

The background of the entire page is a solid blue color. Overlaid on this is a grid of lighter blue squares. The grid is not uniform; it is composed of several rectangular blocks of squares of varying sizes. One large block covers the top-left and middle-left portions of the page. Another block is in the bottom-left. A third, smaller block is in the bottom-right. The squares are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and structure.

# THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT  
BROWNSVILLE ASCEND  
CHARTER SCHOOL*

**Report Date: December 1, 2021**

**Review Date: September 1, 2021**

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**Charter Schools Institute**  
The State University of New York

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## CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND

# BROWNSVILLE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

1501 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn, New York | Grades: K-8 | Community School District 23



### MISSION

*Ascend's mission is to equip every student with the knowledge, confidence, and character to succeed in college and beyond. Our liberal arts curriculum invites students on an intellectual adventure, igniting their natural curiosity. In a warm and supportive community, students build a strong foundation of critical thinking skills, academic habits, and moral integrity, and graduate as independent young adults, prepared to think on their own, thrive on their own, and engage the world as informed, responsible citizens.*

### CURRENT CHARTER

Serves: Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup>

Chartered Enrollment:  
1,020

Charter Expiration:  
June 30, 2022

### PROPOSED FUTURE CHARTER

Serves: Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup>

Chartered Enrollment:  
1,024

Charter Expiration:  
July 31, 2024

### KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Inquiry-based, Common Core curriculum;



Responsive, joyful culture; and,



Professional development.



## CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND

### EDUCATION CORPORATION BACKGROUND

The New York City Schools Chancellor (the “NYC Chancellor”) approved the application for Brownsville Ascend Charter School (“Brownsville Ascend”) in 2008, with the New York State Board of Regents granting final approval in January 2009. Brownsville Ascend opened in 2009-2010. The State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) approved the merger of Brownsville Ascend, Brooklyn Ascend Charter School (authorized by the NYC Chancellor), Bushwick Ascend Charter School (authorized by the NYC Chancellor) and Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School (authorized by the SUNY Trustees) into the SUNY authorized Canarsie Ascend Charter School on February 25, 2016 under the new education corporation name, Ascend Charter Schools (“Ascend Schools”). The merger was effective July 1, 2016. Ascend Schools has the authority to operate ten charters. The SUNY Trustees approved five additional charters for Ascend Schools in June 2017, October 2018, and March 2019. The most recently charter, Brooklyn Ascend Charter School 6, is scheduled to open in the fall 2022. Ascend Schools contracts with Ascend Learning, Inc. (“Ascend Learning” or the “network”), a New York not-for-profit corporation, that supports all charters in the areas of curricular development, student assessment, recruitment of prospective students and staff members, professional development, legal compliance, external relations, financial management, and technology support.



### NOTEWORTHY

In advancing its commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism (“DEIA”) work, Ascend Schools launched a stipend position for inclusion, diversity, equity, and anti-racism leaders (“IDEALS”) for each charter program and the network. IDEALS work to develop DEIA professional development, coordinate events, and apply a DEIA lens to systems, structures, and practices.

### SUMMARY OF COVID-19 RESPONSE

During 2020-21 school year, Ascend Schools quickly adapted instruction to the remote environment, helped students access remote instruction, and supported its school community through the trauma of the pandemic. The charters secured laptops for all students and transitioned to a synchronous remote instruction model with the option for in-person learning available to the most vulnerable students. More than 250 students with unique needs, such as students with special needs and unstable housing, participated in supervised remote instruction through the implementation of Learning Pods at the Ascend Learning Support Center. Thanks to a \$150,000 grant from the Robin Hood Foundation, Ascend Schools provided other direct assistance to families in need including maintaining a food pantry, supplying clothing, and providing microgrants to families experiencing homelessness or living in temporary housing. By April 2021, Ascend Schools resumed in-person instruction four days a week after careful monitoring of the public health situation and assessment of the needs of teachers, parents, and families. Roughly 25% of Ascend Schools students were learning in-person by the end of the 2020-2021 school year. All schools in the education corporation provide full in-person instruction during the 2021-2022 school year.

## RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

### FULL-TERM RENEWAL

**Renewal through 2023-24.** The SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) recommends the SUNY Trustees’ Charter Schools Committee approve the Application for Charter Renewal of Brownsville Ascend Charter School through July 31, 2024 to align the expiration date and renewal schedule going forward of each charter held by Ascend Schools. The Institute makes this recommendation as Brownsville Ascend Charter School meets the requirements for renewal set forth in the Policies for Renewal of Not-For-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”).<sup>1</sup>

The table below presents information on the Institute’s plan<sup>2</sup> to align the charter expiration dates for each charter school operated by Ascend Charter Schools. By the 2023-24 school year, the charter expiration dates for all charter schools in the education corporation will align. At this time, the Institute will conduct a full renewal review of all the charter schools in the education corporation.

CHARTER	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Brooklyn Ascend Charter School		Charter Expiration	Alignment Year		
Brownsville Ascend Charter School	Charter Expiration		Alignment Year		
Bushwick Ascend Charter School		Charter Expiration	Alignment Year		
Canarsie Ascend Charter School		Charter Expiration	Alignment Year		
Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School			Alignment Year		
Cypress Hills Ascend Charter School		Charter Expiration	Alignment Year		

1. 1. SUNY Renewal Policies (p. 14) are available on the [Institute’s website](#).

2. The above plan does not guarantee a specific renewal outcome for the education corporation or any of its charters.

## RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

East Brooklyn Ascend Charter School			Alignment Year		
East Flatbush Ascend Charter School			Alignment Year		
Flatbush Ascend Charter School			Alignment Year		



To earn a **Subsequent Full-Term Renewal**, a charter must demonstrate that it has met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.

### REQUIRED FINDINGS

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the charter has met the SUNY Trustees' specific renewal criteria, the Institute makes the following findings required by the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended, the "Act"):

- 1: the charter, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal, meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations;
- 2: the education corporation can demonstrate the ability to operate the charter in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and,
- 3: given the programs it will offer, its structure, and its purpose, approving the charter to operate for another two years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.<sup>3</sup>

3. See New York Education Law § 2852(2).

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brownsville Ascend is an academic success having met or came close to meeting its key Accountability Plan goals. The summary below demonstrates the key findings for the SUNY Trustees and highlights the successes of the charter.

#### FINDINGS & INFORMATION

##### ***Is the charter an academic success?***

Brownsville Ascend is an academic success. Brownsville Ascend has demonstrated success on the New York State Exams and will continue the programmatic elements that have resulted in strong academic achievement across all Ascend Schools. The charter demonstrates strong academic achievement from the Ascend internal benchmark exams which are historically highly predictive of performance on state exams.

##### ***Is the charter an effective, viable organization?***

Brownsville Ascend is an effective, viable organization. The Ascend Schools' board's governance of the education corporation and oversight of the charter management organization and charter leadership provide for clear academic and financial accountability structures. Ascend Learning provides Brownsville Ascend with operational support allowing charter leaders to effectively execute the academic program. In summer 2020, Ascend Schools made changes to its leadership structure in response to the evolving needs of the instructional roles. The role of school director was retitled as principal, and the director of operations became the assistant principal of operations. The positions of dean of instruction and dean of students were combined into the new assistant principal position. These changes ensured a more efficient leadership structure and greater role clarity. The Brownsville Ascend lower and middle schools are managed by distinct leadership teams that coordinate both with each other and the network.

##### ***Is the charter fiscally sound?***

Brownsville Ascend is fiscally sound based on the fiscal evidence collected through a renewal review. The education corporation has met or come close to meeting its fiscal benchmarks throughout the charter term, and presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for Brownsville Ascend's next charter term.

##### ***If the SUNY Trustees renew the education corporation's authority to operate the charter, are its plans for the charter reasonable, feasible, and achievable?***

Ascend Schools' plans for the future of Brownsville Ascend, if renewed, are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. Brownsville Ascend will continue to grow its program in establishing high achievement levels. The charter began a multi-pronged strategy to continue supporting students' learning growth during the 2021-22 school year, and it will continue to do so in the next charter term, if renewed. When filling vacancies, the Ascend Schools board plans to recruit new perspectives and expertise to continue its effective oversight and strong support of the charter's academic performance, organization efficacy, and fiscal soundness.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Based on the Institute's review of the charter's performance as posted over the charter term; a review of the Application for Charter Renewal submitted by the education corporation; a review of academic, organizational, governance, and financial documentation; and a renewal review of the charter's academic program, the Institute finds that the charter meets the required criteria for renewal.

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees grant Brownsville Ascend a subsequent renewal with an expiration date of July 31, 2024 to align with the renewal plan for Ascend Schools.



# DP

DATA PRESENTATION

PAGES: 8-15

AP

ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE

CP

COMPLIANCE  
PERFORMANCE

CS

COMMUNITY  
SATISFACTION

SD

STUDENT  
DEMOGRAPHICS

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

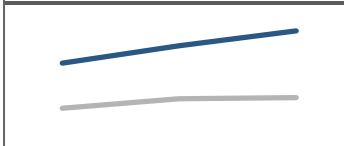
### BROWNSVILLE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

#### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

**District Comparison.** The percentage of students at **the charter** performing at or above proficiency in ELA compared to **the district**.

100  
50  
0

Target: 75



Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2017	3-8	21	44
2018	3-8	26	53
2019	3-8	27	61

**Effect Size.** The chart shows charter's effect size above its predicted level of performance in **ELA** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

2  
1  
0

Target: 0.3



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2017	3-8	0.87
2018	3-8	0.92
2019	3-8	1.20

**Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.** The charter's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **ELA**.

80  
60  
40

Target: 50



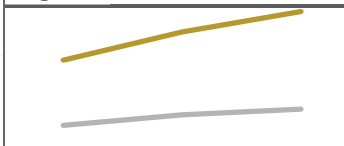
Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2017	52.1
2018	49.5
2019	53.5

#### MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

**District Comparison.** The percentage of students at **the charter** performing at or above proficiency in mathematics compared to **the district**.

100  
50  
0

Target: 75



Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2017	3-8	15	48
2018	3-8	21	62
2019	3-8	23	73

**Effect Size.** The chart shows charter's effect size above its predicted level of performance in **mathematics** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

2  
1  
0

Target: 0.3



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2017	3-8	0.98
2018	3-8	1.42
2019	3-8	1.46

**Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.** The charter's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **mathematics**.

80  
60  
40

Target: 50



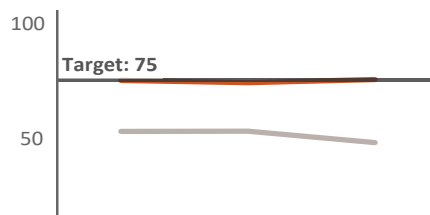
Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2017	59.7
2018	60.2
2019	59.9

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

### BROWNSVILLE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

#### SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

**Science: Comparative Measure.**  
The percentage of students at **the charter** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in science will exceed **the district**.

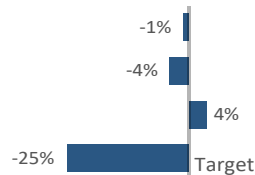


Test Year	District %	Charter %
2017	53	75
2018	53	74
2019	49	76

#### BASELINE INTERNAL ASSESSMENT RESULTS 2020-21 ELA AND MATHEMATICS - INTERNALLY DEVELOPED\*

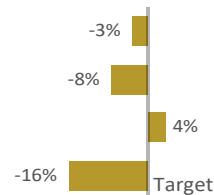
Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results
Growth	All students	0%	358	-1%
Equity 1	Gap closing	0%	165	-4%
Equity 2	Students with disabilities	-2%	78	1%
Absolute	2+ students	75%	648	50%

#### Difference from Target



Measure	Subgroup	Target	Tested	Results
Growth	All students	0%	363	-3%
Equity 1	Gap closing	0%	183	-8%
Equity 2	Students with disabilities	-5%	647	-1%
Absolute	2+ students	75%	647	59%

#### Difference from Target



#### SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE\*\*

	2017	2018	2019
Students with Disabilities Enrollment	132	143	168
Tested on State Exam	84	88	105
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	6.0	12.5	22.9
District Percent Proficient	5.2	8.8	8.6
ELL Enrollment	13	9	4
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	13	7	4
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	38.5	42.9	0.0

\* For description of internal assessments, see section 1A.

\*\* The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and ELLs above is not tied to separate goals in the charter 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".

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



### HAS THE CHARTER MET OR COME CLOSE TO MEETING ITS ACADEMIC ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS?

During its subsequent five year charter term, Brownsville Ascend met or came close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals in ELA, mathematics, and science. In 2018-19, the final year of its Accountability Period with available state test data, the charter exceeded the targets for all comparative and growth measures in all goal areas. During 2019-20 and 2020-21, the charter administered internally developed assessments aligned to the New York State exams to measure student growth and achievement. The charter remained in good standing according to the state's accountability system over the term.

From 2016-17 to 2018-19, Brownsville Ascend posted strong results in ELA and mathematics. Brownsville outperformed the district in both subjects during the three years. In comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students, Brownsville Ascend consistently performed higher than expected in ELA and mathematics.

Notably in 2018-19, 73% of the charter's students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficient in mathematics exceeding the district rate by 50 percentage points. The charter also posted laudable growth in mathematics. During each year of the Accountability Period with available data, the charter posted a mean growth percentile 10 points above the target of 50. In the absence of state exam data suitable for analysis in 2020-21, Brownsville Ascend used its internally developed benchmark exams modeled off the New York State exams to measure student achievement and growth in 3<sup>rd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades. As it has in the past, the charter used these benchmark exam scores to project students' success on the ELA and mathematics exams. Fifty percent of students enrolled for at least their second year met the proficiency target and 59% of students did so in mathematics. Notably, students with disabilities made greater median growth in both ELA and mathematics than their general education peers from 2018-19 to 2020-21.



## COMPLIANCE REPORTING



### HAS THE CHARTER SUBSTANTIALLY COMPLIED WITH APPLICABLE LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS, AND PROVISIONS OF ITS CHARTER?

*The education corporation substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and provisions of its charter. Over Brownsville Ascend's current charter term, the education corporation demonstrates a clear record of compliance including the terms of its charter applicable to Brownsville Ascend.*

#### BROWNSVILLE ASCEND

##### **Annual Reports**

While the education corporation submitted its annual reports to the Institute and NYSED on time and posted the annual reports to its website in accordance with the charter and the Act, the education corporation has not posted to its website the two most recent annual reports. The Institute will ensure compliance prior to the start of the next charter term.

##### **Complaints**

The Institute did not receive any formal complaints regarding this charter during the charter term.

##### **Teacher Certification**

The Act allows charters to hire up to 15 uncertified faculty members contingent upon those teachers meeting certain requirements including: two years of Teach for America experience; three years of teaching experience; status as a higher education professor; exceptional experience in a subject; or teaching science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) or career and technical education courses.

At the time of the visit, Brownsville Ascend was outside the allowable limit of uncertified teachers by 24 instructors. The Institute will work with the charter regarding its plans for coming into compliance..

The education corporation and network offer multiple supports for teachers to become certified. Ascend Schools partners with Relay Graduate School of Education and provides partial tuition reimbursement for teachers pursuing their master's degree or an advanced certificate in special education. Ascend Schools also provides an additional stipend to pursue continuing learning opportunities, credits outside the Relay program, additional certification, and external professional development opportunities. Ascend Schools also partners with the New York City Charter School Center to design an individualized pathway to certification for teachers.

##### **Violations**

The Institute issued a Corrective Action Plan to the education corporation on March 26, 2019 as the facility that houses Brownsville Ascend and other Ascend Schools' charters did not have a valid certificate of occupancy. The education corporation came into compliance on March 28, 2019.

## COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

To report on parent satisfaction with the charter's program, the Institute used satisfaction survey data and data regarding persistence in enrollment.

### PARENT SATISFACTION: SURVEY RESULTS

RESPONSE RATE	OVERALL SATISFACTION	TRUST	EFFECTIVE CHARTER LEADERSHIP	STRONG FAMILY COMMUNITY TIES
49%	93%	95%	95%	92%

#### Parent Survey Data

The Institute compiled data from the New York City Department of Education ("NYCDOE") annual family survey from the 2019-20 school year for Brownsville Ascend. The NYCDOE and the Institute note that survey participation was much lower than previous years due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Institute also recognizes that in addition to the NYCDOE survey, schools had multiple touchpoints and methods of gathering feedback from families regarding the quality of hybrid programming as well as understanding families' health and safety concerns. In 2019-20, 49% of families who received the NYCDOE survey responded. Of the families who responded, 93% expressed satisfaction with the charter.

#### Public Comments

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the district in which the charter school is located regarding the charter's Application for Charter Renewal. The full text of any written comments received from the district appears below, which also includes a summary of any public comments.

The New York City Department of Education held its required hearing on Brownsville Ascend Charter School's renewal application on October 19, 2021 by videoconference. Nine people spoke in support of the application. Charter leaders spoke to the impact of a Kindergarten – 12<sup>th</sup> program in one location and the trust it has built with families as evidenced by its family survey. Staff spoke of academic and food supports provided during the pandemic and the high levels of student' engagement as evidenced by continued high attendance rates. In addition to its robust reading and math programs teachers spoke to the value of the charter's restorative justice model in meeting students' social emotional needs and supports for families through that model. Teachers spoke to feeling valued due to continual supports and check-ins received from leadership and coaches. Parents spoke to how the charter builds students' self-esteem and creates a home away from home while focusing on academics and helping students become critical thinkers. No one spoke in opposition.

**Persistence in Enrollment** An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2020-21, 91% of Brownsville Ascend students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data from previous years of the charter term is available in student demographics below.

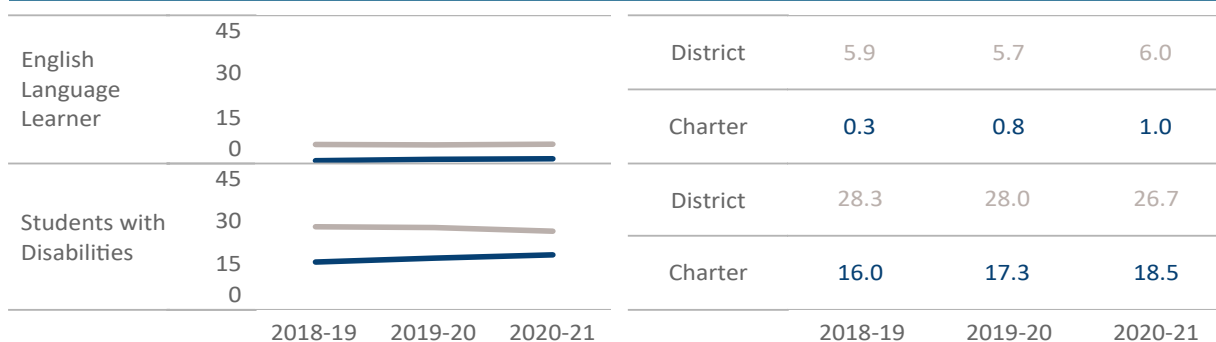
*The Institute derived the statistical information on persistence in enrollment from its database. No comparative data from the New York City Department of Education (the "NYCDOE") or the New York State Education Department ("NYSED") is available to the Institute to provide either district or statewide context.*

## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

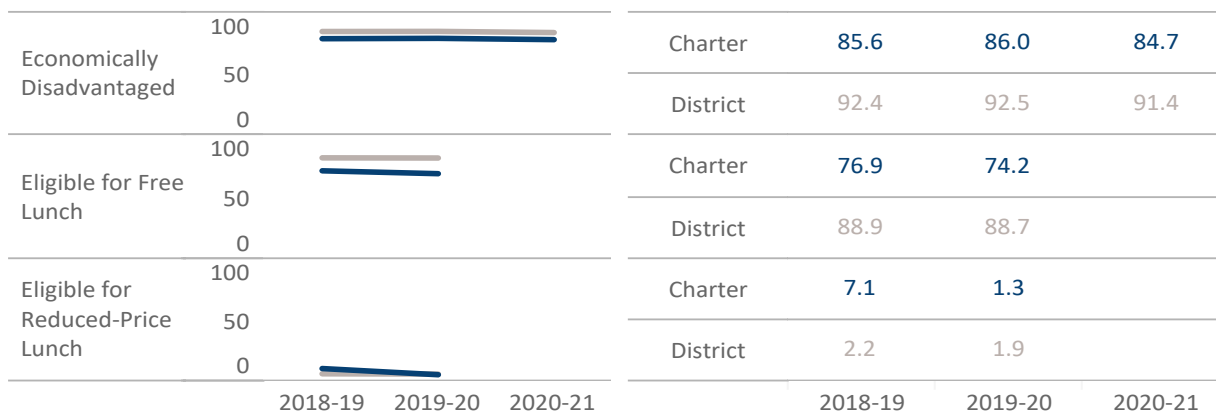
### Brownsville Ascend Charter School

Brooklyn CSD 23

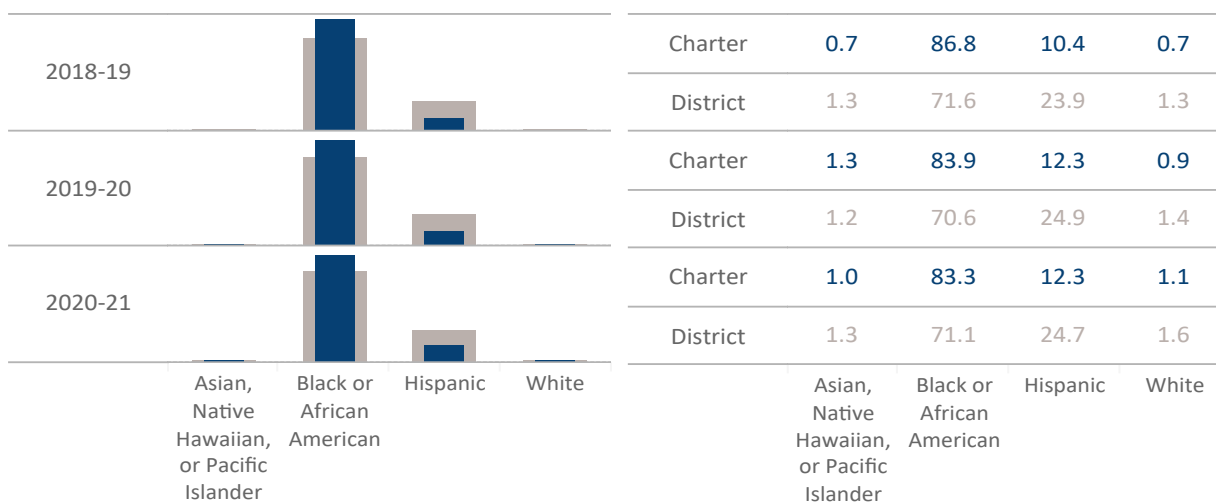
#### Student Demographics: Special Populations



#### Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



#### Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity

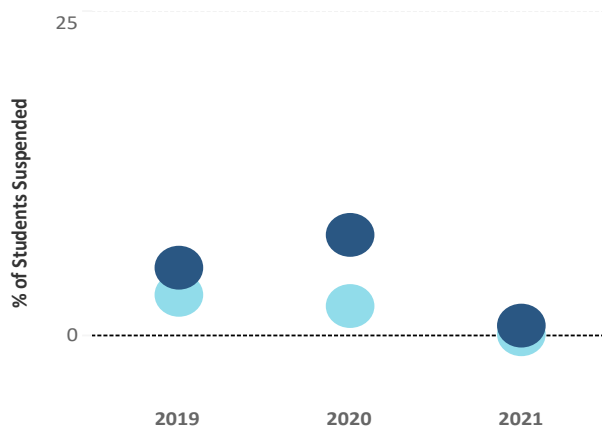


\* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED except for the charter's 2020-21 ELL enrollment which reflects data reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute.



## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

### Brownsville Ascend Charter School



### Brooklyn CSD 23

ISS Rate OSS Rate

2019	3.1	5.2
2020	2.3	7.8
2021	0.1	0.8

Data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by NYCDOE: the total 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 charter each year

2019	2020	2021
0	0	0

### Brownsville Ascend Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2020-21

			Target	Charter School
enrollment	economically disadvantaged	<div><div></div></div>	92.9	84.7
	English language learners	<div><div></div></div>	5.3	1.0
	students with disabilities	<div><div></div></div>	20.5	18.4
retention	economically disadvantaged	<div><div></div></div>	86.6	86.7
	English language learners	<div><div></div></div>	88.5	92.9
	students with disabilities	<div><div></div></div>	87.9	89.4

\* Data reported in these charts reflect information reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute.

## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

### ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a charter must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it will put in place to meet or exceed SUNY's enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners ("ELLs"), and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch ("FRPL") program. The Institute examines each charter's progress toward meeting or coming close to meeting its targets over the charter term as well as the efforts it has and will put in place to meet or continue to meet those targets.

Brownsville Ascend makes good faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets. The charter, with support from the network, conducts the following recruitment efforts:

- sharing information about the charter at neighborhood locations and organizations that serve a large number of economically disadvantaged children, students with disabilities, and ELLs within the community including public housing units, doctors' offices, and intervention service providers;
- updating the charter's website and social media platforms regularly including paid targeted social media advertising;
- advertising on Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) buses, subways, billboards, and in local publications;
- hiring additional recruitment team staff members including more bilingual recruiters to conduct outreach in languages other than English;
- increasing the volume of marketing materials and translating more materials into Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Bengali languages, and increasing the emphasis in marketing materials on the charter's mission and philosophy, as well as the robust services available for at-risk student populations.

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

*Ascend Charter Schools is fiscally sound as is Brownsville Ascend based on the Institute's review of the fiscal evidence collected through the renewal review. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard presents color-coded tables and charts indicating that Brownsville Ascend and the education corporation have demonstrated fiscal soundness over the majority of the charter term.<sup>5</sup> The fiscal dashboard for Brownsville Ascend and the merged education corporation can be found at the end of this section. The discussion that follows relates mainly to the Ascend Charter Schools education corporation because a charter is not a legally distinct fiscal entity.*



Ascend Schools currently contracts with Ascend Learning, which supports the charters in the areas of curriculum development, student assessment, recruitment of prospective students and staff members, professional developments, legal compliance, external relations, financial management, and technology support under the terms of a current management contract that reflects a 13.25% management fee, which is negotiated on an annual basis.

Brownsville Ascend opened in 2009-10 under authorization by the NYC Chancellor, and then merged under the SUNY Trustees' authorization in 2016-17 and is combined with eight operating charters within the education corporation. In addition to analyzing the soundness of the individual charter schools, the Institute analyzed the soundness of the not-for-profit education corporation granted the authority to operate the charter and finds it too has adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. The fiscal dashboards reflect the combined entity as fiscally adequate.



### DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION OPERATE THE CHARTER PURSUANT TO A FISCAL PLAN WITH REALISTIC BUDGETS THAT THE EDUCATION CORPORATION MONITORS AND ADJUSTS WHEN APPROPRIATE?

***The charter operates pursuant to a long-range financial plan in which the education corporation creates realistic budgets that it monitors and adjusts when appropriate. The following elements are generally present:***

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The charter has clear budgetary objectives for the charter and clear budget preparation procedures.	+
Board members, charter management, and staff members contribute to the budget process, as appropriate.	+

5. The U.S. Department of Education has established fiscal criteria for certain ratios or information with high – medium – low categories, represented in the table as green – gray – red. The categories generally correspond to levels of fiscal risk, but must be viewed in the context of each education corporation and the general type or category of charter.

"+" : This indicator is generally present.

"-" : This indicator is generally not present.

"P" : The education corporation is progressing toward this indicator being present.

"N/A" : This indicator is not applicable.

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

The education corporation frequently compares its long-range fiscal plan for the charter to actual progress and adjusts it to meet changing conditions.

+

The education corporation routinely analyzes charter budget variances for the charter; the education corporation board addresses material variances and makes necessary revisions.

+

Actual charter expenses are equal to, or less than, actual charter revenue with no material exceptions.

P

Since opening, the charter has reported a surplus in each year. However, the merged education corporation has reported both surpluses and deficits within that timeframe. The merged education corporation did report a surplus in the most recent fiscal year.

## DOES THE CHARTER MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES?

*The education corporation maintains appropriate internal controls and procedures, which are implemented by the charter. The following elements are generally present:*

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation has a history of sound fiscal policies, procedures and practices, and maintains appropriate internal controls at the charter.	+
The most recent education corporation audit report, which covers fiscal operations for the charter, was free of any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls.	+
The education corporation reviews and updates its Financial Policies and Procedures manual, which covers the charter, on a regular basis.	APRIL 2021

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### DOES THE CHARTER COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

*The education corporation complies with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and NYSED with required financial reports that are on time, complete and follow generally accepted accounting principles. The following reports, which include information about the charter, are generally filed in a timely, accurate, and complete manner:*

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
Annual financial statement audit reports including federal Single Audit report, if applicable.	+
Annual budgets.	+
Un-audited quarterly reports of income, expenses, and enrollment.	P
Bi-monthly enrollment reports to the sending districts and if applicable, to NYSED including proper documentation regarding the level of special education services provided to students.	+
Grant expenditure reports.	+

Unaudited financial statements provided by the education corporation have not always aligned with the final audited numbers at the end of the year. This suggests the education corporation has needed significant adjustments to its unaudited financial statement numbers. The situation has improved within the last year and appears to be corrected going forward.

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### DOES THE CHARTER MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE STABLE OPERATIONS?

*The education corporation maintains adequate financial resources for the charter to ensure stable operations. Critical financial needs of the charter are not dependent on variable income (grants, donations and fundraising). The following elements are generally present:*

CURRENT	EVIDENT
The education corporation maintains sufficient cash on hand to pay current bills of the charter and those that are due shortly.	+
The education corporation maintains adequate liquid reserves to fund expenses in the event of income loss (generally 30 days).	+
The education corporation prepares and monitors cash flow projections for the charter.	+
If the education corporation includes philanthropy in its budget for the charter, it monitors progress toward its development goals on a periodic basis.	N/A
If necessary, the education corporation pursues district state aid intercepts with NYSED to ensure adequate per pupil funding.	N/A
The education corporation accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of the charter's operating budget for the upcoming year.	+
The education corporation is in compliance with all loan covenants related to the charter.	+

Since opening, the charter has reported operating surpluses in each year contributing to \$8.4 million in combined net assets of the merged education corporation. The education corporation benefits from a combined balance sheet, which is a combination of individual charters' assets and liabilities. To track the operations of any individual charter within a merged education corporation, the Institute tracks each charter's revenues and expenses to report operating surpluses or deficits. While the merged education corporation had reported an overall net deficit for most of the charter term, a surplus of \$13.5 million in the most recent fiscal year 2020-21 significantly improved the net position and cash on hand for the education corporation. As of June 30, 2021, the education corporation reported 2.7 months of cash on hand to pay liabilities due shortly. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard ratios analysis shows the improved fiscal stability of the merged education corporation and the upward trajectory. Ascend Schools has funded and maintained the required amount in a separate escrow account in case of dissolution of any of the operating Ascend Schools charters.

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### BROWNSVILLE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

NOTE: Effective 2016-17, the charter merged finances with the education corporation, "Ascend Charter Schools." Accordingly, see the education corporation report containing the "Balance Sheet" for all charters merged into the education corporation.

#### CHARTER INFORMATION

##### BALANCE SHEET

###### Assets

###### Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents - **GRAPH 1**  
Grants and Contracts Receivable  
Accounts Receivable  
Prepaid Expenses  
Contributions and Other Receivables

###### Total Current Assets - **GRAPH 1**

Property, Building and Equipment, net  
Other Assets

###### Total Assets - **GRAPH 1**

###### Liabilities and Net Assets

###### Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses  
Accrued Payroll and Benefits  
Deferred Revenue  
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt  
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable  
Other

###### Total Current Liabilities - **GRAPH 1**

Deferred Rent/Lease Liability  
All other L-T debt and notes payable, net current maturities

###### Total Liabilities - **GRAPH 1**

###### Net Assets

Without Donor Restrictions  
With Donor Restrictions

###### Total Net Assets

###### Total Liabilities and Net Assets

##### ACTIVITIES

###### Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment  
Students with Disabilities

###### Grants and Contracts

State and local  
Federal - Title and IDEA  
Federal - Other  
Other  
NYC DoE Rental Assistance  
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program

###### Total Operating Revenue

###### Expenses

Regular Education  
SPED  
Other

###### Total Program Services

Management and General  
Fundraising

###### Total Expenses - **GRAPHS 2, 3 & 4**

###### Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations

###### Support and Other Revenue

Contributions  
Fundraising  
Miscellaneous Income  
Net assets released from restriction

###### Total Support and Other Revenue

###### Total Unrestricted Revenue

###### Total Temporally Restricted Revenue

###### Total Revenue - **GRAPHS 2 & 3**

###### Change in Net Assets

###### Net Assets - Beginning of Year - **GRAPH 2**

Prior Year Adjustment(s)

###### Net Assets - End of Year - **GRAPH 2**

Opened 2009-10 (Merged from NYCDOE to SUNY 2016-17)					
MERGED	MERGED	MERGED	MERGED	MERGED	
2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-

-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-

-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-

14,751,450	15,099,788	16,362,716	17,127,301	16,768,452
1,365,373	1,958,489	2,338,471	2,356,689	2,272,331

80,195	79,800	87,741	90,680	42,806
182,411	691,464	566,512	582,740	612,443
943,924	43,930	47,562	241,401	530,460
-	-	213,849	-	55,181
848,213	1,465,193	1,616,124	1,676,363	1,351,271
-	475,034	506,632	369,039	-
18,171,566	19,813,698	21,739,607	22,444,212	21,632,944

11,115,309	12,486,566	12,529,925	16,651,919	11,932,596
2,928,200	3,854,153	4,270,191	2,273,301	3,581,931
-	-	-	-	-
14,043,509	16,340,719	16,800,116	18,925,220	15,514,527
2,988,911	3,487,274	4,473,272	2,781,475	3,387,868
-	-	-	-	-
17,032,420	19,827,993	21,273,388	21,706,695	18,902,395
1,139,146	(14,295)	466,219	737,517	2,730,549

1,306	-	-	6,320	221,205
3,651	-	8,333	2,204	-
1,852	15,160	2,335	78,960	3,241
-	-	-	-	-
6,809	15,160	10,668	87,485	224,446

18,178,375	19,828,858	21,750,275	22,531,697	21,857,390
-	-	-	-	-
18,178,375	19,828,858	21,750,275	22,531,697	21,857,390

1,145,955	865	476,887	825,002	2,954,995
1,438,970	2,584,924	2,585,789	3,062,676	3,887,778
-	-	-	-	-
2,584,925	2,585,789	3,062,676	3,887,678	6,842,773

# FISCAL ANALYSIS

## BROWNSVILLE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

NOTE: Effective 2016-17, the charter merged finances with the education corporation, "Ascend Charter Schools." Accordingly, see the education corporation report containing the "Balance Sheet" for all charters merged into the education corporation.

### CHARTER INFORMATION - (Continued)

#### Functional Expense Breakdown

Personnel Service  
Administrative Staff Personnel  
Instructional Personnel  
Non-Instructional Personnel  
Personnel Services (Combined)  
**Total Salaries and Staff**  
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes  
Retirement  
Management Company Fees  
Building and Land Rent / Lease / Facility Financing  
Staff Development  
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services  
Marketing / Recruitment  
Student Supplies, Materials & Services  
Depreciation  
Other

2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
1,910,241	2,166,449	2,683,493	2,660,432	1,481,043
5,790,315	6,638,871	6,988,822	7,795,954	7,248,307
472,826	426,750	451,040	481,153	237,867
-	-	-	-	-
8,173,382	9,232,070	10,123,355	10,937,540	8,967,217
1,544,550	1,954,927	2,163,123	667,533	1,389,430
-	79,161	108,548	1,451,651	684,346
2,160,207	2,372,791	2,593,224	2,794,190	2,721,230
2,475,779	2,773,430	2,820,842	2,634,428	2,448,818
94,056	185,134	133,428	125,408	38,405
170,389	365,266	682,193	544,046	514,385
42,164	41,403	48,736	25,656	4,049
336,264	507,047	498,535	403,419	175,409
315,371	297,107	381,554	584,016	784,341
1,720,258	2,019,657	1,719,850	1,538,807	1,174,765
17,032,420	19,827,993	21,273,388	21,706,694	18,902,395

Total Expenses

### CHARTER ANALYSIS

#### ENROLLMENT

Original Chartered Enrollment  
Final Chartered Enrollment (includes any revisions)  
Actual Enrollment - **GRAPH 4**  
Chartered Grades  
Final Chartered Grades (includes any revisions)

2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
1,004	1,076	1,150	1,244	1,336
989	1,028	1,020	1,020	1,020
1,023	1,013	1,035	1,050	1,043
K-8	K-9	K-10	K-11	K-11
-	K-8	K-8	K-8	K-8

#### Primary School District: NYC CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)  
Increase over prior year

-	14,027	14,527	15,307	16,150
0.0%	100.0%	3.4%	5.1%	5.2%

#### PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

##### Revenue

Operating  
Other Revenue and Support

**TOTAL - GRAPH 3**

17,763	19,559	21,004	21,375	20,741
7	15	10	83	215
17,770	19,574	21,015	21,459	20,956

##### Expenses

Program Services  
Management and General, Fundraising

**TOTAL - GRAPH 3**

% of Program Services  
% of Management and Other

13,728	16,131	16,232	18,024	14,875
2,922	3,443	4,322	2,649	3,248
16,649	19,574	20,554	20,673	18,123
82.5%	82.4%	79.0%	87.2%	82.1%
17.5%	17.6%	21.0%	12.8%	17.9%
6.7%	0.0%	2.2%	3.8%	15.6%
13.6%	14.0%	13.0%	11.7%	11.3%

% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - **GRAPH 5**

% of Revenue Expended on Facilities

#### Student to Faculty Ratio

11.5	10.8	10.9	10.5	11.1
------	------	------	------	------

#### Faculty to Admin Ratio

3.3	3.8	2.6	4.2	7.2
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

#### Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

Score  
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 /  
Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0

0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

#### Working Capital - GRAPH 7

Net Working Capital  
As % of Unrestricted Revenue  
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score  
Risk (Low  $\geq 3.0$  / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)  
Rating (Excellent  $\geq 3.0$  / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)

0	0	0	0	0
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

#### Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score  
Risk (Low  $\geq 2.5$  / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)  
Rating (Excellent  $\geq 2.5$  / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)

0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

#### Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

Score  
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)  
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)

0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

#### Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

Score  
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)  
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)

0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (COMBINED)

#### CHARTER INFORMATION

##### BALANCE SHEET

###### Assets

###### Current Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents - **GRAPH 1**  
Grants and Contracts Receivable  
Accounts Receivable  
Prepaid Expenses  
Contributions and Other Receivables

###### Total Current Assets - **GRAPH 1**

Property, Building and Equipment, net  
Other Assets

###### Total Assets - **GRAPH 1**

###### Liabilities and Net Assets

###### Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses  
Accrued Payroll and Benefits  
Deferred Revenue  
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt  
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable  
Other

###### Total Current Liabilities - **GRAPH 1**

Deferred Rent/Lease Liability  
All other L-T debt and notes payable, net current maturities

###### Total Liabilities - **GRAPH 1**

###### Net Assets

Without Donor Restrictions  
With Donor Restrictions

###### Total Net Assets

###### Total Liabilities and Net Assets

##### ACTIVITIES

###### Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment  
Students with Disabilities

###### Grants and Contracts

State and local  
Federal - Title and IDEA  
Federal - Other  
Other  
NYC DoE Rental Assistance  
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program

###### Total Operating Revenue

###### Expenses

Regular Education  
SPED  
Other

###### Total Program Services

Management and General  
Fundraising

###### Total Expenses - **GRAPHS 2, 3 & 4**

###### Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations

###### Support and Other Revenue

Contributions  
Fundraising  
Miscellaneous Income  
Net assets released from restriction

###### Total Support and Other Revenue

###### Total Unrestricted Revenue

###### Total Temporally Restricted Revenue

###### Total Revenue - **GRAPHS 2 & 3**

###### Change in Net Assets

###### Net Assets - Beginning of Year - **GRAPH 2**

Prior Year Adjustment(s)

###### Net Assets - End of Year - **GRAPH 2**

MERGED	MERGED	MERGED	MERGED	MERGED
2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
5,696,217	9,309,933	12,535,301	13,336,023	26,040,233
3,121,856	4,013,967	1,242,978	-	-
-	-	-	2,993,848	3,465,648
519,892	251,548	262,154	938,908	851,105
-	-	-	-	510,686
9,337,965	13,575,448	14,040,433	17,268,779	30,867,672
23,198,550	8,122,089	9,331,930	11,775,583	13,981,838
339,542	548,284	576,504	332,014	332,545
32,876,057	22,245,821	23,948,867	29,376,376	45,182,055

1,200,165	1,990,824	2,082,487	1,116,986	1,902,515
2,252,678	2,629,264	3,256,437	5,116,070	3,899,174
109,840	90,245	93,700	184,742	34,342
501,773	-	-	120,742	128,508
81,250	-	-	1,787,896	1,517,581
1,626,649	2,702,253	676,740	-	191,028
5,772,355	7,412,586	6,109,364	8,326,436	7,673,148
13,129,534	14,799,329	18,290,324	22,997,739	26,030,153
14,402,081	947,317	947,317	3,119,172	3,021,858
33,303,970	23,159,232	25,347,005	34,443,347	36,725,159

(427,913)	(913,411)	(1,648,337)	(5,066,971)	8,456,896
-	-	250,199	-	-
(427,913)	(913,411)	(1,398,138)	(5,066,971)	8,456,896
32,876,057	22,245,821	23,948,867	29,376,376	45,182,055

57,478,105	65,029,759	77,585,870	88,629,845	96,388,761
5,779,185	8,046,299	8,995,134	9,603,674	10,943,087
298,512	335,223	410,557	465,111	362,049
867,713	2,833,841	2,455,856	2,876,485	3,184,492
3,355,124	277,631	572,055	2,197,511	4,306,574
-	-	1,828,712	-	225,082
3,742,361	6,807,861	9,620,147	12,056,551	13,124,973
-	1,573,765	2,007,129	1,452,323	97,175
71,521,000	84,904,379	103,475,460	117,281,500	128,632,193

44,816,219	52,901,912	64,169,383	81,771,046	76,900,751
14,237,571	18,292,081	20,165,857	22,897,295	18,256,984
-	-	-	-	-
59,053,790	71,193,993	84,335,240	104,668,342	95,157,735
12,129,337	14,760,654	19,806,649	16,820,500	21,389,766
-	-	-	-	-
71,183,127	85,954,647	104,141,889	121,488,841	116,547,501
337,873	(1,050,268)	(666,429)	(4,207,341)	12,084,692

148,838	51,163	3,663	10,595	1,258,500
23,719	-	14,452	5,514	-
179,838	513,607	163,587	522,527	180,675
-	-	-	-	-
352,395	564,770	181,702	538,637	1,439,175

71,873,395	85,469,149	103,657,162	117,820,137	130,071,368
-	-	-	-	-
71,873,395	85,469,149	103,657,162	117,820,137	130,071,368

690,268	(485,498)	(484,727)	(3,668,705)	13,523,867
(1,118,181)	(427,913)	(913,411)	(1,398,138)	(5,066,971)
-	-	-	-	-
(427,913)	(913,411)	(1,398,138)	(5,066,843)	8,456,896

## FISCAL ANALYSIS

### ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (COMBINED)

#### CHARTER INFORMATION - (Continued)

##### Functional Expense Breakdown

Personnel Service
Administrative Staff Personnel
Instructional Personnel
Non-Instructional Personnel
Personnel Services (Combined)
<b>Total Salaries and Staff</b>
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes
Retirement
Management Company Fees
Building and Land Rent / Lease / Facility Financing
Staff Development
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services
Marketing / Recruitment
Student Supplies, Materials & Services
Depreciation
Other

2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
8,448,425	9,728,340	12,333,437	14,592,704	10,267,346
23,374,054	27,717,943	34,004,507	40,740,326	39,823,197
848,258	873,720	1,166,954	1,311,509	881,136
-	-	-	-	-
32,670,737	38,320,003	47,504,898	56,644,539	50,971,679
5,939,052	7,894,044	9,285,243	4,447,731	7,326,375
-	244,404	364,870	7,102,661	3,632,331
8,527,882	10,157,734	12,233,826	14,549,441	16,041,302
11,582,039	15,410,219	19,085,111	23,684,568	25,524,215
482,613	773,367	871,402	808,215	239,507
1,796,763	2,179,939	2,688,672	2,302,394	1,984,467
226,599	337,945	380,568	219,057	90,389
1,543,520	2,079,030	2,605,574	2,301,709	1,483,056
2,064,964	1,372,122	1,640,163	2,151,464	3,210,863
6,348,956	7,185,841	7,481,561	7,277,061	6,043,317
71,183,125	85,954,648	104,141,889	121,488,840	116,547,501

Total Expenses

#### CHARTER ANALYSIS

##### ENROLLMENT

Original Chartered Enrollment
Final Chartered Enrollment (includes any revisions)
Actual Enrollment - <b>GRAPH 4</b>
Chartered Grades
Final Chartered Grades (includes any revisions)

2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
4,101	4,565	5,433	6,104	7,110
3,848	4,322	4,857	5,341	5,733
3,976	4,370	4,917	5,426	5,972
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-

##### Primary School District:

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)  
Increase over prior year

-	-	-	-	-
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

##### PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

###### Revenue

Operating
Other Revenue and Support

**TOTAL - GRAPH 3**

17,988	19,429	21,044	21,615	21,539
89	129	37	99	241
18,077	19,558	21,081	21,714	21,780

###### Expenses

Program Services
Management and General, Fundraising

**TOTAL - GRAPH 3**

% of Program Services
% of Management and Other

% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - **GRAPH 5**

% of Revenue Expended on Facilities

14,853	16,292	17,152	19,290	15,934
3,051	3,378	4,028	3,100	3,582
17,903	19,669	21,180	22,390	19,516
83.0%	82.8%	81.0%	86.2%	81.6%
17.0%	17.2%	19.0%	13.8%	18.4%
1.0%	-0.6%	-0.5%	-3.0%	11.6%
16.2%	18.2%	18.4%	20.2%	19.8%

##### Student to Faculty Ratio

11.2	10.6	10.4	10.0	10.8
------	------	------	------	------

##### Faculty to Admin Ratio

3.4	3.8	3.4	3.8	6.6
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

##### Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - **GRAPH 6**

Score
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 /
Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0

0.2	0.0	(0.0)	(0.5)	1.3
Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Adequate

##### Working Capital - **GRAPH 7**

Net Working Capital
As % of Unrestricted Revenue
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score
Risk (Low ≥ 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)
Rating (Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)

3,565,610	6,162,862	7,931,069	8,942,343	23,194,524
5.0%	7.2%	7.7%	7.6%	17.8%
1.6	1.8	2.3	2.1	4.0
MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
Good	Good	Good	Good	Excellent

##### Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score
Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)
Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)

1.5	1.8	2.3	2.0	3.9
MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
Good	Good	Good	Good	Excellent

##### Debt to Asset Ratio - **GRAPH 7**

Score
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)

1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2	0.8
HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good

##### Months of Cash - **GRAPH 8**

Score
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)

1.0	1.3	1.4	1.3	2.7
MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Good	Good	Good	Good	Good

## FUTURE PLANS



### IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE EDUCATION CORPORATION'S AUTHORITY TO OPERATE THE CHARTER, ARE ITS PLANS REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?

*Brownsville Ascend is an academic success supported by an effective, viable organization. Both the charter and education corporation are fiscally sound and present sound financial plans. As such, the plan for Ascend Schools to operate Brownsville Ascend for the next charter term are reasonable, feasible, and achievable.*

#### BROWNSVILLE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

**Plans for the Charter's Structure.** The education corporation has provided all of the key structural elements for a charter renewal and those elements are reasonable, feasible, and achievable.

**Plans for the Educational Program.** Brownsville Ascend plans to continue to implement the same core elements of its educational program that enabled the charter to meet its key Accountability Plan goals in the current charter term. These elements are likely to enable the charter to meet or exceed its academic goals in the next charter term.

**Plans for Board Oversight & Governance.** Current board members express interest in continuing to serve Ascend Schools in the next charter term. The board is looking to fill vacancies with new members who are Ascend Schools parents or have education experience.

**Fiscal & Facility Plans.** Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, including a review of the 5-year financial plan, Ascend Schools presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term including education corporation and charter budgets that are feasible and achievable. The education corporation intends to maintain its contractual relationship with the network. The Institute has reviewed the proposed terms of such contract and will review and approve the final contract, and any other network contracts, when executed.

Brownsville Ascend will continue to operate its program in the existing facility that is privately leased. The facility provides the necessary amenities to operate the program sufficiently for the foreseeable future.

	CURRENT	END OF NEXT CHARTER TERM
<b>Enrollment</b>	1,020	1,024
<b>Grade Span</b>	K-8	K-8
<b>Teaching Staff</b>	84	88
<b>Days of Instruction</b>	185	185



Brownsville Ascend

# Ax

## APPENDICES

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## ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### CHAIR

Stephanie Mauterstock

### TREASURERS

Glenn Hopps

Shelly Cleary

### TRUSTEES

Nadine Sylvester

Stanley Taylor

Tracy Dunbar

Oral Walcott

Kwaku Andoh

Emmanuel Fordjour

Amanda Craft

## CHARTER LEADERS

### ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

*Billie Quigley (2018-19 to Present - July 2020)*

*Erica Murphy (2013-14 to 2017-18)*

*Erin Swan (January 2013 to June 2013)*

*Kelly Bowers (September 2012 to December 2012)*

*Kelly Bowers, Co-Director (2011-12)*

*Angela Beal, Co-Director (2011-12)*

*M Keli Swearingen (2009-10 to 2010-11)*

### MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

*Lauren Kinrich, (2019-20 to Present)*

*Emily Fernandez (2014-15 to 2018-19)*

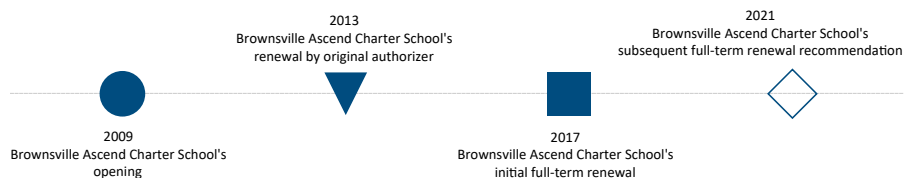
## CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS\*

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2017-18	1,028	1,013	99%	K-8
2018-19	1,020	1,035	101%	K-8
2019-20	1,020	1,050	103%	K-8
2020-21	1,020	1,043	102%	K-8
2021-22	1,020	907	89%	K-8

\* Data in the Charter Characteristics chart reflects the most recently submitted actual enrollment from the charter's quarterly budget submissions to the Institute and reflects the final enrollment for the school year. For the current year, the Institute reports the most recently available actual enrollment information.

## APPENDIX A: CHARTER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

### TIMELINE OF CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL



### CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
<b>2016-17</b>	Initial Renewal Visit	November 2-4, 2016
<b>2021-22</b>	Renewal Review	September 15, 2021

### CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL REVIEW

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
<b>September 15, 2021</b>	Vickie Masséus	School Evaluation Analyst

## BENCHMARK SUMMARY

### ASSESSMENT

Ascend Schools has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning. The charters administer a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments in all subject areas including the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (“F&P”) and a variety of network-developed unit tests and assessments. Charter school leaders use assessment data to identify student strengths and areas of development and to create goals for growth, promotion, and matriculation. Teachers and leaders review and analyze assessment data to promote regular instructional adjustments that drive student achievement and mastery of content. Teachers access comprehensive data reports to identify trends in student performance and develop effective strategies to meet students’ academic needs. Teachers’ consistent review of student work, achievement data, and trends informs purposeful lesson planning and student feedback. Charter leaders use student performance data to inform ongoing professional development plans and coaching strategies. Charter leaders also use assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness. The charter regularly communicates with parents and guardians about students’ progress.

### CURRICULUM

Ascend Schools has a curricular framework with student performance expectations that provides a fixed, underlying structure aligned to state standards and across grades. The curriculum supports teachers in instructional planning and includes significant opportunities to develop student mastery of standards in all subject areas. For ELA, elementary and middle school program teachers use a balanced literacy approach, which includes FUNdations, interactive read alouds, guided reading, and shared text. Each of these components allow students multiple opportunities to practice their reading skills in different contexts, moving them closer to reading proficiency. Ascend Schools’ writing curriculum, which is based on Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, is genre-based and rooted in frequent writing exercises. For mathematics, Ascend draws from the EngageNY curriculum and a variety of Common Core aligned resources. To target concepts to students’ instructional level, Ascend Schools uses the TEACH Culturally Responsive Mathematics (“CRMT”) framework across the Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum and a guided mathematics component for all middle school program grades. Teachers and the network curriculum team work together continually to monitor the effectiveness of the academic program.

### PEDAGOGY

High quality instruction is evident across all Ascend Schools. Teachers communicate clear learning objectives while delivering lessons that align to the education corporation’s curriculum and build on students’ previous skills and knowledge. Teachers utilize effective checks of progress toward mastery and frequently use the data collected to adjust instruction and support student learning. Teachers regularly challenge students with questions and activities that develop depth of understanding and higher order thinking and problem solving skills. Ascend Schools teachers establish and maintain classroom environments with a sense of urgency for learning and a consistent focus on academic achievement.



### INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Ascend Schools have systems and structures that enable consistently strong instructional leadership across all charters. All charters' faculty participate in intensive and ongoing professional development through pre-service training (two weeks for instructional and operations leaders, followed by two weeks of summer institute for teachers). All teachers participate in professional development days and after school sessions on Fridays, teacher planning and development ("TPD") sessions, coaching, and ongoing modeling. The chief schools officer and three network managing director positions make up the network charters' line management structure and provide charters with extensive coaching and professional development designed to accelerate teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The school level instructional leadership team includes the principal and assistant principals, including the assistant principal of operations. The principal is the school's head instructional leader and is responsible for managing and coaching the assistant principals. The assistant principals are responsible for teaching, learning, and academic data at the school. This includes coaching and developing the teaching staff, and managing successful implementation of the Ascend instructional model. Assistant principals support teachers in implementing effective instructional techniques, coach teachers in using the Responsive Classroom model to build strong student culture, and maintain a safe environment with strong procedures throughout the school. The student services coordinator is responsible for overseeing that students with disabilities fully participate in the educational program and receive supports and services mandated by their Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs"). Leadership team members have clear roles and responsibilities, which provide clear reporting structures for teachers, and allow instructional staff to focus on teaching and learning.

### AT-RISK PROGRAM

Ascend Schools has programs in place to meet the needs of students struggling academically, students with disabilities, and ELLs. Each charter uses clear procedures for identifying students with disabilities, ELLs, and students struggling academically. Each charter delivers a sufficient program to meet the academic needs of its students with disabilities and students struggling academically. Each charter implements adequate programs to meet the needs of its students with disabilities. Each charter meets the needs of students with IEPs through integrated co-teaching ("ICT") classrooms and with targeted special education teacher support services ("SETSS") while also delivering a sufficient intervention program for students struggling academically. In the lower grades, ELA and mathematics intervention teachers provide push-in supports in ICT rooms and pull-out supports for students not receiving ICT. Intervention teachers deliver Leveled Literacy Intervention ("LLI") in ELA and skill building based on the Ascend Schools curriculum for mathematics, supplementing instruction with content tailored to specific students. In the upper grades, general education teachers deliver daily intervention in ELA during independent reading time and two weekly pull-out sessions for mathematics. Ascend Schools provides sufficient training and professional development to all teachers on identifying and supporting students with disabilities and students struggling academically. Teachers receive targeted opportunities that address meeting the needs of students with disabilities and students struggling academically, such as trainings on LLI, STEP assessment analysis, and differentiation.



### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

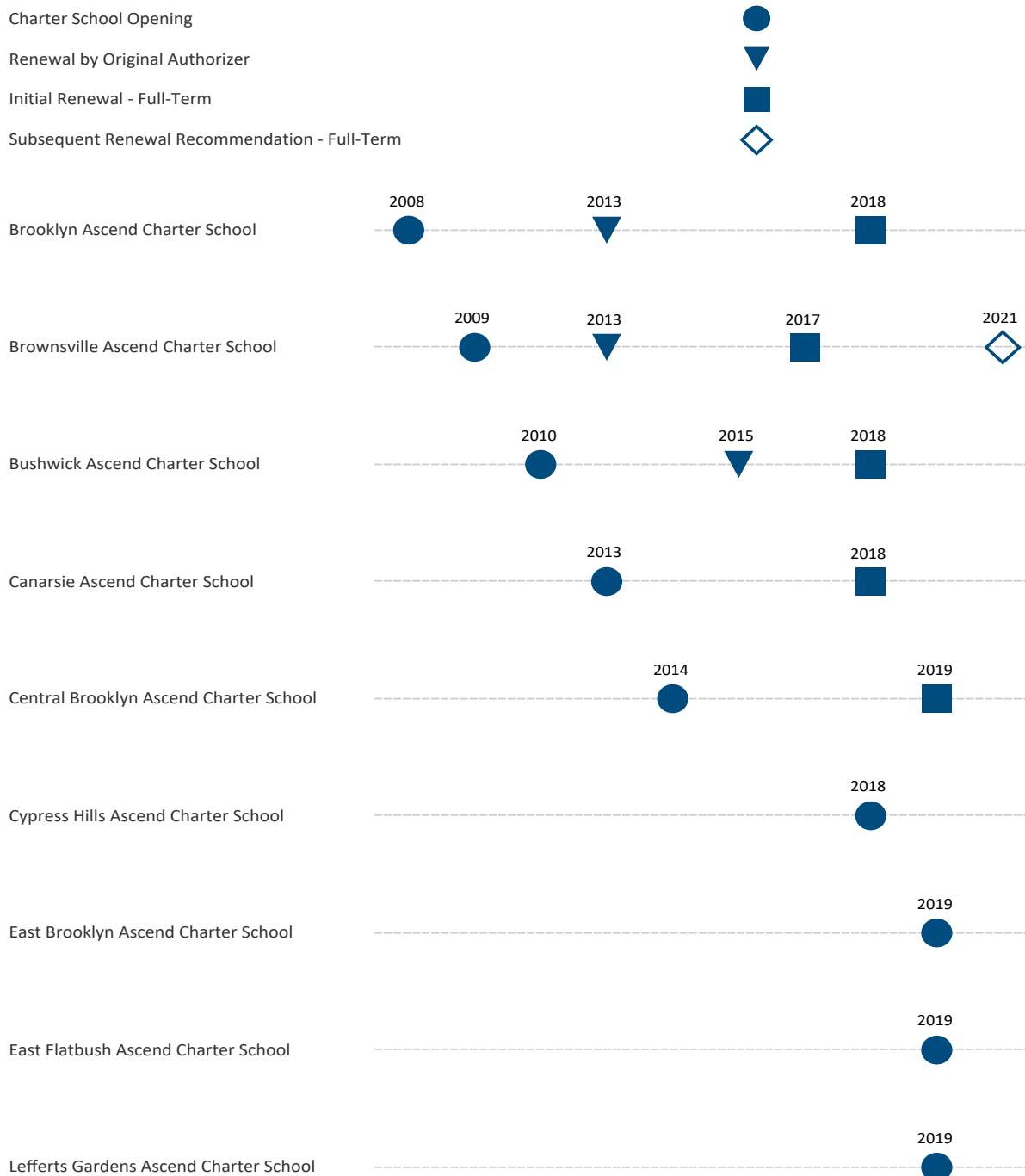
Ascend Schools establishes an organizational structure that works effectively to deliver the educational program. The network has clearly defined roles within its organization, which allows network- and charter-based instructional leaders to focus on student learning and teacher support. The organizational design has network managing directors of schools managing Ascend Schools' principals. The network provides differentiated coaching and development to assistant principals, the secondary instructional leaders, and school-based assistant principals of operations. Ascend has sufficient resources to support the educational model. The network provides quality school facilities, sufficient materials for students, funding for charterwide staffing, and staff and student recruitment support from the network office. The network finance team meets monthly with charter directors and directors of operations to review finance reports and develop the charters' annual budgets. The network provides charter leaders autonomy in this process while also providing the appropriate network oversight.

The network regularly monitors and evaluates the educational program and makes necessary changes. During the school year, instructional staff members provide curricular feedback regularly via surveys, town halls, and TPD meetings. Together with the network curriculum and instruction team ("CIT"), the network charters team oversees any necessary programmatic changes that need to be implemented during the school year. The network charters team works with the network curriculum team to review the ongoing feedback and student data, and the curriculum team makes any necessary curricular changes during the summer for leaders to implement the following academic year, which the network rolls out to staff when they return prior to the upcoming school year.

### BOARD OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE

The Ascend Schools board works effectively to achieve each charter's Accountability Plan goals. The board has a clear understanding of its role and has established committees, systems, and procedures. Board members bring an array of talents and expertise in education, finance, insurance, social work, and law and provide thoughtful oversight to the charters, ensuring the stability and soundness of the charters' academics, organization, and finances. Board members are knowledgeable of Brownsville Ascend's academic progress and areas for growth, and set measurable goals to improve performance. The board is clear about each charter's Accountability Plan goals and receives a clear dashboard to monitor the performance of each charter. Board members plan to build a pipeline of potential trustees who are Ascend parents or who have academic expertise.

## EDUCATION CORPORATION TIMELINE OF CHARTER RENEWAL



## EDUCATION CORPORATION CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS

CHARTER	LOCAL DISTRICT	CO-LOCATED	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADE SPAN
Brooklyn Ascend Charter School	Brooklyn CSD 18	Private	1,528	K-12
Brownsville Ascend Charter School	Brooklyn CSD 23	Private	1,020	K-8
Bushwick Ascend Charter School	Brooklyn CSD 32	Private	897	K-8
Canarsie Ascend Charter School	Brooklyn CSD 18	Private	992	K-8
Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School	Brooklyn CSD 22	Private	747	K-8
Cypress Hills Ascend Charter School	Brooklyn CSD 19	Private	378	K-4
East Brooklyn Ascend Charter School	Brooklyn CSD 19	Private	108	K-2
East Flatbush Ascend Charter School	Brooklyn CSD 18	Private	189	K-3
Flatbush Ascend Charter School	Brooklyn CSD 17	Private	243	K-3

## APPENDIX C: EDUCATION CORPORATION OVERVIEW

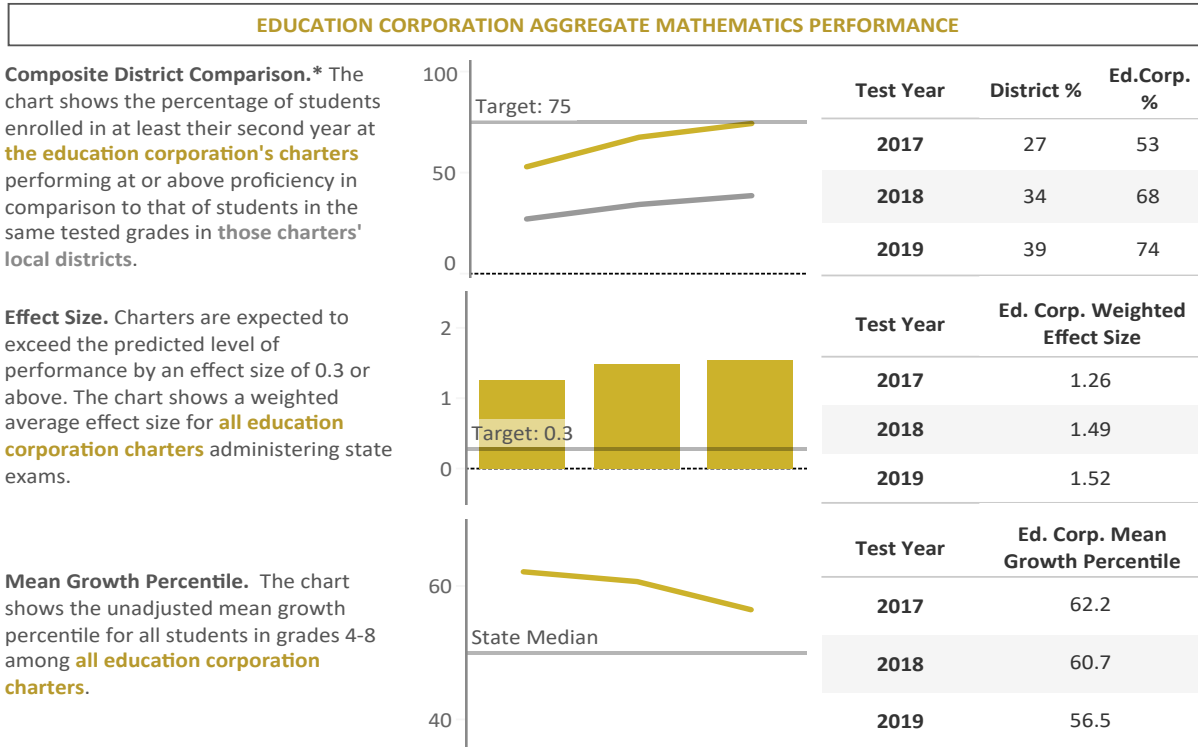
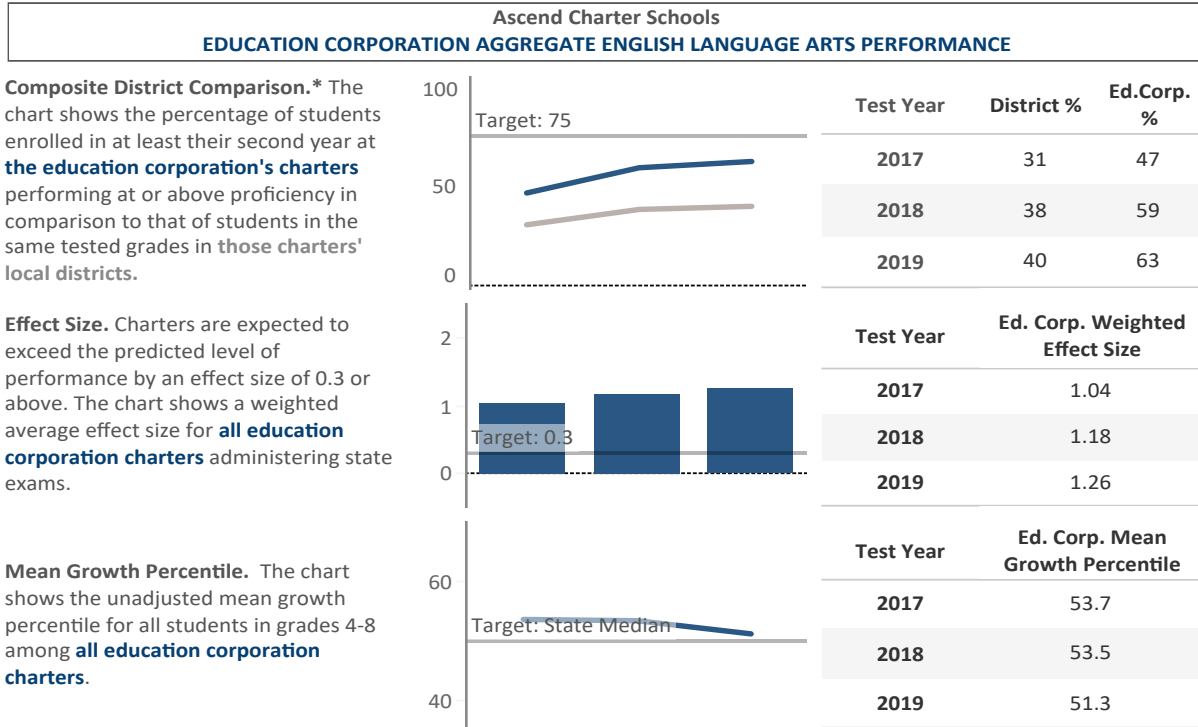
### Ascend Charter Schools Aggregate Education Corporation Enrollment and Persistence



\* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED except for the charters' 2020-21 ELL enrollment which reflects data reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute.

## APPENDIX C: EDUCATION CORPORATION OVERVIEW

### ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS: AGGREGATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS PERFORMANCE FOR ALL CHARTERS

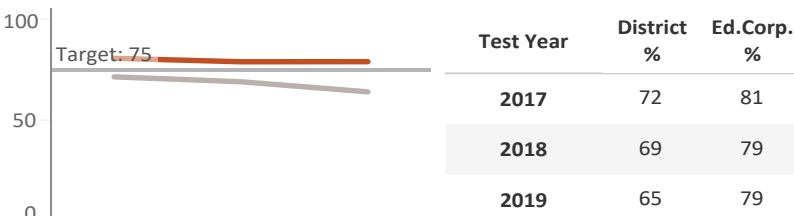


\* The composite district comparison is a weighted proficiency rate including all comparison grades from Districts/New York City CSDs in which a charter in the education corporation is located. The data reflect results for all charters in the education corporation that have produced New York State exam results.

## APPENDIX C: EDUCATION CORPORATION OVERVIEW

### Ascend Charter Schools EDUCATION CORPORATION AGGREGATE SCIENCE PERFORMANCE

**Composite District Comparison.** The chart shows the percentage of students enrolled in at least their second year at the education corporation performing at or above proficiency in comparison to that of students in the same tested grades in those charters' local districts.

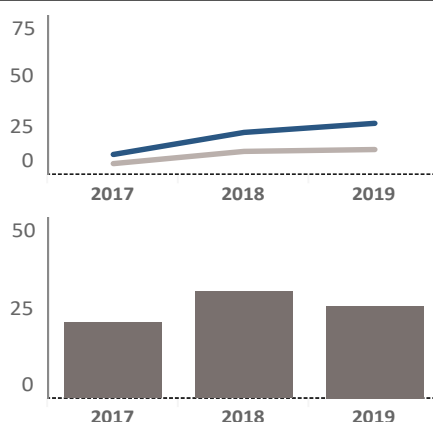


### BASELINE INTERNAL ASSESSMENT RESULTS 2020-21 ELA AND MATHEMATICS - INTERNALLY DEVELOPED\*

Measure	Subgroup	Brooklyn		Brownsville		Bushwick		Canasie		Central		Cyrpress	
		Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results
Growth	All students	0.0%	-0.1%	0.0%	-1.2%	0.0%	-0.8%	0.0%	-2.1%	0.0%	-1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Equity 1	Gap closing	0.0%	-2.5%	0.0%	-3.9%	0.0%	-2.8%	0.0%	-4.4%	0.0%	-2.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Equity 2	Students with disabilities	-1.0%	1.7%	-2.2%	1.4%	-1.7%	-0.2%	-2.3%	-0.4%	-1.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Absolute	2+ students	75.0%	52.0%	75.0%	50.0%	75.0%	54.0%	75.0%	60.0%	75.0%	47.0%	75.0%	36.0%

Measure	Subgroup	Brooklyn		Brownsville		Bushwick		Canasie		Central		Cyrpress	
		Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results	Target	Results
Growth	All students	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	-3.3%	0.0%	-2.9%	0.0%	-0.8%	0.0%	-0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Equity 1	Gap closing	0.0%	-4.1%	0.0%	-7.5%	0.0%	-10.5%	0.0%	-9.9%	0.0%	-3.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Equity 2	Students with disabilities	0.3%	2.4%	-4.6%	-1.0%	-3.4%	-1.9%	-0.9%	1.3%	-0.6%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Absolute	2+ students	75.0%	69.0%	75.0%	59.0%	75.0%	66.0%	75.0%	71.0%	75.0%	59.0%	75.0%	55.0%

### AGGREGATE PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND ELLS FOR EDUCATION CORPORATION\*\*



Ed. Corp. Enrollment Receiving Mandated Academic Services	526	654	756
Tested on State Exam	307	367	429
Ed. Corp. Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	10.4	21.5	26.1
Composite District Percent Proficient	5.8	12.0	12.9
Ed. Corp. ELL Enrollment	205	193	215
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	202	186	204
Ed. Corp. Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress on NYSESLAT	20.8	29.6	25.5

\* For description of internal assessments, see section 1A.

\*\*The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and ELLs above is not tied to separate goals in a charter'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.

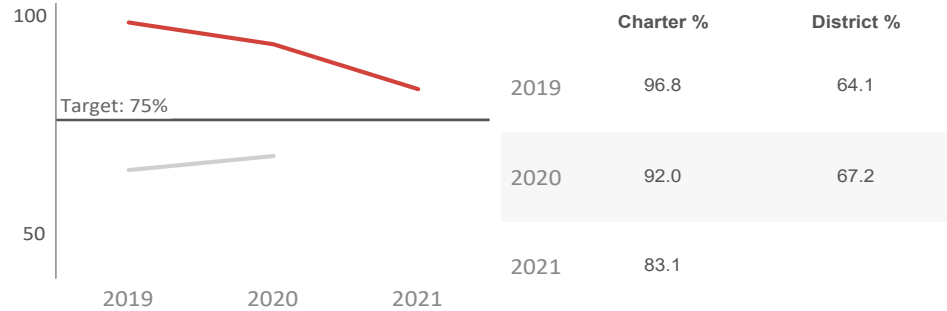
## APPENDIX C: EDUCATION CORPORATION OVERVIEW

### Brooklyn Ascend

Brooklyn CSD 18

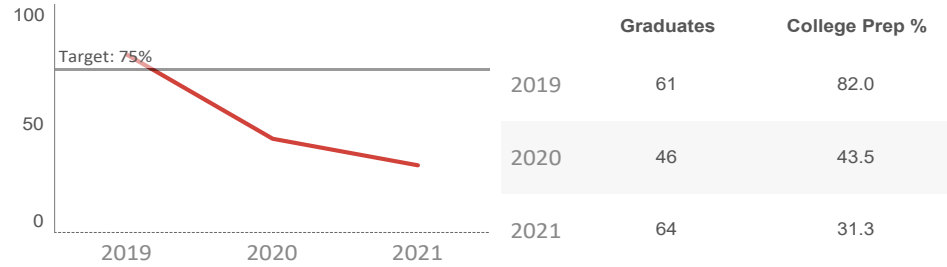
#### HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE

**Comparative Measure: Graduation Rate.** Each year, the percentage of **the charter school's students graduating** after completion of their fourth year will exceed the **District**.



#### COLLEGE PREPARATION AND ATTAINMENT

**College Preparation Measure:** Each year, 75 percent of **graduates** will demonstrate college preparation through one or more indicators including passing an AP exam or earning an advanced diploma.

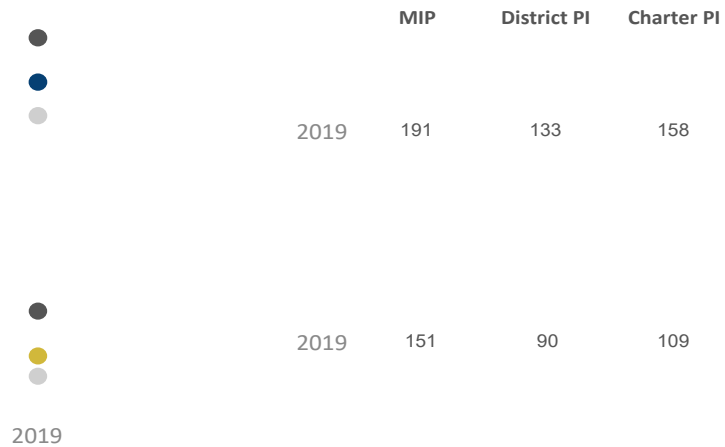


**College Attainment Measure: Matriculation into College.** Each year, 75 percent of **graduating students** will enroll in a college or university.

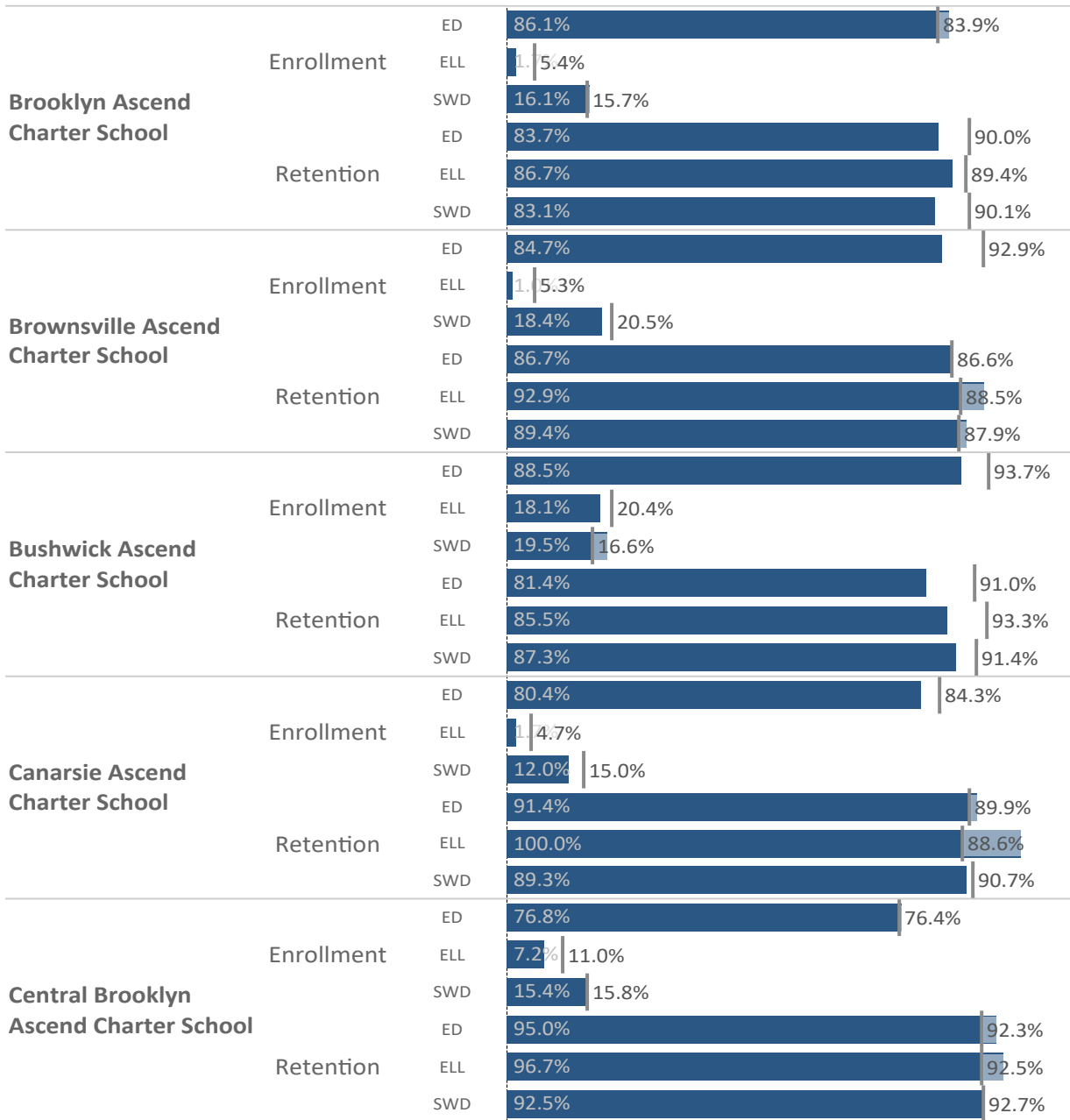


#### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS

**Comparative and Absolute Measure: District Comparison.** Each year, the charter school's **ELA Accountability Performance Index** and the **math PI** will exceed the **district's PI** and the **state's MIP**.



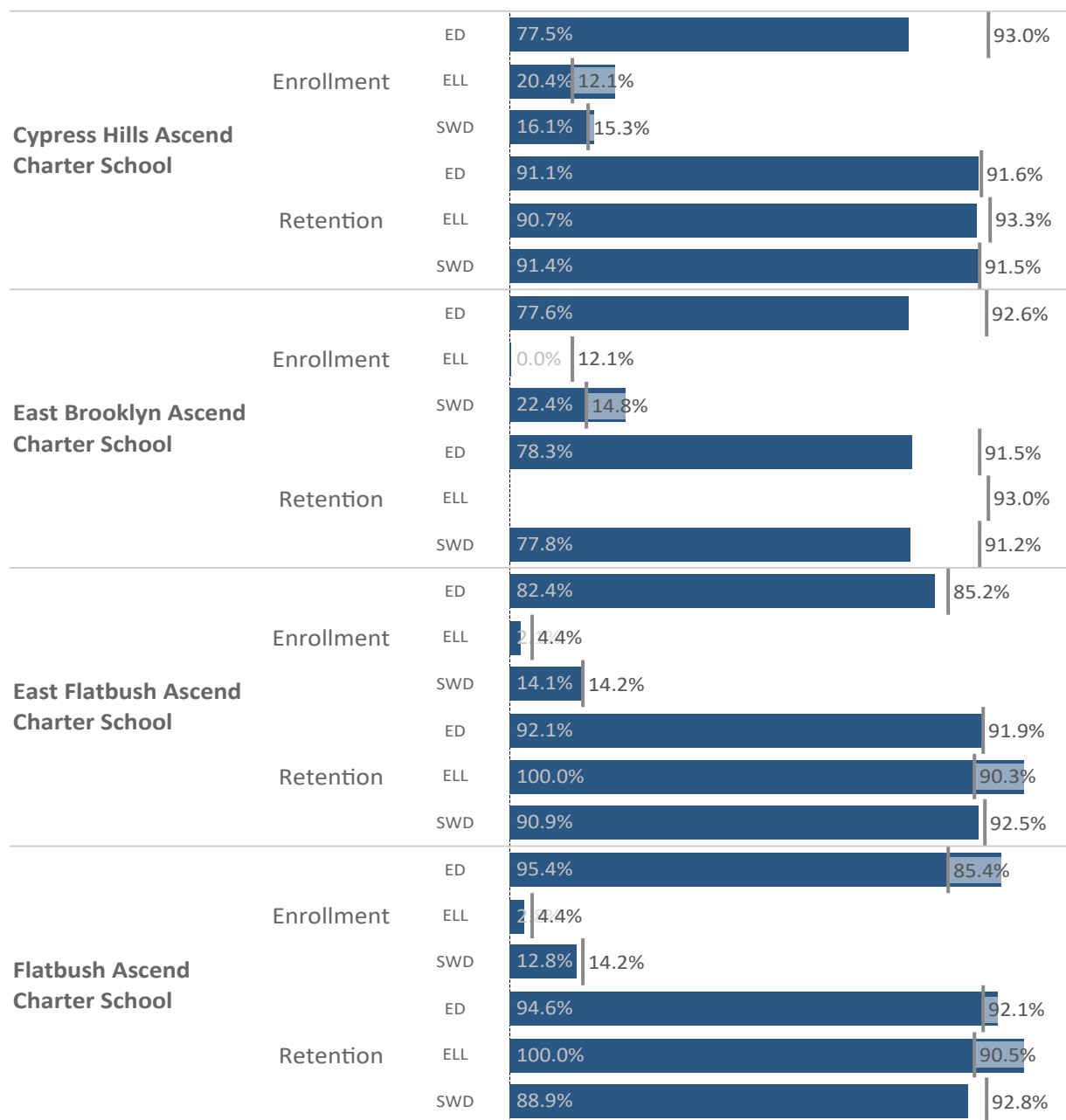
### ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS



The chart illustrates the **current enrollment and retention percentages** against the **enrollment and retention targets** for each operating charter in the education corporation. As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a charter must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it has, and will, put in place to meet or exceed SUNY's enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, and FRPL students. This analysis is based on the most recent enrollment and retention data supplied to the Institute by the network.

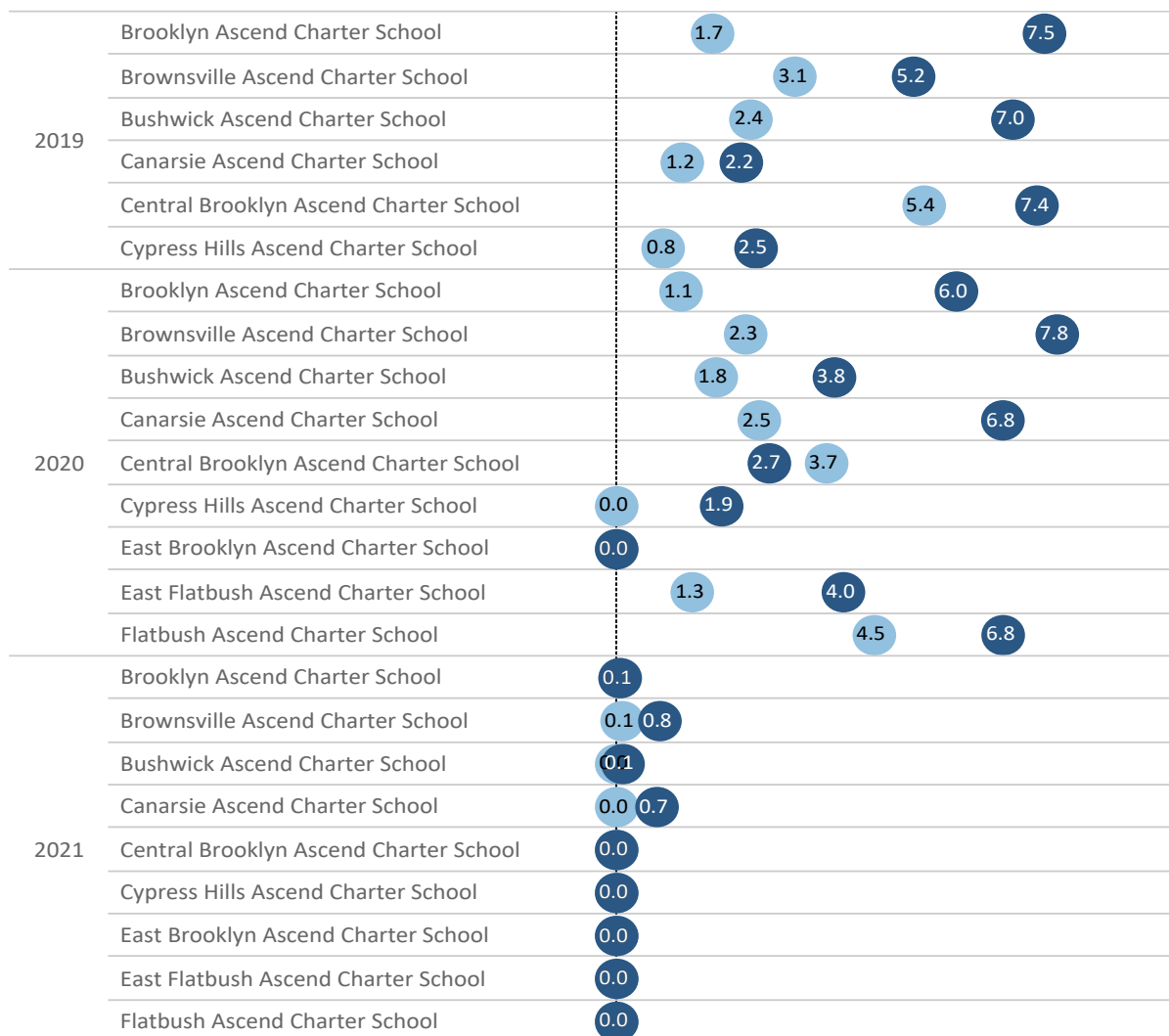


## ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS



The chart illustrates the **current enrollment and retention percentages** against the **enrollment and retention targets** for each operating charter in the education corporation. As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a charter must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it has, and will, put in place to meet or exceed SUNY's enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, and FRPL students. This analysis is based on the most recent enrollment and retention data supplied to the Institute by the network.

### Suspensions: Ascend Charter Schools's out of school suspension rate and in school suspension rate.



% of students suspended

Data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by the NYCDOE: the total the number of students receiving an out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

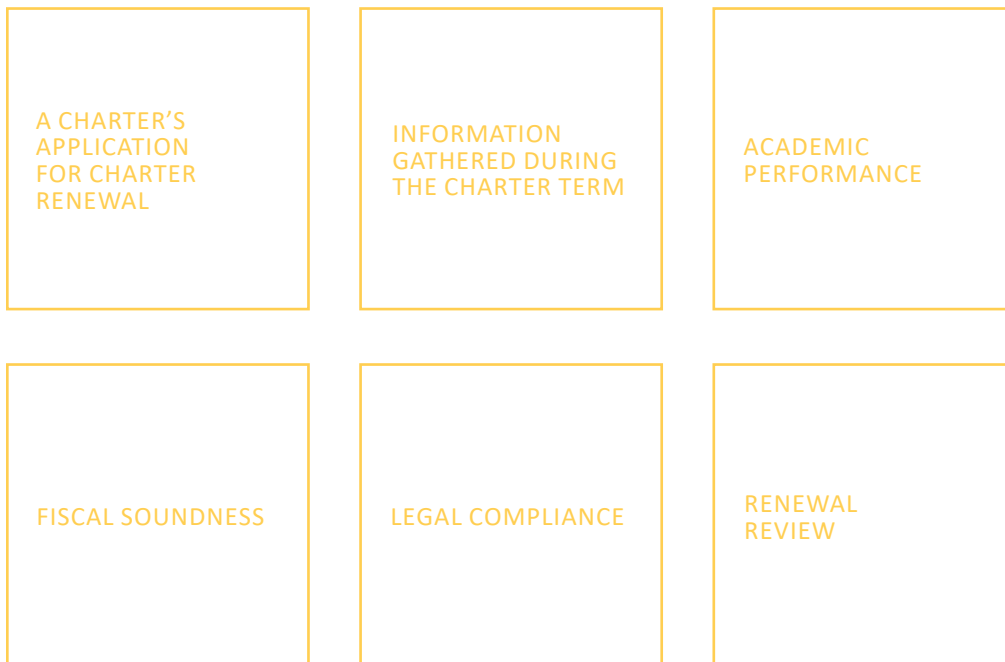
During the most recent school year, the education corporation expelled 0 students.

The sections below contain general information about the SUNY Trustees’ and Institute’s approach to renewal.

#### REPORT FORMAT

This report is the primary means by which the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) transmits to the State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) its findings and recommendations regarding a charter’s Application for Charter Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of a charter’s case for renewal. The Institute has created and issued this report pursuant to the ***Policies for the Renewal of Not-For-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York*** (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”).<sup>1</sup>

#### THE INSTITUTE MAKES ALL RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON



***Most importantly, the Institute analyzes the charter’s record of academic performance and the extent to which it has met its academic Accountability Plan goals.***

1. Revised September 4, 2013 and available on the [Institute’s website](#).

## REPORT FORMAT

This renewal recommendation report compiles evidence using the **State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks** (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”),<sup>2</sup> which specify in detail what a successful charter should be able to demonstrate at the time of the renewal review. The Institute uses the four interconnected renewal questions below for framing benchmark statements to determine if a charter has made an adequate case for renewal.

## RENEWAL QUESTIONS



**IS THE CHARTER AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?**

**IS THE CHARTER AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?**

**IS THE CHARTER FISCALLY SOUND?**

**IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE EDUCATION CORPORATION’S  
AUTHORITY TO OPERATE THE CHARTER, ARE ITS PLANS REASONABLE,  
FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?**

This report contains appendices that provide additional statistical and organizationally related information including a statistical charter overview, copies of any school district comments on the Application for Charter Renewal, and the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard information for the charter. If applicable, the appendices also include additional information about the education corporation, its charters, and student achievement of those charters.



Additional information about the SUNY renewal process and an overview of the requirements for renewal under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended, the “Act”) are available on the [Institute’s website](#).

2. Version 5.0, May 2012, are available on the [Institute’s website](#).



## IS THE CHARTER AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS? THE INFORMATION BELOW HIGHLIGHTS THE INSTITUTE'S AND SUNY TRUSTEES' APPROACH TO ACCOUNTABILITY PLANS FOR EACH SUNY AUTHORIZED CHARTER.

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,<sup>3</sup> the charter developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals for performance in the key subjects of ELA and mathematics, as well as science and the federal Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA"). High school Accountability Plans also include goals for High School Graduation, College Preparation, and Social Studies. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. The Institute examines results for all required Accountability Plan measures to determine goal attainment. The Act requires charters be held "accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results"<sup>4</sup> and states the educational programs at a charter school must "meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents"<sup>5</sup> for other public schools. SUNY's required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by statewide assessments. Historically, SUNY's required measures include measures that present charters':

ABSOLUTE PERFORMANCE, I.E., WHAT PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SCORE AT A CERTAIN PROFICIENCY ON STATE EXAMS?

COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE, I.E., HOW DID THE CHARTER DO AS COMPARED TO SCHOOLS IN THE DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS THAT SERVE SIMILAR POPULATIONS OF ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS?

GROWTH PERFORMANCE, I.E., HOW MUCH DID THE CHARTER GROW STUDENT PERFORMANCE AS COMPARED TO THE GROWTH OF SIMILARLY SITUATED STUDENTS?

Absolute, comparative, and growth achievement provide a basis for triangulating performance within each academic goal area. Furthermore, every SUNY authorized charter may propose additional, mission aligned goals and measures of success when crafting its Accountability Plan. The final Accountability Plan adopted by the education corporation's board and approved by the Institute is included in the charter agreement and frames the analysis of the charter's student achievement results.

The Institute consistently emphasizes comparative and growth performance over absolute measures in its analysis of goal attainment. Nevertheless, the Institute analyzes every measure included in a charter's Accountability Plan to determine its level of academic success including the extent to which each charter has established and maintained a record of high performance and demonstrated progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals throughout the charter term. Whether or not a charter includes additional measures in its Accountability Plan, the Institute considers all available evidence of charter performance at the time of renewal.

3. 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 charter 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. In this renewal report, the Institute uses "charter term" and "Accountability Period" interchangeably.

4. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

5. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

State assessment data in ELA, mathematics, and science in 3<sup>rd</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> grade form the basis of data required to analyze the accountability measures for elementary and middle schools. These data were not available in 2019-20 following the state's cancellation of all state exams during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although charters participated in state assessments in ELA and mathematics in 2020-21, the participation rates that year were inconsistent. The resulting data are not sufficiently reliable or credible for cogent analyses of charter academic performance. In response, the Institute provided all SUNY authorized charters a framework for the analysis of norm-referenced and internally developed exam data. To every extent possible, the Institute attempted to maintain a consistent framework of examining absolute, comparative, and growth performance. During 2019-20 and 2020-21, charters reported data from a variety of norm-referenced and internally developed assessments to demonstrate student academic success. This renewal report contemplates charter performance during the pandemic through the lenses of absolute and growth performance on norm-referenced and internally developed ELA, mathematics, and science assessments along with high school completion and college readiness data.



**Charter Schools Institute**  
The State University of New York