this time.

- The school does not hold teachers and leaders accountable for student achievement. In past years the former principals did not consistently complete formal performance evaluations for teachers. This year teachers anticipate an end of year evaluation from the current principal, but leaders' expectations are unclear. Teachers are unaware of the evaluation criteria. Despite the school's low performance on state assessments, the school lacks differentiated supports for struggling teachers because leaders do not adequately use data to evaluate the effectiveness of coaching and professional development. Additionally, the school does not formally evaluate the two instructional coaches.

DOES HENRY JOHNSON MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS?

Although the school has increased the amount of time for intervention support, the instructional quality and content of interventions do not demonstrate that the additional support will improve achievement for struggling students or students with disabilities. Henry Johnson does not have in place an effective and functioning program for English language learners ("ELLs") that the school regularly reviews and is research based as required by federal law and regulations.

- The school uses clear procedures to identify students with disabilities and ELLs but lacks a clear process to identify students who struggle academically. The school administers a home language survey to all incoming students to identify students who speak languages other than English, and appropriately administers the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners ("NYSITELL"). Henry Johnson identifies students with disabilities based on students' existing Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs").

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

However, for students who struggle academically, there are no specific criteria for how staff should determine which students receive services. The school nominally has a Response to Intervention (“RTI”) process, but the school does not have a consistent schoolwide process for using data to refer students to the school’s child study team.

- Henry Johnson’s intervention programs do not meet the needs of students. This year the school provides daily intervention in both mathematics and ELA to all students. The AIS coordinators and four AIS teachers support the general education teachers with providing support at this time. However, the school does not have a system to analyze data to determine student groupings and differentiation strategies. For ELA, teachers provide support through either a prescriptive literacy intervention program or a small group ELA lesson, which, during the Institute’s observations, lacked a clear focus or target for supporting student learning. During the mathematics intervention block, teachers use the same set of mathematics problems for all students and do not differentiate content; as such, the school misses an opportunity to address specific student misconceptions. For students with disabilities, the special education coordinator and the special education teacher provide push-in and pull-out support to help students meet IEP goals. The ELL teacher provides push-in and pull-out support for the school’s nine ELLs. The school does not have a clearly defined or research based ELL program to provide English language acquisition strategies to ELLs. The current program is content based and does not provide students with adequate skills for English language acquisition. Therefore, the school’s program is out of compliance, and the Institute is following up with the school to ensure compliance.
- Despite the school’s low enrollment of students with disabilities and ELLs, the school does not adequately monitor the progress of at-risk students. For students with disabilities, the special education coordinator and special education teacher track students’ progress toward IEP goals using an online system. However, for ELLs, the school does not set targets for mastery of ELA and mathematics state standards or English language proficiency, and therefore cannot monitor progress toward a goal. Instructional leaders do not disaggregate data for students with disabilities, ELLs, or students who struggle academically and have no other method for monitoring ELLs’ and struggling students’ progress. As a result, leaders are unaware of the effectiveness of the school’s current interventions.
- The school does not provide adequate professional development to help teachers meet the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs. During the summer professional development, the special education coordinator led a session on understanding IEPs and described the interventions the school provides. However, overall there are few professional development opportunities, as the school has not provided any training on instructional strategies to support students with disabilities or ELLs.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2C

DOES THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?

The school organization does not effectively support the delivery of the educational program. The structure of the organization should allow the school to carry out its academic program, but the school does not utilize its resources to evaluate its program and make meaningful changes that show evidence of improvement for student achievement.

- The school based organizational structure is clear. The principal leads the instructional team with leadership support from two instructional coaches and an assistant principal. The director of finance and operations leads the operations team. Before the start of the current school year, the executive director and principal unexpectedly resigned. The board hired a new principal but intentionally did not hire a new executive director, as they had created the position to be temporary and determined it unnecessary for the current school year.
- Henry Johnson has a student discipline system that is consistently applied. The assistant principal is responsible for the school's culture and discipline. The school uses ClassDojo, an online behavior management tool, to monitor student behavior. All teachers have access to all students' data, and parents have immediate access to their child's data, allowing both staff and families to follow up with school leaders when necessary. The assistant principal meets with grade level leaders weekly to review student behavior data and determine which students are not meeting behavior standards. For students who consistently exhibit problem behaviors, teachers work with the assistant principal, social workers, and community liaison to determine a plan for more support. The program is effective, as the Institute observed on-task student behavior in classrooms and the school's out of school suspension rate in 2016-17 was only one percent, which is lower than previous years.
- School leaders and the board recognize the need to retain high quality staff, but do not yet effectively do so. This school year the board instituted a salary schedule and retirement program that is competitive with the district's and is considering changes to the school schedule to accommodate teachers' needs. However, at the time of the Institute's visit, over 40% of teachers had been at the school for one year or less, and three teachers left during the current school year.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- The school maintains adequate student enrollment but does not have sufficient procedures to ensure it meets enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities and ELLs. Although the school's enrollment has declined in the last three school years, the school is within its chartered enrollment allowance. The school accepts new students in every grade, and the parent liaison tracks students' reasons for leaving the school. The school uses several strategies to recruit students such as advertising through radio ads, handing out flyers at daycares and pre-Kindergarten programs, and holding open house events at the school. Although the school provides application materials translated into Spanish language, the school does not use any other specific strategies to recruit ELLs and does not use specific strategies to recruit students with disabilities. The school also does not use data to adjust recruitment strategies. The board is aware that the school does not meet its enrollment targets for students with disabilities and ELLs, but has not shown urgency in taking action to mitigate this.
- The school makes changes to its programs, but the changes are not strategic or aligned with an overall schoolwide plan, mission, or vision. In order to minimize students' transition time and strengthen student-teacher relationships, at the start of the school year the principal changed the class structure such that the 3rd and 4th grade students had the same teacher throughout the day, rather than having a departmentalized structure. The principal also adapted the schedule to allow more time for ELA and mathematics instruction with the goal of improving students' proficiency in these areas. While staff members cite an improved school culture because of these changes, the effectiveness of these changes on student achievement is not yet evident because the school does not systematically use data to evaluate the school's program.

DOES THE SCHOOL BOARD WORK EFFECTIVELY TO ACHIEVE THE SCHOOL'S ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS?

The board does not provide effective oversight that supports achievement of the school's Accountability Plan goals. The board lacks clear priorities and goals. In the absence of systems to effectively collect and analyze schoolwide data, the board does not adequately monitor the school's progress toward goal attainment.

- Henry Johnson's board includes ten members who possess a variety of skills. In addition to a parent representative, board members possess skills in communications, information technology, educational administration, and educational policy. The board is looking to increase expertise in teacher retention and recruitment, but given that nearly 70% of the school's students were not proficient on the state ELA and mathematics assessments, the board lacks urgency in attaining support for reviewing and monitoring academic data.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- The board does not set clear priorities and objectives and does not hold itself or the school leader accountable for student achievement. Despite the school's low performance, the board did not set specific goals for student achievement or the principal's performance this year. Aside from a performance bonus structure based on an increase in student proficiency rates on state assessments, the evaluation criteria for the principal is vague, and the criteria for effective performance is unclear. The board does not evaluate its performance. The board has a long-term goal to expand to middle school grades but recognizes the need to improve student achievement results significantly before taking further action to plan for expansion.
- The board requests and receives information to provide oversight to the school's program, but the information is not sufficient to enable understanding of schoolwide performance. During monthly board meetings, the principal provides enrollment and attendance data, behavior referral data, and assessment data. Each month the board primarily reviews student level F&P results and teachers' formative assessment data as well as teachers' strategies for remediating content. Although the board reviews such detailed assessment data, the data does not give information on students' aggregate performance on key assessments schoolwide and it is unclear what actions the board takes based on this data. In the absence of specific goals for student achievement, the board cannot sufficiently determine whether students are making adequate progress and relies heavily on the principal's judgment to do so.

Henry
Johnson

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BENCHMARKS

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APPENDIX A: School Overview

HENRY JOHNSON CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES¹

CHAIR	TRUSTEES
Salem Cheeks	Latoya Taitt
SECRETARY	Sharon DeSilva
Brian Backstrom	Bramble Buran
TREASURER	Juanita Nabors
Michael Bartoletti	Bob Pistilli
PARENT REP	Michael Strianese
Naomi Roldan	

SCHOOL LEADERS

PRINCIPAL
<i>Lillian Turner, Principal (2007-08 to 2010-11)</i>
<i>Robert Warmack, Principal (2011-12)</i>
<i>Kathleen A. O'Brien, Principal (2012-13)</i>
<i>Jerome Watts, Principal (2013-14)</i>
<i>S. Neal Currie, Executive Director (2013-14 to 2016-17)</i>
<i>Tiffanie Curtis, Principal (2014-15 to 2016-17)</i>
<i>Gregory Mott, Principal (August 2017 to Present)</i>

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ²	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	PROPOSED GRADES	ACTUAL GRADES
2007-08	125	116	92%	K-1	K-1
2008-09	200	202	101%	K-2	K-2
2009-10	275	276	100%	K-3	K-3
2010-11	361	350	96%	K-4	K-4
2011-12	387	367	95%	K-4	K-4
2012-13	375	385	103%	K-4	K-4
2013-14	375	366	98%	K-4	K-4
2014-15	375	388	103%	K-4	K-4
2015-16	375	390	104%	K-4	K-4
2016-17	375	384	102%	K-4	K-4
2017-18	375	350	93%	K-4	K-4

1. Source: The Institute's board records at the time of the visit.

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

APPENDIX A: School Overview

Henry Johnson Charter School

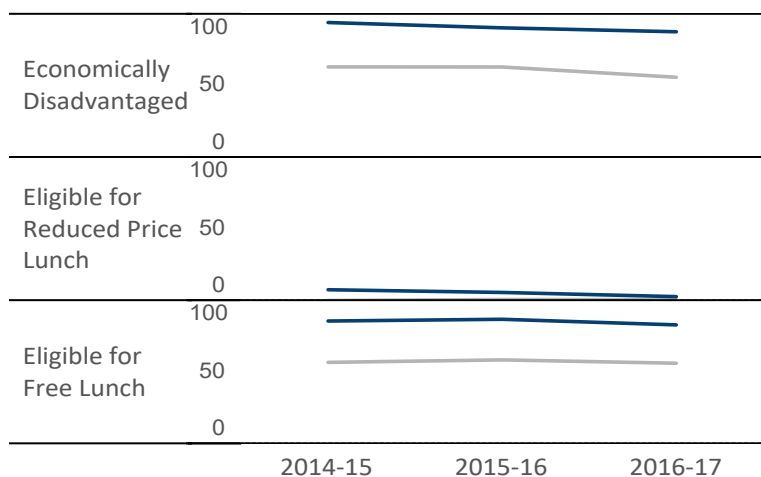
Albany

Student Demographics: Special Populations



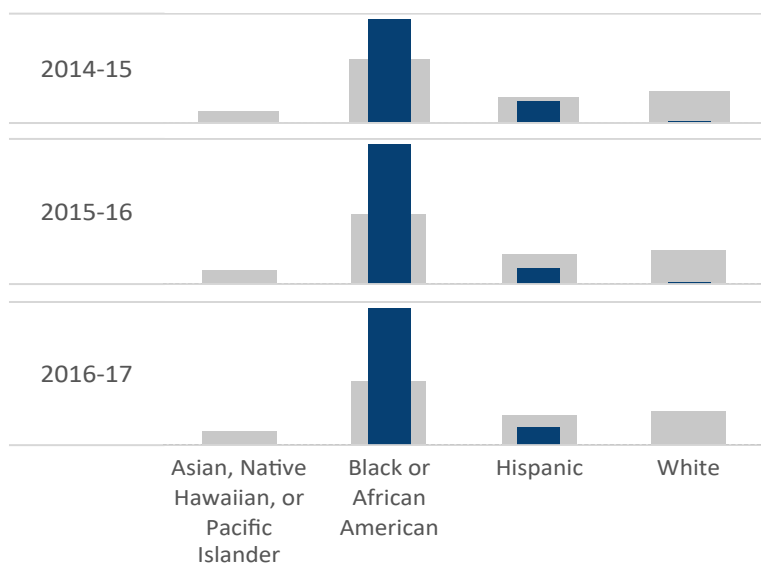
District	9.0	10.1	12.3
School	0.5	1.3	1.8
District	9.9	9.9	10.9
School	2.3	3.3	0.0
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17

Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



District	63.6	63.6	56.4
School	94.6	90.9	88.2
District	0.5	1.1	1.0
School	8.0	6.1	3.2
District	57.2	59.0	56.6
School	86.1	87.3	83.4
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17

Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity

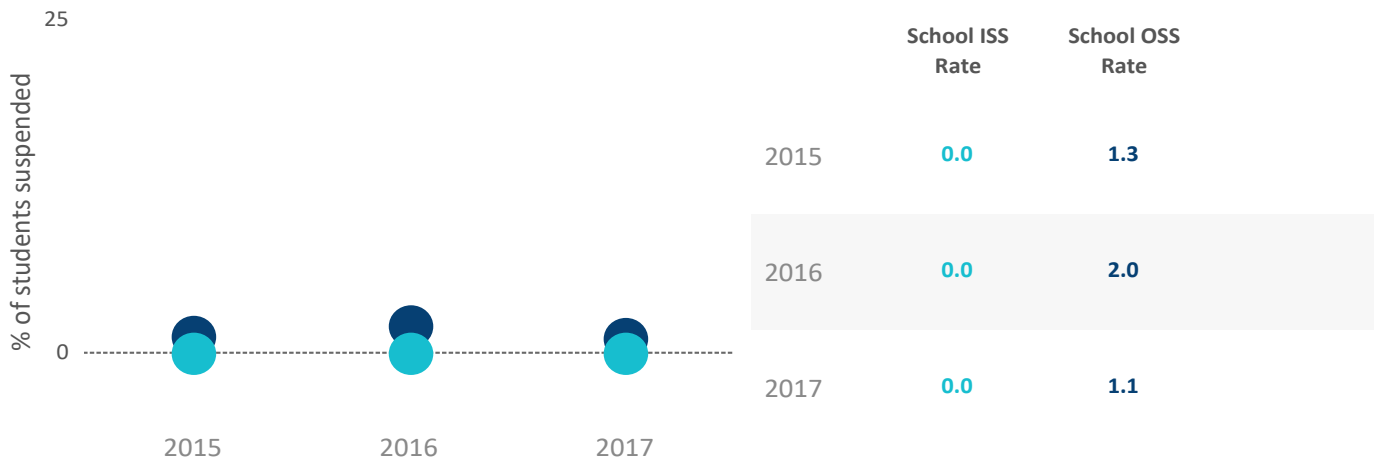


District	8	45	18	22
School	0	74	16	1
District	9	43	19	21
School	1	87	10	2
District	9	41	19	22
School	0	87	11	1
	Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	Black or African American	Hispanic	White

APPENDIX A: School Overview

Henry Johnson Charter School

Albany



District data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by the New York City Department of Education ("NYCDOE"): the total the number of students receiving an in school or out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

Persistence in Enrollment: The percentage of students eligible to return from previous year who did return



Expulsions: The number of students expelled from the school each year.

2015	2016	2017
0	0	0

Henry Johnson Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2016-17

			District Target	School
Enrollment	Economically disadvantaged	<div><div></div></div>	73.0	88.2
	English language learners	<div><div></div></div>	7.6	1.8
	Students with disabilities	<div><div></div></div>	10.9	3.7
Retention	Economically disadvantaged	<div><div></div></div>	93.5	84.3
	English language learners	<div><div></div></div>	94.5	60.0
	Students with disabilities	<div><div></div></div>	91.3	78.6

APPENDIX A: School Overview

SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2008-09	Evaluation Visit	May 13-14, 2009
2009-10	Evaluation Visit	March 30, 2010
2011-12	Initial Renewal Visit	October 18, 2011
2012-13	Evaluation Visit	March 20-21, 2013
2013-14	Pre-Renewal Visit	February 27, 2014
2014-15	Subsequent Renewal Visit	September 30, 2014
2017-18	Evaluation Visit	March 20-21, 2018

CONDUCT OF THE VISIT

DATE(S) OF VISIT	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
March 20-21, 2018	Kerri Rizzolo	School Evaluation Analyst
	Andrew Kile	Director of School Evaluation
	Sinnjinn Bucknell	Senior Performance and Systems Analyst

CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT

CHARTER TERM	ACCOUNTABILITY PERIOD ³	ANTICIPATED RENEWAL VISIT
Third Year of Five-Year Subsequent Charter Term	Fourth Year of Five-Year Accountability Period	Fall 2019

3. 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 that charter term. For schools in initial charter terms, the Accountability Period is the first

four years that the school provides instruction. For schools in subsequent charter terms, the

Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous charter term through the next to last year of the current charter term.

APPENDIX A: School Overview

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS:

ELEMENT	EVIDENT?
A rigorous academic program;	—
A longer school day and a longer school year allowing for three hours of English language arts instruction and 90 minutes of mathematics instruction daily;	+
Comprehensive assessment program, the results of which drive curricular and instructional decision making;	—
A school culture based on the “habits of mind;”	+
A focus on learning, with at least two adults providing instruction in each classroom and extensive professional development available to teachers; and,	—
A program enriched by visual and performing arts, computer class, and by physical education.	—

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts Henry Johnson Charter School

	2014-15 Grades Served: K-4				2015-16 Grades Served: K-4				2016-17 Grades Served: K-4			
	All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)	
	Grades		Grades		Grades		Grades		Grades		Grades	
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	23.4 (77)	25.0 (60)		3	31.9 (69)	35.6 (59)		3	31.3 (83)	33.3 (66)	
	4	32.1 (81)	36.2 (69)		4	26.8 (71)	27.3 (66)		4	28.6 (63)	29.6 (54)	
	5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)	
	6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)	
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)	
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)	
	All	27.8 (158)	31.0 (129)	NO	All	29.3 (140)	31.2 (125)	NO	All	30.1 (146)	31.7 (120)	NO
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO	
	3-4	97	97	YES	3-4	100	104	NO	3-4	91	111	NO
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Albany City Schools				Comparison: Albany City Schools				Comparison: Albany City Schools			
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District	
	3-4	31.0	14.1	YES	3-4	31.2	19.2	YES	3-4	31.7	19.7	YES
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	Effect Size				Effect Size				Effect Size			
	% ED	Actual	Predicted		% ED	Actual	Predicted		% ED	Actual	Predicted	
	95.0	27.8	16.0	0.95	91.9	29.3	26.5	0.16	87.2	30.1	29.3	0.05
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State	
	4	53.0			4	44.3			4	36.0		
	5	0.0			5	0.0			5	0.0		
	6	0.0			6	0.0			6	0.0		
	7	0.0			7	0.0			7	0.0		
	8	0.0			8	0.0			8	0.0		
	All	53.0	50.0	YES	All	44.3	50.0	NO	All	36.0	50.0	NO

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Henry Johnson Charter School

	2014-15 Grades Served: K-4				2015-16 Grades Served: K-4				2016-17 Grades Served: K-4				MET
	All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		
	Grades		Grades		Grades		Grades		Grades		Grades		
	3	4	5	6	7	8	All	3-4	5	6	7	8	
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	14.5 (76)	41.5 (82)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	28.5 (158)	103	14.9 (67)	17.8 (73)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	NO
	16.9 (59)	46.4 (69)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	32.8 (128)	94	15.8 (57)	17.6 (68)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	
	PLI	PLI	PLI	PLI	PLI	PLI	PLI	PLI	PLI	PLI	PLI	PLI	
	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	NO
	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	
	103	94	103	94	103	94	103	94	103	94	103	94	
	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO	
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Albany City Schools		Comparison: Albany City Schools		Comparison: Albany City Schools		Comparison: Albany City Schools		Comparison: Albany City Schools		Comparison: Albany City Schools		YES
	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	
	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	3-4	
	32.8	15.8	32.8	15.8	32.8	15.8	32.8	15.8	32.8	15.8	32.8	15.8	
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	Effect Size		Effect Size		Effect Size		Effect Size		Effect Size		Effect Size		NO
	% ED	% ED	% ED	% ED	% ED	% ED	% ED	% ED	% ED	% ED	% ED	% ED	
	28.5	24.0	28.5	24.0	28.5	24.0	28.5	24.0	28.5	24.0	28.5	24.0	
	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	Grades	YES
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	
	58.1	58.1	58.1	58.1	58.1	58.1	58.1	58.1	58.1	58.1	58.1	58.1	
	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

VERSION 5.0, MAY 2012

Introduction

The State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks¹ (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 subset 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 “SUNY Renewal Practices”), available on the Institute’s website at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/renewal/>. 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.

1. 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.

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

- 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 Educational 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 Practices. Note that a renewal overview document for parents, teacher and community members is also available on the Institute’s website at: <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/renewal/>. Please do not hesitate to contact the Institute with any questions.

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

RENEWAL QUESTION 1

IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1A

OVER THE ACCOUNTABILITY PERIOD, THE SCHOOL HAS MET OR COME CLOSE TO MEETING ITS ACADEMIC ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS.

The Institute determines the extent to which the school has met the Accountability Plan goals in the following areas:

- 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

THE SCHOOL HAS AN ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT IMPROVES INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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.

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1C

THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM SUPPORTS TEACHERS IN THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1D

HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION IS EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1E

THE SCHOOL HAS STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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;

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1F

- 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.

THE SCHOOL MEETS THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

The following elements are generally present:

- 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.

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

RENEWAL QUESTION 2

IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2A

THE SCHOOL IS FAITHFUL TO ITS MISSION AND HAS IMPLEMENTED THE KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS INCLUDED IN ITS CHARTER.

The following elements are generally present:

- the school faithfully follows its mission; and
- the school has implemented its key design elements.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2B

PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS ARE SATISFIED WITH THE SCHOOL.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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

THE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTS THE DELIVERY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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.

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2D

THE SCHOOL BOARD WORKS EFFECTIVELY TO ACHIEVE THE SCHOOL'S ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2E

THE BOARD IMPLEMENTS, MAINTAINS AND ABIDES BY APPROPRIATE POLICIES, SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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 maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity;

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- 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.

THE SCHOOL SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIES WITH APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS AND THE PROVISIONS OF ITS CHARTER.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2F

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

RENEWAL QUESTION 3

IS THE SCHOOL FISCALLY SOUND?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 3A

THE SCHOOL OPERATES PURSUANT TO A LONG-RANGE FINANCIAL PLAN IN WHICH IT CREATES REALISTIC BUDGETS THAT IT MONITORS AND ADJUSTS WHEN APPROPRIATE.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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

THE SCHOOL MAINTAINS APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES.

The following elements are generally present:

- 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 conditions;
- the school prepares payroll according to appropriate state and federal regulations and school policy;

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 3C

- 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.

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.

The following reports have generally been filed in a timely, accurate and complete manner:

- 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.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 3D

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).

The following elements are generally present:

- 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
- the school accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

RENEWAL QUESTION 4

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?

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 4A

KEY STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS OF THE SCHOOL, AS DEFINED IN THE EXHIBITS OF THE APPLICATION FOR CHARTER RENEWAL, ARE REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE.

Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:

- 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.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 4B

THE SCHOOL'S PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ALLOW IT TO MEET ITS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS.

Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:

- 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.

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 4C

THE SCHOOL PROVIDES A REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE PLAN FOR BOARD OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE.

Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:

- 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

THE SCHOOL PROVIDES A REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE FISCAL PLAN INCLUDING PLANS FOR AN ADEQUATE FACILITY.

Based on the elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:

- 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.

