

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT
**CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM
CHARTER SCHOOL**

VISIT DATE: MARCH 10-11, 2020

REPORT DATE: JUNE 26, 2020

SUNY Charter Schools Institute

SUNY Plaza

353 Broadway

Albany, NY 12246

518.445.4250

www.newyorkcharters.org



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. In the top left corner, there are two erasers, one orange and one blue. In the bottom right corner, there are several paper clips in various colors: orange, green, pink, blue, and black.

CONTENTS

2

Introduction & School Background

6

Academic Performance

11

Benchmark Analysis

Appendices

A: School Overview

B: School Performance Summaries

C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

INTRODUCTION & SCHOOL BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school visit on March 10-11, 2020 to Capital Preparatory Harlem Charter School (“Capital Prep Harlem”). 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 (e.g., 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 and historical information about the school, as well as background information on the conduct of the visit. Together this information puts the visit in the context of the school’s current charter cycle. Appendix B displays the performance summary of the school’s performance on the required measures under its ELA and mathematics goals of its Accountability Plan. Appendix C displays the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

This report does not contain an overall rating that would specify the school’s prospects for renewal. Rather, it serves as a summary of the school’s program 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.

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

INTRODUCTION & SCHOOL BACKGROUND

SCHOOL BACKGROUND

The Board of Regents approved the original charter for Capital Prep Harlem on November 18, 2014. The school opened its doors in the fall of 2016 and is in its fourth year of operation. The school is currently authorized to serve 500 students in 6th – 10th grade during the 2019-20 school year. The school is located in privately leased space at 1 East 104th Street, New York, NY in New York City Community School District (“CSD” or the “district”) 4.

The Act allows authorizers to grant charter school education corporations the authority to operate more than one school under Education Law § 2853(1)(b-1) through the approval of new schools as set forth in the Act, or through merger with one or more education corporations. Capital Preparatory Schools, Incorporated (“Capital Prep, Inc.” or the “network”), a Connecticut not-for-profit corporation, is currently authorized to operate two charter schools in New York state. The SUNY Trustees approved the original charter for Capital Preparatory Bronx Charter School (“Capital Prep Bronx”) on October 29, 2018. The school is due to open in the fall of 2020. Effective July 1, 2019 Capital Prep Harlem merged into Capital Prep Bronx, with Capital Prep Bronx remaining as the surviving education corporation under the name Capital Prep Charter Schools NY (“Capital Prep NY”).

Capital Prep, Inc., provides academic, operational, facilities, and back office assistance to Capital Prep NY. The schools use the network’s curricular and assessment materials. The network is responsible for managing and evaluating the performance of each school and school leader. Capital Prep, Inc., also operates one charter school in Connecticut.

Capital Prep Harlem’s mission states:



The mission of Capital Preparatory Schools is to provide historically disadvantaged students with the college and career readiness skills needed to become responsible and engaged citizens for social justice.

Capital Preparatory Magnet School (“Capital Prep Magnet School”) opened its doors in Hartford, CT in 2005 and continues to operate today. The Capital Prep Magnet School boasted a 98% four year graduation rate in 2017-18, the most recent year of available data, and has had 100% of its graduates accepted to college. In the three most recent years of available data, its college matriculation rate has been higher than the local district and that of the state of Connecticut. The success of this original school spurred the creation of Capital Prep, Inc., in

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

INTRODUCTION & SCHOOL BACKGROUND

2012, and ultimately the opening in 2015 of the network's second school, Capital Preparatory Harbor School ("Capital Prep Harbor"), in Bridgeport, CT, which was the network's first charter school. It remains open and currently serves 630 students in Kindergarten – 12th grade. Similar to Capital Prep Magnet School, at Capital Prep Harbor, the school's college matriculation rate for the one year data is available was higher than the state's and local district's public school students.

Capital Prep Harlem, modeled after Capital Prep Harbor, is developing itself as an effective school program. The school holds true to the Capital Prep, Inc., values by attempting to provide a rigorous college preparatory curriculum, a variety of athletic programs, and student supports. The school's social justice programming encompasses some of its strongest curriculum, instruction, and provision of student supports in the school. Capital Prep Harlem is developing its advisory program to meet its intention of fostering strong relationships between students and their learning environment. Leaders are intentionally improving the advisory curriculum to ensure students develop habits of social justice citizens through the school's learner expectation roles of collaborator, problem solver, researcher, empathetic citizen, and pillar of knowledge.

For the first three years of the charter term, the school maintained a consistent leadership team. At the start of the 2019-20 school year, several of the school leaders transitioned into network roles resulting in leadership team members who were new to their role at the school. Early in the 2019-20 school year, the principal and several instructional leaders and teachers left the school. In the midst of the changes, the school leaders, network, and board recognized that the school lacked systems to effectively onboard new staff members and students, as well as hold all staff members accountable for implementing the school's model.

Despite the disruptions in leadership and staffing, the network and school-based leadership team work together to respond to data and make changes to the academic program. At the time of the publishing of this report, the network had hired a high school principal for the Harlem site and transitioned the interim principal to the middle school principal role. The board, network, and school recognize a need to improve student achievement and formalize, communicate, and train staff members on an interconnected set of systems to support teaching and learning. Network and school leaders are beginning to implement these changes, and the school continues to update the Institute regularly about how the changes are progressing.

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

INTRODUCTION & SCHOOL BACKGROUND

CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLANS

The Institute visited Capital Prep Harlem before the COVID-19 facility closure period in mid-March. The analysis contained in this report is a reflection of the academic program in place before the transition to remote learning. During the facility closure period, the Institute has been in touch with all SUNY authorized schools to understand any successes, concerns, and other issues to support the transition to remote learning. Each school submitted a Continuity of Learning Plan to the Institute.

Capital Prep Harlem's facility closure started on March 16, 2020, and school leaders worked quickly to develop a plan, communicate with families and students, and distribute technology to students. The school submitted and discussed its initial plan with the Institute during this week and included information on how to provide meals to students, and any special accommodations for students with disabilities and housing insecure students.

Capital Prep Harlem began its virtual program for students on March 19, 2020. The school began live advisory and teacher check-in blocks via Zoom, and video lessons for core content through Google Classroom. By April 1, 2020, the school transitioned to live instruction via Zoom. For four days a week, each grade level implemented daily one and a half hour blocks for core content, two 45 minute blocks for teacher office hours, and daily advisory periods. On Fridays, the school mimics its in-person schedule and has a half day schedule with an all school meeting, advisory session, and additional teacher review sessions and office hours.

One of the most important components of the school's program, its advisory model, continues daily. Staff members check in on students' social emotional needs and continue to help them develop the school's valued skills including collaboration and problem solving. Another notable part of the program is the two sport requirement. Capital Prep Harlem utilized their partnership with the Harlem Jets and Riverside Basketball Club to hire the organizations' staff members as teaching assistants or case managers during this period of closure.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2018-19 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,¹ the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of ELA and mathematics. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. Throughout the charter term, the Institute examines results for five required Accountability Plan measures on an annual basis and provides an Accountability Dossier to each school detailing the school's progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals. Because the Act requires charters be held "accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results"² and states the educational programs at a charter school must "meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents"³ for other public schools, SUNY's required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by statewide assessments. More information about the required Accountability Plan measures can be found on the Institute's website at www.newyorkcharters.org/accountability/.

Capital Prep Harlem has posted a mixed record of achievement during the three years of operation and two years during which all SUNY Accountability Plan measures would have been applicable. Capital Prep Harlem's model enrolls students in 6th grade to develop competencies and academic skills to drive success in its high school grades and to graduate students with the skills and tools to succeed in college. On intake, the school conducts nationally normed assessments for ELA and mathematics, and the majority of incoming 6th grade students perform below grade level coming into the school. Therefore, Capital Prep Harlem's academic achievement data in its middle school grades partly reflects the academic deficiencies students enter with from prior educational settings.

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. In the case of initial renewal, the Accountability Period covers the first four years of the charter term.

2. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

3. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

Capital Prep Harlem will generate its first graduation data point when its first four year cohort graduates in June 2022. Early high school data and the strength of the academic program as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks indicate that the school has the potential to meet or come close to meeting the SUNY Trustees' standards in ELA and mathematics in the future if it continues making improvements to its program.

The school first enrolled students in 9th grade during the 2018-19 school year. That year, Capital Prep Harlem administered Regents examinations to some of its students in ELA, mathematics, and science. Among the 71 students in the 2018 Graduation Cohort, 66% passed at least one of five exams required for graduation, and 46% of tested students passed at least two exams required for graduation.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

ELA

Capital Prep Harlem would have come close to meeting the SUNY Trustees' standard in ELA during the 2017-18 school year but would not have met the standard during the 2018-19 school year. In 2017-18 the school exceeded the target for three out of the five required measures included in the SUNY Trustees' ELA Accountability Plan goal. That year, the school exceeded the district's proficiency rate on the state's ELA exam by nine percentage points, but fell below the district in 2018-19. In both years the school posted a comparative effect size below the SUNY Trustees' target of 0.3 indicating that Capital Prep Harlem performed lower than expected compared to schools across New York State enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students. The school posted a mean growth percentile above the target of 50 by six points in 2017-18. That year all cohorts demonstrated growth that met or exceeded the target. Notably, the school's 8th grade cohort posted a mean growth percentile that exceeded the target by nine points. The school did not meet the growth target in 2018-19.

MATHEMATICS

Capital Prep Harlem would not have met the SUNY Trustees' mathematics accountability standard in 2017-18 and 2018-19. The school's students enrolled for at least two years outperformed the district on the state's mathematics exam in 2017-18 but fell below the district the following year. The school did not meet its comparative effect size target in either year. The school met its mean percentile growth target of 50 in 2017-18 but posted a score of 17 points below the target in 2018-19. Capital Prep Harlem recognizes the need to improve students' achievement on state assessments.

SCIENCE

Capital Prep Harlem's 8th grade students enrolled for at least two years posted a proficiency rate of 56% on the state science exam in 2018-19, which is below the SUNY absolute target of 75% but exceeding the district's performance by 15 points. Due to an error in data reporting, the school's 2017-18 science results are currently unavailable. The Institute is working with the school to rectify this error.

ESSA

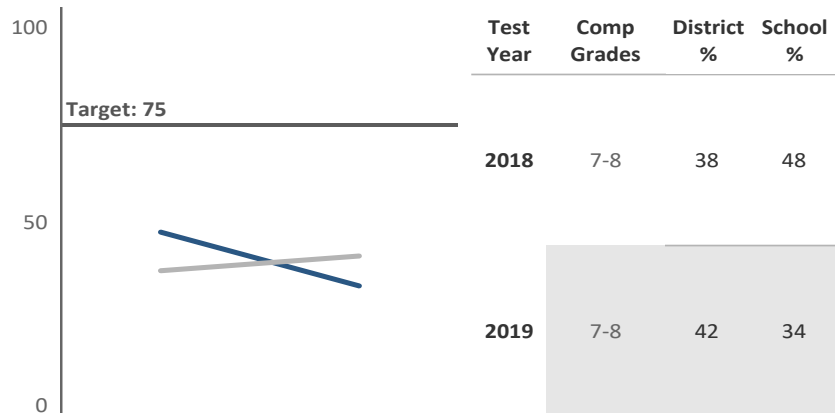
In both 2017-18 and 2018-19, the school remained in good standing according to the state's Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA") accountability system.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

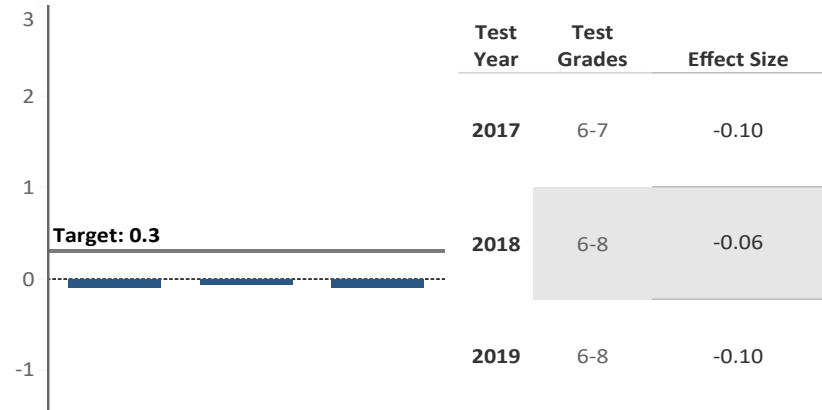
CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM CHARTER SCHOOL

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

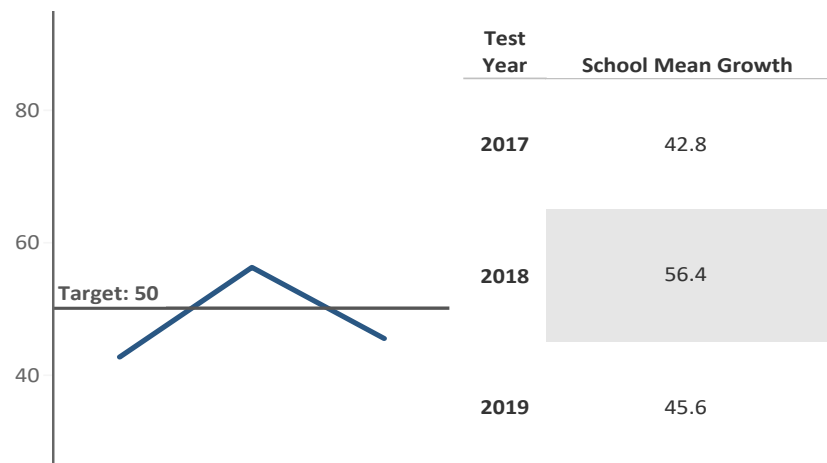
Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in ELA will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



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 target of 50 in **ELA**.

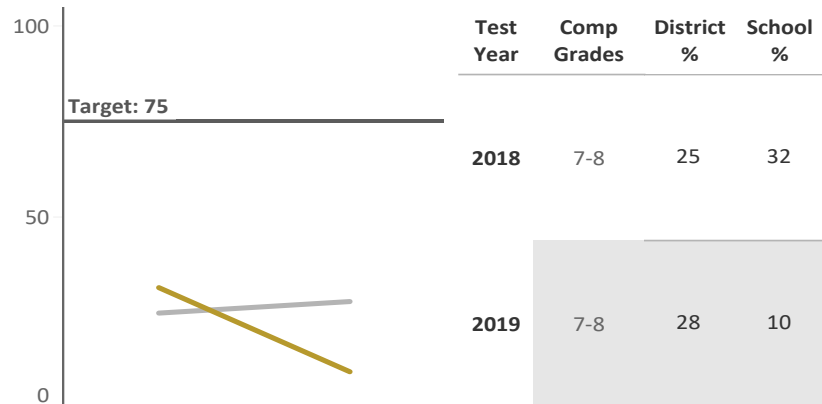


ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

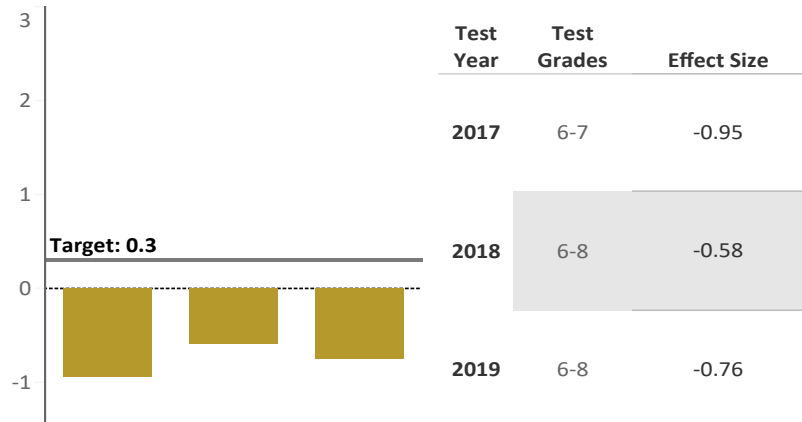
CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM CHARTER SCHOOL

MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

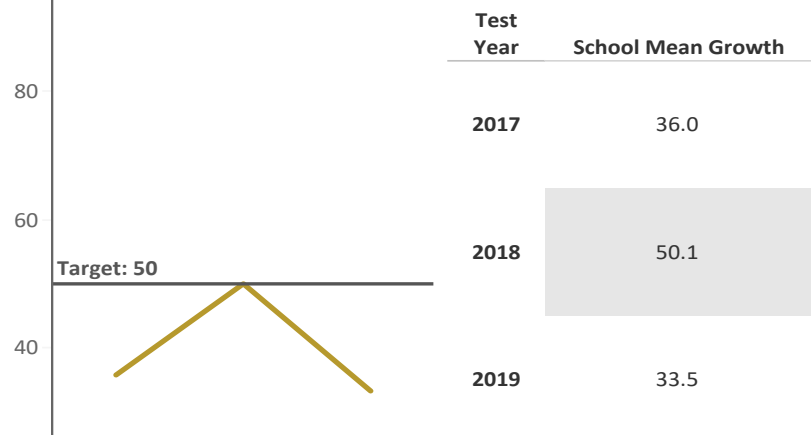
Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in Mathematics will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



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.



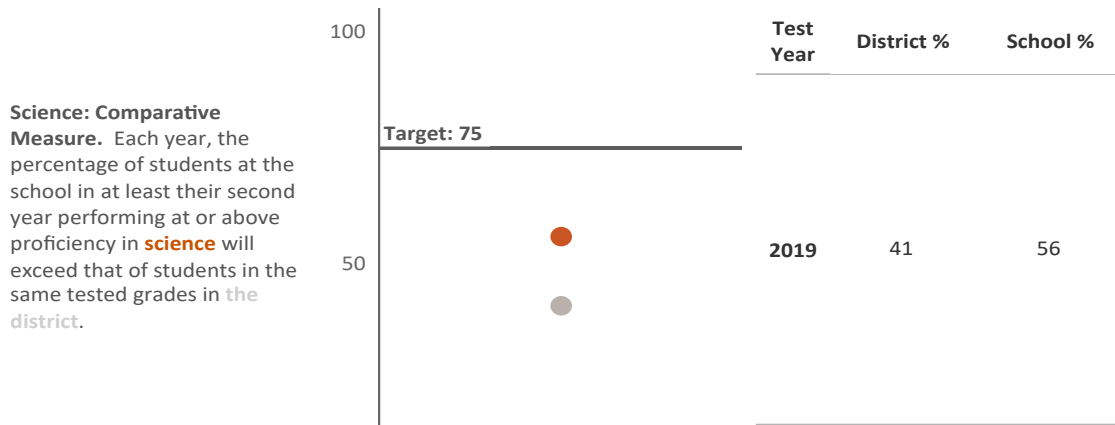
Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **mathematics**.



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE

	2017	2018	2019
Enrollment Receiving Mandated Academic Services	43	56	79
Tested on State Exam	42	49	42
School Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	9.5	20.4	16.7
District Percent Proficient	3.3	9.8	11.0
	2017	2018	2019
ELL Enrollment	3	4	5
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	0	3	0
School Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress on NYSESLAT	NA	0.0	NA

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."

*Due to an error in data reporting, the school's 2017-18 science results and 2016-17 and 2018-19 NYSESLAT results are currently unavailable. The Institute is working with the school to rectify these data in a future date.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

QUALITATIVE BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, grounded in the body of research from the Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University,⁴ 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, found in Appendix C, describe the elements an effective school must have in place at the time of renewal.⁵

DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE AN ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT IMPROVES INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING?

Capital Prep Harlem uses a variety of assessments that are aligned to state standards. However, the school has not yet established effective structures for teachers to collaborate with network deans of curriculum (“DCs”) in a manner that results in increasingly strong instruction and teachers’ use of data to ensure students will produce work products that will lead them to success on state standards.

- Capital Prep Harlem has an assessment system and is developing assessments that demonstrate reliability and validity over time. Each year, Capital Prep Harlem administers the Northwest Evaluation Association MAP (“MAP”) exam three times in mathematics and ELA. In reaction to the state assessment scores being lower than expected, this year, the DCs revamped network-wide benchmark assessments that include test items from the New York State and Regents practice assessments. These benchmark assessments are aligned to state standards and the school predicted a several percentage point increase in student proficiency on the 2020 state assessments. Capital Prep Harlem also administers a variety of curriculum based and diagnostic assessments that are aligned to standards.
- Capital Prep Harlem has established a valid and reliable process for network-level scoring and data analysis. The DCs and academic dean score and analyze student work, and disseminate that analysis to teachers. However, the school lacks a coherent strategy to increase teacher understanding and use of this data for lesson planning content and pedagogy. The school has the opportunity to consider setting aside time for teachers to collaborate with the DCs on data analysis and developing an effective system for assigning students to interventions throughout the year. The school also has the opportunity to establish a uniform scoring process for teacher developed content area assessments.

4. 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 http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/fryer/files/dobbie_fryer_revision_final.pdf.

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

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- The DCs and the academic dean support teachers in using assessment results to meet student needs, but the support has yet to yield an effective instructional program with consistently strong results. The DCs and academic dean establish whole class and within class student groupings and academic interventions based on performance on the MAP and benchmark assessments. Whole school re-groupings occur at least three times annually based on MAP performance. While the school has an established process for using assessment results to group students by learning assets and deficits, the adjustments made to classroom instruction vary in quality. Lesson plans and classroom observations indicate Capital Prep Harlem has yet to maximize opportunities to ensure strong content and differentiated instruction such that students will be on track to master the demands of the New York State standards.
- The DCs and academic dean use student assessment results to coach and develop teacher practice, primarily in ELA, mathematics, and science. DCs accomplish much of this work using the teacher development and evaluation platform TeachBoost. However, interviews, observations, and a review of TeachBoost records indicate the school has yet to put in place supports necessary to ensure consistency in instruction across all classrooms.
- The school makes assessment data accessible to teachers, school leaders, and board members. The DCs collect various student performance data, disaggregate and analyze it, and deliver this data via one-on-one, content area, and grade level team meetings with teachers. The academic dean, network head of school, and other leaders also have quick access to assessment data via Google Drive. The board receives assessment data via the school leader's report and during scheduled board meetings.

DOES THE SCHOOL'S CURRICULUM SUPPORT TEACHERS IN THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING?

Capital Prep Harlem's core content curricula are aligned to state standards. The school has the opportunity to establish a strong framework that clearly connects the curricula across content areas and aligns to instructional expectations for the teaching staff. After student achievement on the second internal benchmark assessment was lower than expected, the school changed the instructional model from classrooms with one teacher to combined subject courses with co-teaching. While the intention of this significant scheduling and instructional change was to quickly improve student achievement, leaders recognize specific areas to establish clear expectations and strong systems to support the change in pedagogical practice.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- The school has a state standards aligned curriculum for each subject area comprised of texts, web-based content and assessments, formative and summative assessments, teacher selected open education resources, and lesson plans. However, the school does not have a framework that provides a fixed, underlying structure to support the humanities and STEM cross content performance expectations. The absence of this framework results in missed opportunities to create consistent and effective lesson plans and instructional delivery. For example, leaders expect teachers to annotate the commercially developed lesson plans for ELA, mathematics, and science based on the learning needs of their students. Capital Prep Harlem has an opportunity to ensure that leaders articulate a common process and clear expectations to drive this task so that teachers consistently recognize the school's performance expectations for the quality of curricular annotations.
- The school has some supporting tools to bridge curricula and lesson plans using commercially developed lesson plans from EngageNY for ELA, Eureka Math for mathematics, and Project Based Inquiry Science for science. DCs and teachers annotate commercial plans with varying degrees of quality. Capital Prep Harlem has the opportunity to establish a cross content humanities or STEM curricular map supported by high quality lesson and unit plans. Currently, across the school, annotated lesson plans reflect varying degrees of quality; very little differentiation, modification, and accommodation; and few differences in content and instructional strategy from class to class.
- Teachers know what to teach and when to teach it, and the school has an opportunity to improve the consistency of the DCs' supports to build more independence with teachers to ensure proper scope and sequence planning and pacing. With the rapid shift to co-teaching, teachers lacked sufficient time to process students' learning assets and deficits, to familiarize themselves with newly introduced curricula and the ways in which it will replace or supplement previous content, and to hone small student group instructional practices.
- The DCs drive the school's process for selecting, developing, and reviewing its curriculum. While teachers are directed in what to teach and when, the school lacks guidelines to ensure teachers sufficiently differentiate content and instruction to address students struggling academically, students with disabilities, ELLs, and students who perform above grade level.

SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- The school's social justice curriculum is strong and aligns with Capital Prep Harlem's mission of developing responsible and engaged citizens. The school has yet to develop purposeful and focused core content lesson plans schoolwide. While lesson plans may state the school value that is aligned to the lesson, instruction does not demonstrate the connection of core content to the school's mission. The school has an opportunity to also ensure that lessons are focused or personalized to meet the needs of individual or small groups of students.
- Capital Prep Harlem leaders are redesigning the advisory curriculum to ensure students develop skills for success and staff members implement the curriculum with consistency and quality. During the evaluation visit, the Institute observed eight different advisory groups. Since the visit, the Institute remains in contact with the school specifically about the development of the advisory program. The school has identified the skill development outcomes expected from the curricula and how students will demonstrate the development of these skills over the course of their time at Capital Prep Harlem. To further illuminate the impact of the school's programming, starting in the 2020-21 school year, school leaders and staff will collect and track data demonstrating students' growth in the school's learner expectations according to predetermined benchmarks and goals.

IS HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL?

Capital Prep Harlem leaders recognize inconsistencies in the quality of instruction across classrooms and are working to leverage strong practices in many classrooms to establish more consistently high quality teaching and learning. Network DCs develop lessons to meet the needs of most students but teachers do not consistently modify lesson plans to meet the needs of students struggling academically. Teachers make attempts to check for student understanding, challenge students with higher order thinking questions and tasks, maximize learning time, and manage their classrooms. However, the efficacy of those attempts varies significantly from classroom to classroom. As shown in the chart below, during the renewal visit Institute team members conducted 21 observations following a defined protocol used in all school evaluation visits.

**SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
1D**

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

		G R A D E					
		6	7	8	9	10	Total
CONTENT AREA	ELA	2	1	1	1	2	7
	Math	2	1	2	1		6
	Soc Stu			1	1		2
	Science			1	1	1	3
	Other				1	2	3
	Total	4	2	5	5	5	21

- The quality of instructional supports for students varies across classrooms at Capital Prep Harlem. The school has yet to ensure teachers' lesson delivery and activity is aligned with grade level objectives in the lesson plans (18 out of 21 lessons observed). Most lessons connect to previously taught content and skills. The majority of classrooms, especially at the middle school level, implement co-teaching strategies as part of a recently enacted schoolwide initiative to have two or three teachers delivering instruction with clearly defined roles. However, because teachers' lesson plans lack intentional differentiation for individual students, there is little evidence that the co-teaching model effectively targets each student's area of greatest need.
- Most teachers regularly check for student understanding during their lessons (13 out of 21 lessons observed). Many teachers use questioning techniques, circulate around the room to review student work, ask students to provide non verbal indicators of their comfort with the content and skills, and collect student work including exit tickets. In these classrooms, teachers' assessment strategies align closely to the content and skills delivered during the lesson. In other classes, teachers struggle to check for student understanding or make minimal efforts to do so. In those classrooms, teachers do not incorporate formative assessments or questioning techniques that allow them to know if students comprehend the content.
- Less than half of teachers challenge students with questions and activities that develop depth of understanding, higher order thinking, and problem solving skills (9 out of 21 lessons observed). While some teachers incorporate academic rigor into their instruction, in the majority of lessons students are not required to examine, analyze, synthesize, or evaluate information to make a determination and defend a position. Similarly, in most classes, students are not required to apply new concepts or skills to real life or open

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

ended situations. While rigorous instruction occurs in some classes, the extent to which students are challenged continues to vary within the different courses and teachers of each grade level. In some classrooms, teachers challenge students to defend their thinking using evidence from a text or content from the unit of study, but there is little emphasis on developing critical thinking skills.

- While in most classrooms teachers are prepared to deliver instruction, only half of teachers maximize learning time and use effective classroom management techniques (11 out of 21 lessons observed). Learning time is not maximized despite the use of timers in many classrooms. Teachers extend the original amount of time assigned to a task, thereby forcing parts of the lesson to be rushed and important explanations to be cut short in the interest of time. In at least five lesson observations, teachers did not have visible routines and structures especially during transitions between activities. The most direct cause of lost learning time, especially at the high school level, is from student misbehaviors. Despite teacher attempts at redirection, consequences are minimal and inconsistent from teacher to teacher.

DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

Capital Prep Harlem's turnover in leadership during the 2019-20 school year contributed to a lack of communication of an instructional vision and accountability for teacher performance. While the network and the school have a collaborative leadership structure, at the time of the Institute's visit, school staff members articulated varied understandings of how leaders collaborate for coaching and mentoring and the process for teacher performance evaluation. Despite the turnover at the beginning of this school year, Capital Prep Harlem and the network communicated to the Institute a clear structure and staffing for its leadership team for the 2020-21 school year.

- Instructional leaders communicate high expectations for student achievement but had not yet established clear expectations for teacher performance. The network set state assessment achievement goals, and teachers can articulate the goals for their classes. However, teachers are unaware of how they will be held accountable for performance under the new co-teaching structure.
- Capital Prep Harlem's instructional leadership supports the development of the teaching staff but these supports lack consistent coordination. At the time of the visit, the network head of schools, Capital Prep Harlem academic dean, and Capital Prep Harlem instructional coach were serving as the school's instructional leaders

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

during the temporary planned absence of the interim principal. The network DCs provide the majority of instructional coaching support along with the school based leaders. While teachers meet with school-based instructional leaders on an ad hoc basis, touchpoints are frequent, occurring multiple times weekly depending on need. However, concomitant with the leadership changes and lack of clarity around schoolwide instructional decision making, the network and school leader feedback does not consistently align.

- While the network incorporates a sustained system of supportive coaching to teachers to develop them so they can become effective pedagogues, the school does not yet have a means of measuring the quality of the support. School and network leaders provide observation feedback to teachers via TeachBoost and meet with network leaders on a weekly or biweekly basis. Feedback is organized around the school's walkthrough rubric and the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Using these rubrics, instructional leaders and individual teachers can easily identify the teacher's strengths and weaknesses in instructional practice. However, the network lacks clearly articulated outcome measures and expectations for the DCs' performance as it relates to teacher performance. The network also lacks protocols, standards of practice, and timelines for DCs to provide teacher support.
- Professional development topics are inconsistently connected to classroom practice. Leaders have an opportunity to ensure that individual professional development sessions connect to form a comprehensive plan that develops teachers' pedagogy in alignment with schoolwide priorities and to the school's focus on social justice and relationship building. Teachers stated the school's professional development program often focuses on upcoming events and initiatives rather than on developing the pedagogical competencies of teachers. School leaders do not yet consistently follow up with classroom feedback that is aligned to professional development topics, making the implementation of pedagogical strategies inconsistent across classrooms.
- Capital Prep Harlem has a process for conducting teacher evaluations but has not yet implemented it consistently this year due to midyear scheduling changes. Although the network evaluated the school leaders' performance midyear, school leaders have intentionally delayed conducting teachers' midyear evaluations to provide time for the school community to adjust to programming changes. With these delays, while intended to provide fairness to teachers, it is not clear to what extent school leaders hold teachers accountable for quality instruction, student learning, and rapid teacher improvement. Though unable to articulate how and by whom they would ultimately be evaluated, teachers are able to identify areas of growth based on their coaching sessions and feedback from walkthroughs and informal observations.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1F

DOES THE SCHOOL MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS?

Capital Prep Harlem attempts to meet the needs of students but does not yet have systems in place to address the academic needs of all students in need of intervention. Capital Prep Harlem has not established a system of support to provide targeted academic interventions to students at risk of academic failure nor does the school have a systematic approach to intensify academic supports and identify students with disabilities on an ongoing basis. The school does not have a program in place to support its ELL students, and the Institute is following up to ensure that the school establishes a compliant program.

- The school has clear procedures to identify students struggling academically but does not have a clear system of intensifying supports to systematically identify students who may require evaluation for special education services. Teachers review an array of academic data to identify students at risk of academic failure. Teachers encourage students at risk of academic failure to participate in afterschool and Saturday tutoring sessions. However, the school does not systematically track the progress of these supports and lacks a tiered approach to academic interventions. Therefore, teachers refer students to the special education coordinator based on teacher discretion. Once this happens, the special education coordinator requires teachers to collect additional data on students' academic progress that the coordinator shares with the district Committee on Special Education ("CSE"). The school administers a home language survey and the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners ("NYSITELL") to identify ELLs.
- Capital Prep Harlem has not yet established an academic program to meet the needs of all students specifically students struggling academically and ELLs. The school offers remedial resources to students struggling academically, but the approach is not systematic and relies heavily on student engagement outside of the regular school day. Teachers invite students to afterschool tutoring sessions and Saturday academy based on student progress. In some cases teachers provide additional remediation during co-taught classes. However, these decisions are based on teacher discretion and there is no schoolwide system to monitor which students are receiving additional in-class support. As a result, the students who require the most intensive interventions may not receive those supports, as their effectiveness is reliant on students staying after school or participating in Saturday academy. Similarly, the school does not have a program in place to support ELLs. Prior to the Institute's visit, the school reassigned an integrated co-teaching ("ICT") teacher to provide ELL services. However, at the time of the visit, these services were not yet established and so the school has not provided services to ELLs. The school employs special education teacher support services ("SETSS") and ICT teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- The school monitors the progress of individualized education program (“IEP”) goals for students with disabilities but does not monitor the progress of ELL students’ language acquisition throughout the year. Despite administering the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (“NYSESLAT”) to ELL students at the end of the 2018-19 school year, the school did not review the results until assigning a teacher to provide ELL services at the time of the Institute’s visit. More so, general education teachers are not consistently aware of the designation or English language acquisition progress of ELLs.
- Despite the school offering professional development opportunities for supporting at-risk students, the quality of teachers’ differentiation of materials and instructional strategies varies across the school. Leaders deliver professional development sessions throughout the year on topics such as effective co-teaching, differentiation, and using data to inform small group instruction. In addition to these topics, the school sends teachers to participate in training sessions at the New York City Collaborative for Inclusive Education. Capital Prep Harlem has not yet established a system to ensure teachers consistently implement these pedagogical strategies with high quality.
- Instructional staff turnover contributes to Capital Prep Harlem’s ability to effectively establish instructional expectations such that coaches and leadership can provide opportunities for teachers to routinely coordinate services and check in on student progress with one another. At the time of the visit, at least 10 teachers had left since the summer and many of the at-risk program providers rotated through several different teaching assignments since the year started. These transitions, in addition to the schedule shift and change to co-teaching, create challenges for ongoing coordination between general education teachers and at-risk program staff members.

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

The school organization is developing its supports to deliver the educational program. The organizational structure is clear to staff members in regard to which leaders oversee each area of the school program. With significant turnover among teachers, leaders, and students, and student needs that differ significantly from previous years, Capital Prep Harlem is still establishing itself as an organization that meets the needs of students.

- The school’s administrative structure should enable clearly defined roles and allow the school to carry out its academic program. The director of operations oversees an operations team that manages all non-academic functions at the school. The principal

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

oversees all academic functions at the school, and the dean of students works with the social workers and paraprofessionals to provide behavior and social emotional supports so that students can fully engage in academic learning. The network provides curricula, assessments, instructional coaching, and staff member and student recruiting support. While the roles of staff members are clear for day to day tasks, leaders recognize a need to consistently articulate the overall vision for academics and social and emotional programming so that all teachers are aware and see how the vision drives decision making for overall programming. As such, the school has an opportunity to establish clear guidelines to hold teachers accountable.

- Leaders use data to drive program changes and have an opportunity to align such changes to a long term strategic plan. For example, the interim principal and network leaders decided after the second benchmark assessment scores were lower than expected that students needed more instructional time and teachers needed more support in the classroom. As such, the school changed the schedule to have a block schedule and co-teachers in core content areas due to the success of this structure at the network's Connecticut school. However, the quick implementation of the schedule change lacked adequate preparation for teachers, and staff members could not articulate how this new structure fits into an overall vision for instruction at the school.
- Capital Prep Harlem does not yet have a fully articulated and consistently applied discipline system. Capital Prep Harlem identifies a need to have a school culture that supports all students in preparation for college, and staff members clearly articulate the school's learner expectations and attempts to infuse them into daily lessons. However, staff members do not yet consistently articulate the school's philosophy around behavior and discipline. The school has a positive behavioral intervention system as a tool but teachers apply it inconsistently. The school's suspension numbers have fluctuated throughout the year and the school lacks goals for student discipline and a consistent set of expectations for behavior that connects to social and emotional learning. At the time of the Institute's visit, the school had administered 127 out-of-school suspensions and two expulsions. The number of suspensions decreased from October to March, but the board, school, and network leaders did not have clear targets for these data in the future.
- The school does not yet effectively retain staff members. At the time of the Institute's visit, at least 10 teachers, one principal, and two instructional coaches who started at the beginning of the year had left the school. The school leaders, network leaders, and board recognize a need to more clearly define the school's vision for instruction and culture in order to better onboard staff members and prepare them for success at the school.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- Capital Prep Harlem has not maintained its planned student enrollment. In 2018-19, only 74% of students returned from the previous year. At the start of the 2019-20 year the school enrolled 460 students. At the time of the visit, the school reported to the Institute team that enrollment declined to 353 students, which is 71% of its chartered enrollment and well below the enrollment collar. The average daily attendance rate was only 85%, with a significant number of students tardy each day. However, as of the end of the second quarter, the school decreased its spending by filling 10 less positions than originally budgeted including seven fewer instructional staff members. As such, the school can meet its day to day operations and provide resources to staff members. Capital Prep Harlem leaders recognize a need to set clear expectations for student conduct and improve its onboarding of students into the school culture.

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

The Capital Prep NY board is developing its structures to work effectively to ensure the school meets its Accountability Plan goals. The board is establishing stronger accountability systems for leaders that include clear performance benchmarks.

- Board members have necessary skills to govern the school, and members are working to establish governance structures to appropriately provide oversight and support. Board members have expertise in finance, real estate, development, Kindergarten – 12th grade education, non-profit management, and marketing. Members identify a need to formalize their committee structure to improve efficiency. The board has operated under different subgroups such as the real estate, audit, nominating, and community relations committees but the board has not established regular recurring committee meetings and reporting out. The board is looking to add members who are a parent at the school, have expertise in fundraising, and experience in New York City public schools.
- Although the board has identified areas of priority and focus, the board does not yet have clear benchmarks to measure progress and hold school and network leaders accountable. The board is focused on improving student achievement and growth through stronger teaching and learning, improved staff member retention, and supports for student social and emotional development. The network provides achievement targets for state assessments but the board recognizes a need to establish targets for intermediate outcomes to monitor student achievement and social and emotional development.

BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

- The Capital Prep NY board requests and receives information to provide oversight to the school. The principal provides monthly reports to the full board on the school's academic achievement as well as data on enrollment, attendance, and discipline. Both the board and school leaders were surprised by the decrease in state assessment scores in 2019, as the MAP assessment predicted higher scores and had been reliable in previous years. The board is working with the school and network to understand measures that more closely predict student performance on state assessments. The network chief operating officer provides monthly reports on finance, and the school remains fiscally strong despite the school's lower than budgeted enrollment this year.
- The Capital Prep NY board is beginning to formalize processes to evaluate itself and the network. The board chair has weekly contact with the network head of schools. Board members have annually discussed the network's performance and is now planning to provide written evaluations moving forward. The board intends to develop benchmarks to hold the network accountable by the end of the 2019-20 school year. The board recently completed a self-evaluation and identified a need to improve in formalizing its committee structure, clarifying the evaluation of the school leader and network, and fundraising.
- The board is developing its strategy to recruit and retain school leaders. The network head of schools is a founder of the school. As the board supports the school in executing its model in New York City, the network is refining its hiring process to hire school leaders who fit the mission and culture of the school. At the time of the publishing of this evaluation report, the network hired a high school principal for the Harlem site and transitioned the interim principal to the middle school principal role.

Capital Prep
Harlem

Ax

APPENDICES

PAGES Ax 1-20

SO^A
SCHOOL
OVERVIEW

PAGE Ax 2

PS^B
PERFORMANCE
SUMMARIES

PAGE Ax 7

RB^C
RENEWAL
BENCHMARKS

PAGE Ax 9

APPENDIX A: School Overview

CAPITAL PREP CHARTER SCHOOLS NY WITH AUTHORITY TO OPERATE CAPITAL PREPARATORY HARLEM CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES¹

CHAIR

Derek Ferguson

TREASURER

Maurice Coleman

SECRETARY

Dr. Stephen Perry

TRUSTEES

Reverend Georgiette Morgan Thomas

D'Angela Simms

Ramik Williams

SCHOOL LEADERS

PRINCIPAL

Tywayne Redman, Interim Principal (*November 2019 - present*)

Reginald Richardson, Principal (*July 2019 - November 2019*)

Danita Jones, Principal (*2016-17 to 2018-19*)

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ²	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2016-17	NYSED*	NYSED	NYSED	6 -7
2017-18	NYSED	NYSED	NYSED	6 -8
2018-19	NYSED	NYSED	NYSED	6-9
2019-20	500	380	76%	6 -10

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.)



*The Institute does not have verifiable data as the school was authorized by the Board of Regents.

APPENDIX A: School Overview




Capital Prep Harlem Charter School

Manhattan CSD 4




Student Demographics: Special Populations

English Language Learner	45 30 15		District	8.9	9.2	9.2
Students with Disabilities	45 30 15		District	30.0	29.4	27.9
			School	1.8	1.7	1.5
			School	25.9	24.2	23.7
	2016-17 2017-18 2018-19			2016-17	2017-18	2018-19

Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch

Economically Disadvantaged	100 50 0		District	77.1	82.8	80.4
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	100 50 0		District	4.1	3.2	
Eligible for Free Lunch	100 50 0		District	76.1	80.2	
			School	74.7	64.9	69.4
			School	1.2	0.0	
			School	54.8	60.6	
	2016-17 2017-18 2018-19			2016-17	2017-18	2018-19

Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity

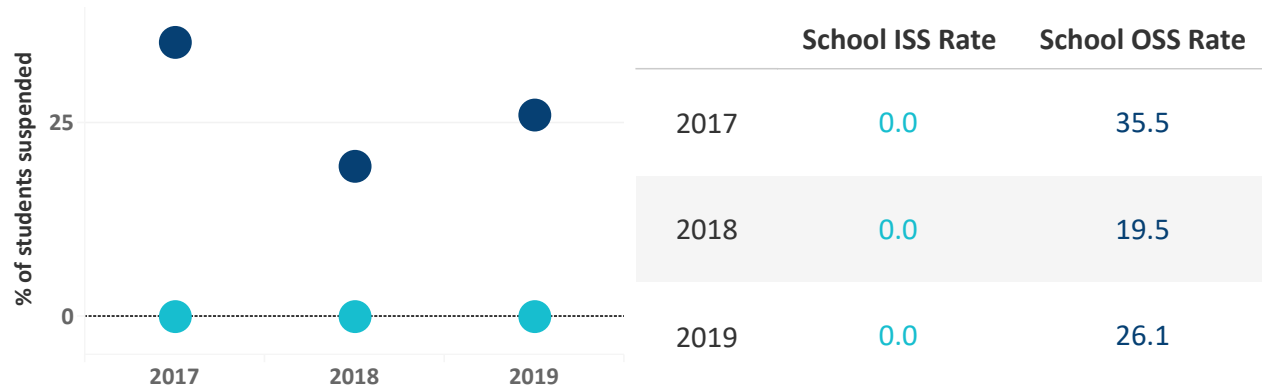
2016-17		District	6.4	25.8	62.8	2.9
		School	1.8	71.1	24.7	0.0
2017-18		District	6.6	26.1	61.4	3.2
		School	0.4	71.4	26.4	0.0
2018-19		District	8.6	24.8	59.7	4.1
		School	0.0	75.1	23.1	0.3
	Asian, Native Hawaiian.. Black or African American Hispanic White		Asian, Native Hawaiian.. Black or African American Hispanic White			

Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the New York State Education Department

APPENDIX A: School Overview

Capital Prep Harlem Charter School

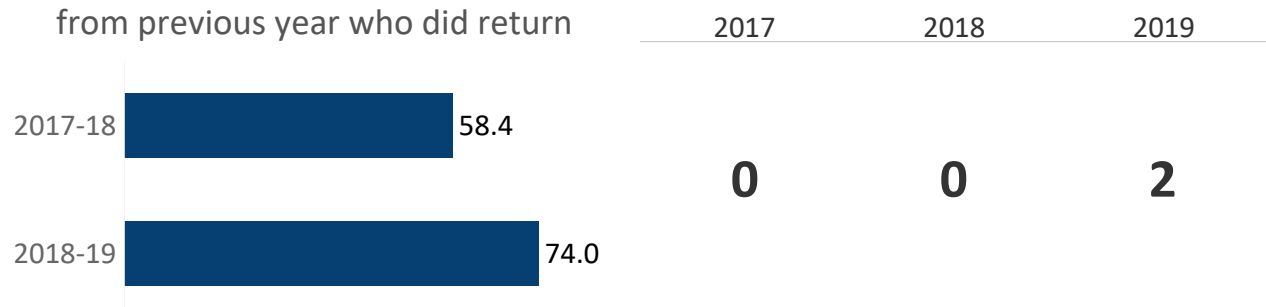
Manhattan CSD 4



CSD 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 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



Capital Prep Harlem Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2018-19

			District Target	School
Enrollment	economically disadvantaged	<div><div></div></div>	87.0	69.4
	English language learners	<div><div></div></div>	8.2	1.5
	students with disabilities	<div><div></div></div>	19.9	23.7
Retention	economically disadvantaged	<div><div></div></div>	89.8	71.3
	English language learners	<div><div></div></div>	87.8	100.0
	students with disabilities	<div><div></div></div>	86.2	71.4

Data reported in these charts reflect information reported by the school and validated by the Institute.

APPENDIX A: School Overview

SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2018-19	School Merger Visit	February 27, 2019
2019-20	School Evaluation Visit	March 10-11, 2020

CONDUCT OF THE VISIT

DATE(S) OF VISIT	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
March 10-11, 2020	Kerri Martin Rizzolo	Senior Analyst
	Hannah Hansen	School Evaluation Analyst
	Leslie Talbot	External Consultant
	Ashish Kapadia	External Consultant

CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT

CHARTER TERM	ACCOUNTABILITY PERIOD ³	ANTICIPATED RENEWAL VISIT
Fourth Year of Five Year Initial Term	Fourth Year of Four Year Accountability Period	Fall 2020

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?
High expectations rooted in the Five Learner Expectations;	—
A student centered data driven instructional approach;	—
A longer school day and year;	+
Social Justice is the central theme of the Capital Prep, Inc., model and supports students' growth as agents of change;	+
Advisory program;	—
Student led conferences;	+
Partnerships with local colleges;	+
Two sport requirement; and,	+
Robust professional development.	—

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Capital Preparatory Harlem Charter School

		2016-17 Grades Served 6-7				2017-18 Grades Served 6-8				2018-19 Grades Served 6-9						
		Grades	All % (N)	2+ Years % (N)	MET	Grades	All % (N)	2+ Years % (N)	MET	Grades	All % (N)	2+ Years % (N)	MET			
Absolute Measure	1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)				
		4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)				
		5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)				
		6	17.1 (76)	(0)		6	35.6 (73)	0.0 (1)		6	32.1(53)	(0)				
		7	37.0 (81)	(0)		7	31.9 (69)	34.9 (43)		7	22.1(68)	22.0(41)				
		8	(0)	(0)		8	57.3 (75)	60.9 (46)		8	39.7(78)	43.4(53)				
		All	27.4 (157)	(0)	NA	All	41.9 (217)	47.8 (90)	NO	All	31.7(199)	34.0(94)	NO			
		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	MIP		Grades	PI	MIP				
6-7	99	111	NO	6-8	132	101	YES	6-8	112	105	YES					
		Comparison: Manhattan CSD 4				Comparison: Manhattan CSD 4				Comparison: Manhattan CSD 4						
Comparative Measure	3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District				
		Grade	% ED	Actual	Predicted	ES	Grade	% ED	Actual	Predicted	ES	Grade	% ED	Actual	Predicted	ES
		3					3					3				
		4					4					4				
		5					5					5				
		6	80.8	17.1	21.8	-0.31	6	68.5	35.6	44.5	-0.51	6	68.7	596.0	595.9	0.02
		7	69.9	37.0	35.1	0.11	7	59.2	31.9	38.9	-0.38	7	70.6	595.0	597.4	-0.28
		8					8	66.7	57.3	43.8	0.68	8	67.4	598.0	598.2	-0.03
All	75.2	27.4	28.6	-0.10	All	64.9	41.9	42.5	-0.06	All	68.8	596.4	597.3	-0.10	NO	
Growth Measure	5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the target of 50.	Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State				
		4	0.0			4	0.0			4	0.0					
		5	0.0			5	0.0			5	0.0					
		6	34.2			6	50.8			6	46.2					
		7	51.1			7	58.2			7	42.3					
		8	0.0			8	59.4			8	48.3					
		All	42.8	50.0	NO	All	56.4	50.0	YES	All	45.6	50.0	NO			

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: MATHEMATICS

Capital Preparatory Harlem Charter School

2016-17 Grades Served 6-7					2017-18 Grades Served 6-8					2018-19 Grades Served 6-9							
Grades		All % (N)	2+ Years % (N)	MET	Grades		All % (N)	2+ Years % (N)	MET	Grades		All % (N)	2+ Years % (N)	MET			
Absolute Measure	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	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)					
		4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)					
		5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)					
		6	9.5 (74)	(0)		6	18.6 (70)	100.0 (1)		6	17.0 (53)	(0)					
		7	9.8 (82)	(0)		7	27.9 (68)	35.7 (42)		7	13.2 (68)	12.2 (41)					
		8	(0)	(0)		8	25.0 (72)	26.7 (45)		8	10.3 (68)	7.8 (51)					
		All	9.6 (156)	(0)	NA	All	23.8 (210)	31.8 (88)	NO	All	13.2 (189)	9.8 (92)	NO				
		2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Measure of Interim Progress set forth in the State's ESSA accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	MIP		Grades	PI	MIP				
	6-7	61	109	NO	6-8	87	103	NO	6-8	66	107	NO					
Comparative Measure	3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Manhattan CSD 4				Comparison: Manhattan CSD 4				Comparison: Manhattan CSD 4							
		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District					
	Grade	% ED	Actual	Predicted	ES	Grade	% ED	Actual	Predicted	ES	Grade	% ED	Actual	Predicted	ES		
	3					3					3						
	4					4					4						
	5					5					5						
	6	80.8	9.5	26.2	-0.85	6	68.5	18.6	39.5	-1.10	6	68.7	590.0	598.2	-0.94		
	7	69.9	9.8	29.1	-1.03	7	59.2	27.9	40.3	-0.65	7	70.6	592.0	598.1	-0.65		
	8					8	66.7	25.0	25.4	-0.02	8	67.4	590.0	597.6	-0.72		
All	75.1	9.6	27.7	-0.95	NO	All	64.9	23.8	34.9	-0.58	NO	All	68.9	590.7	597.9	-0.76	NO
Growth Measure	5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the target of 50.	Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State					
		4	0.0			4	0.0			4	0.0						
		5	0.0			5	0.0			5	0.0						
		6	30.7			6	39.5			6	33.5						
		7	41.0			7	70.7			7	41.4						
		8	0.0			8	42.1			8	26.0						
		All	36.0	50.0	NO	All	50.1	50.0	YES	All	33.5	50.0	NO				

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;

APPENDIX C: SUNY Renewal Benchmarks

- 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.



Susan Miller Carello, Executive Director
SUNY Charter Schools Institute
SUNY Plaza, 353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

July 3, 2020

Dear Ms. Miller Carello,

On behalf of the Capital Prep Harlem children, families, staff and board, we would like to thank you for visiting Capital Prep Harlem in March and sharing feedback and insights in the comprehensive evaluation report (dated June 26, 2020). The Institute's feedback was fair, thoughtful and aligned with work underway to address issues that we agree need resolution. The following response is not a rebuttal, but rather an explanation of our areas of focus and some observations that we feel could be useful to the SUNY Charter Schools Institute team in terms of data and context. Thank you again for the care that you took in crafting your observations. We feel that the Institute genuinely wants to see Capital Prep win and that makes a partnership such as this meaningful.

We have learned a great deal since our doors opened, and feel that SUNY's understanding of the challenges faced by our burgeoning network do not outweigh the immediate prospects of our ability to provide a compelling academic and affective experience to our deserving scholars. As we continuously reflect and improve, Capital Prep is demonstrating the organizational will and capacity necessary to succeed for the benefit of the scholars we serve who are under invested in and often forgotten by the time we get them in middle school. We believe that Capital Prep, founded and governed by African-Americans is important to the education landscape and despite a significant resource gap versus other operators in the charter space we are committed to being best in class.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at your earliest convenience should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Derek Ferguson'.

Mr. Derek Ferguson,
Chair, Board of Trustees

Capital Prep Harlem is well-positioned to meet (or come close to) traditional accountability plan goals, and is evolving into an institution of unequivocal academic success.



Capital Preparatory Schools (CPS) is a small charter management organization currently supporting three charter schools, across 4 sites, in two states. As an organization, CPS has a rich history of providing visionary leadership and a supportive academic environment which has helped many scholars reach outstanding levels of achievement - primarily demonstrated by graduation rates that exceed ninety percent, and a consistent 100 percent college acceptance rate year after year at both our founding magnet school and our Bridgeport charter school. Our work is a marathon, not a sprint.

Capital Prep Harlem is still scaling up its middle and high school grades, which culminates in 2021-22 when our first seniors will graduate. The CPS network and the Harlem leadership teams have the necessary skills, dedication, humility and relentless pursuit of excellence on behalf of our scholars to ensure long-term stability and success.

Prior to the evaluation visit in March of this year, members of CPS and the Harlem Leadership team were aware of and addressing many areas of the school that needed improvement. Overall, both CPS and the leadership team agree with the Institute's conclusion that there has been a mixed record of achievement evident in the first few years of the charter term, with positive data particularly evident at the high school level. We do not seek to dismiss data that is disappointing - on the contrary, staff and leadership are working furiously to address areas of need exposed by outcome data. However, there are some insights that we consider to be critical when examining our data picture in order to appropriately interpret the school's likelihood of success at meeting the SUNY Trustees' high standards in the future.

Capital Prep Harlem extends the 15-year commitment of Capital Prep's Schools to serve all scholars and get them to and through college. Capital Prep Harlem is an outlier among other schools and networks in that we accept students starting in the middle school grades, when significant academic deficits have already occurred, and we backfill through 12th grade. Our students are generally poor, minority and come from the lowest performing schools.

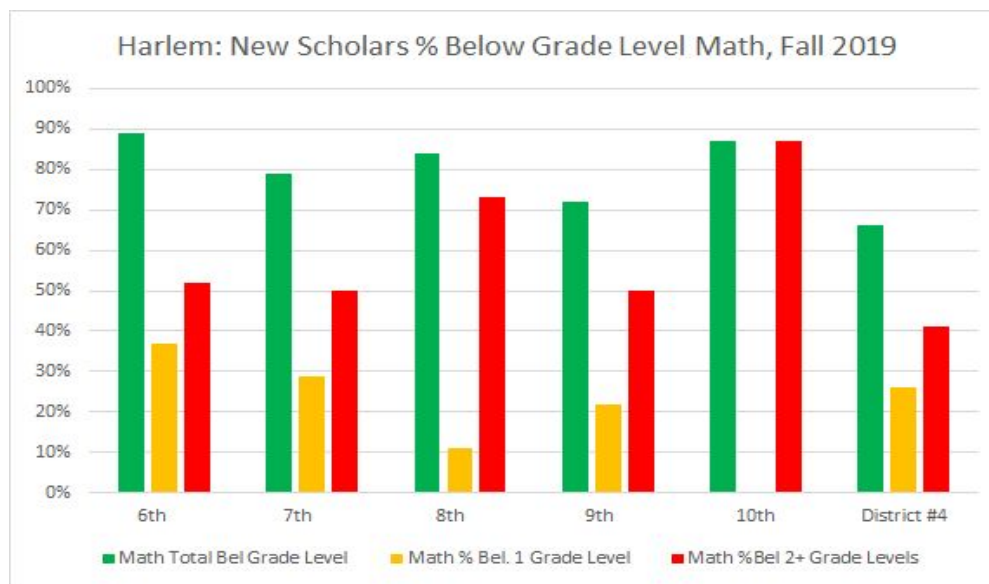
When assessing performance primarily via the New York State exam results, it is easy to overlook other equally important academic indicators such as the school's academic growth that exceeds national norms on NWEA MAP, students' early Regents participation and pass rates, and the practice of enrolling high school sophomores in college courses. The state exams are important assessments; however, the full data story must be one that reflects the importance of providing a longitudinal academic experience.

Comparisons between Capital Prep Harlem and other charter and district schools often falls short of establishing a "like for like" comparison. This is especially true as the school is, by design, building towards full enrollment in 6th through 9th grade. Upwards of 90% of the 99% minority and 70% poor children enrolled come to us from very low performing schools. The majority of them are at least two grade levels behind in math and ELA. Correcting the educational mistreatment our children have endured before coming to us requires more than teaching the fundamentals of ELA, math and science. We must establish a foundational trust with scholars and families.

The NWEA MAP graphs below depict the percent of scholars who come to us below grade level - nearly 90% in both math and ELA in grades 6 to 10. Since all 6th grade scholars were new to us, the graphs

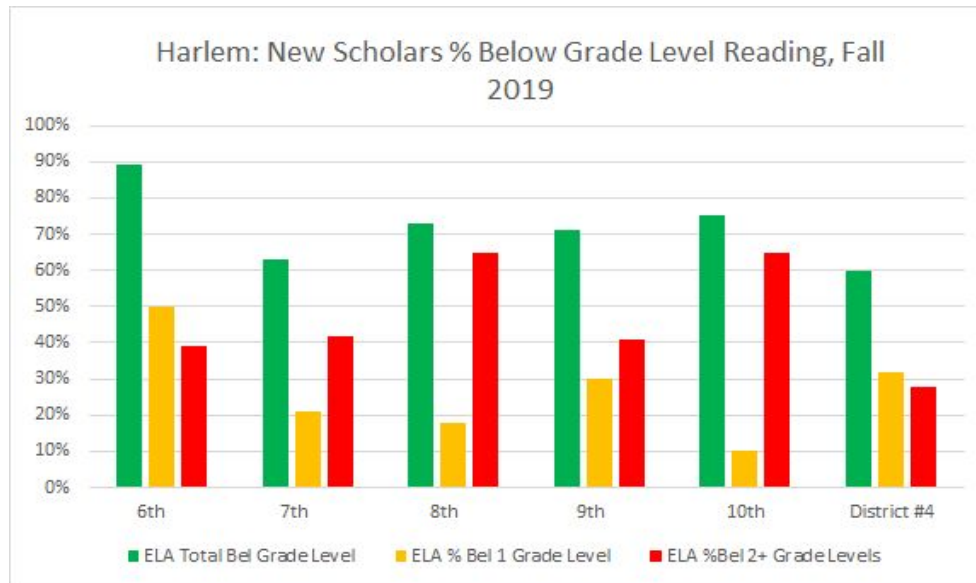


show that 90% of our 6th grade tested below grade level in both math and reading, with over 50% testing two or more grade levels below in math, and 40% testing two or more grade levels below in reading. A similar pattern existed for new scholars in all grade levels. The charts show how the majority of new students are at least two grades behind and how the older our new students are, the greater the percentage of them who are further behind. Said differently, the chart below shows that while 89% of our 10th graders are below grade level in math, all 89% are at least two grade levels behind. This is almost three times higher than the percentage of scholars in District 4 who are at least two grade levels below by the 10th grade.



It is worth noting that, according to The Children’s Reading Foundation, “by the end of third grade, 74 percent of struggling readers won’t ever catch up. In fact, one of the most important predictors of graduating from high school is reading proficiently by the end of third grade.” The statement “Won’t ever catch up,” is worth repeating as it depicts the depth of the challenge that Capital Prep Harlem deliberately accepts.

The percent of students who come to Capital Prep at least two grades behind in the 10th grade, seven years later, is double that of the neighborhood schools of District 4 when using state exam scores for the District in level 1 and 2 as a comparison. MAP data below the 65th percentile is defined as below grade-level.



The Children’s Foundation also says, “Without a strong foundation in reading, children are left behind at the beginning of their education. They lag in every class, year after year because more than 85 percent of the curriculum is taught by reading.” Capital Prep enrolled these children in college classes and had them take and pass Regents.

Knowing that the higher the grade we accept students, the further they will be behind could beg the question, “why do it”? Why accept scholars who are often overaged and under credited? Why not focus on the younger grades? We are resolute in our answer. Capital Prep Harlem’s Board believes that we are here to serve those who have been most underserved by the current education system.

Capital Prep operates like an alternative school who performs like a prep school. We know that every single student who graduates from Capital Prep Harlem will be accepted to a four-year college. Our scholars’ performance on the Regents Exams are but one example of how we are able to provide an exceptional academic experience. Consider just these two highlights:

- 1) The Common Core ELA Regents is typically taken in the 11th grade. In June of 2019, 17 scholars took the Regents as freshman. These scholars prepared for the Regents and were accelerated by our program because of successful MAP scores and strength in the classroom. All 17 of the scholars passed the exam for a pass rate of 100%.
- 2) In January of 2020, ten scholars took the Common Core ELA Regents, and eight of the ten passed the Regents for a pass rate of 80%.

Early exposure to college is a priority at Capital Prep. In the Fall of 2019, thirteen scholars in the 10th grade earned three college credits by passing a college course through Hostos Community College or Housatonic Community College. Capital Prep Harlem was the only school in NYC to have sophomores



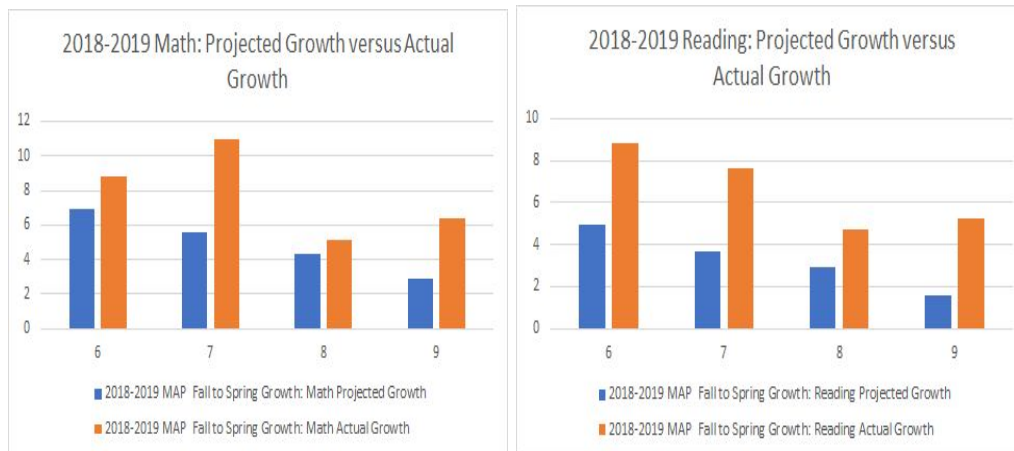
take college classes with Hostos Community College. The high school students from other schools taking courses at Hostos were in the 11th or 12th grade. Hostos allowed this because of Capital Prep's relationship building with the institution, and because we successfully made the case that our scholars were prepared and would be supported to ensure a high likelihood of success. The pass rate that semester was a remarkable 100%.

In the Spring of 2020, six scholars earned at least three college credits through Hostos Community College or Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport, CT, with one scholar earning nine college credits. This was despite the transition to distance learning, which was a significant hurdle to success.

In addition to Regents exams and college courses, the promise and potential of the Capital Prep model was captured in the Fall to Spring growth on MAP in the 2018-2019 school year. The charts below highlight extraordinary progress (2019-20 data unfortunately is not available due to constraints on administering the MAP with precision during the building closure). The graph below illustrates our scholars' growth when compared to their national peers.

All four of Harlem's grades experienced significantly accelerated growth in math. In fact, when compared to national norms, our growth percentiles among the 12 million students who took the exam from fall to spring were:

- 6th grade was in the 80th percentile,
- 7th grade was in the 99th percentile,
- 8th grade growth was in the 65th percentile,
- 9th grade growth was in the 93rd percentile



The same pattern was seen in reading. All grade levels experienced significantly accelerated growth. When compared to national norms, our growth percentiles were:

- 6th grade was in the 98th percentile,
- 7th grade was in the 98th percentile,
- 8th grade was in the 78th percentile,
- 9th grade was in the 94th percentile.



Despite these promising indicators, it is also imperative to note we are a reflective, self-aware organization, and as such we had identified challenges within our school that were reinforced by the evaluation report. The *Capital Prep Harlem School Improvement Plan, 2020-2025* was created during the 2019-20 school year. It represents the swift and aggressive shifts the Trustees, network and school leaders saw as necessary to ensure the ongoing improvement and success of scholars and Illuminators. It represents thoughtful self-reflection, and was created prior to receiving the Institute's feedback. The SIP outlines short- and long-term strategies to drive improvement, and establishes goals which align with accountability measures and metrics (both those instituted by CPS and school leaders as well as those used by SUNY). We share this in good faith to demonstrate our commitment and understanding of where to go from here. The information that follows highlights some of the most important changes we are making.

We continue to ensure the curriculum supports teachers with instructional planning.

Last year, our fourth, we were able to hire four designated directors of curriculum (DCs). The DCs were charged with identifying and writing as well as refining curriculum for all grades. They also were responsible for document creation that included lesson plans and assessments, including formative and summative assessments. This offered our faculty direction and our school consistency. We are currently focused on strengthening the granular differentiation necessary to effectively serve our scholars.

The network hired a new Assistant Superintendent of Academics has been hired. Ms. Danique Day previously served as principal of Success Harlem 1 for 9 years where she led the school to test in the top 5% in ELA and top 1% in math in the State. She will bring this expertise to both Harlem and the Bronx. As we continue to refine the co teaching model initially implemented in February, lesson plans will identify how the second teacher in the room should support differentiation and Illuminators will receive side-by-side coaching in the classrooms.

We are driving relentlessly toward providing high quality instruction in every classroom.

This year SEED is being implemented, which stands for a comprehensive System for Educator Evaluation and Development. This system is being used by our Connecticut school with positive results and feedback.

SEED is described as follows: "The SEED model was informed by research, including the Gates Foundation's Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) study. The MET study and other research have consistently found that no school-level factor matters more to student success than high-quality teachers. To support teachers, we need to clearly define effective practice, provide strong leadership, develop systems/practices that give accurate, useful information about strengths and development areas, and provide opportunities for growth and recognition throughout the career continuum."¹

The team is working to create a rigorous checklist for lesson plans and instruction that includes: social justice essential questions, learner expectations, common core state standard(s), and differentiation. These rigor checklists will work collaboratively with the more structured evaluation process to provide a clearer

¹ Online: <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Evaluation-and-Support/SEED-Model>



set of expectations, support and accountability to the consistent implementation of the Capital Prep model. Principals, deans and coaches will set goals for the year with each Illuminator through the establishment of an Individualized Illuminator Plan (IIP) which includes goals specific to that professional aligned to the school's accountability plan where appropriate.

When the Institute team visited in March the co teaching staff structure change was newly implemented. It is not an exaggeration to say that we looked at data during our comprehensive mid-year self-reflection, and spent a few days in the building observing and listening with a critical eye toward systems and routines, and decided immediate change was necessary. This is the strength of the charter model at work - leaders decided on a Friday that change was imperative, and on Monday morning the change was made. Granted, as a new staffing structure the implementation was a bit raw, and while we don't disagree with the observations in the evaluation report, a great deal has changed since that time.

The rationale for the change was two-fold: 1) bolstering classroom support for scholars and restructuring the school day to reduce unnecessary transitions; and, 2) improving our ability to observe and respond to Illuminators' needs. Leaders were well aware that individuals of varying capacity were struggling with instruction, and thus co teaching teams were thoughtfully paired to allow strengths and areas of need to combine into strong partnerships. Although we knew SUNY was visiting, we made this change anyway.

Capital Prep will never prioritize tradition and/or allow fear to keep us from making the changes we know are necessary. Co teaching continues through the building closure period and as we look to the fall, we will again reevaluate the pairings, adjusting plans to accommodate what we believe will be the strongest classroom environments for our scholars, and will find solutions to any lingering challenges. Whether the renewal site visit is virtual or in-person, we are confident the progress made in strengthening the co teaching model will shine.

This year school leaders will have more accountability to the renewal metrics (they will "own" their data), internal accountability goals, and the support faculty needs. Professional opportunities for coaching in the moment and giving a robust level of feedback will be clearly defined. Faculty and administrators will provide high levels of feedback aligned to SEED. An acute emphasis on data will guide interactions between school leaders and illuminators.

The network and school have exceptionally talented, strong instructional leaders in place.

The school's Principals, Academic Deans and Instructional Coaches are strong instructional leaders who will be supporting teachers and team members. Capital Prep Harlem recently hired a high-caliber Principal for the high school grades. The former interim Principal will be the permanent Principal at the middle school level. Each will work closely with a dedicated Academic Dean, and receive network support

A positive new development to highlight is the creation of more targeted coaching cycles. The middle and high school teams in collaboration with the network Directors of Curriculum and Instruction will create an instructional coaching cycle aligned to support teachers with planning, classroom observations, walk throughs. Teachers will receive written feedback and will provide weekly coaching to focus on classroom



instruction, student engagement and assessment. The weekly coaching check in's will be individualized and aligned to the teacher's Individual Illuminator Plan. The coaching meetings will be followed with specific next steps in TEACHBoost.

At the start of the COVID closure we began Data Wise - a program out of Harvard through which our schools have developed both a structure and language for data-driven decision making. The middle and high school teams schedule weekly Data Wise meetings to focus on student progress, child study teams, RTI, attendance, and progress toward standards mastery. The Data Wise meetings will also focus on SWD and ELL student progress and compliance tracking and identification of students requiring services or intervention.

A commitment to the needs of at-risk students.

A unique aspect of the Capital Prep model is the intentional approach to providing affective supports - in fact, our internal lingo refers to two parallel houses, academic and affective. A Student Assistant Team delivers the vast majority of supports and interventions for students at-risk at Capital Prep Harlem, with help on the academic side from special education teachers and starting in fall 2020 a certified ENL teacher. A network level Special Education Coordinator works with inclusion Illuminators to ensure programs and services are provided and works closely with the CSE to ensure IEP compliance and request modifications to best meet individual needs.

Capital Prep Harlem identifies students who are struggling academically/behaviorally and at risk for academic failure. We define a struggling student as a student who has difficulty in comparison to peers of the same age in a developmentally appropriate learning environment. These scholars may become very overwhelmed by tasks, have limited social and emotional skills and have difficulty organizing themselves in the learning environment. School must deliver a strong Response to Intervention (RTI) process. The multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of students with learning and behavior needs is being strengthened with a rigorous revision to our established policies and procedures which will be rolled out to all staff this summer. It begins with high-quality instruction in the general education classroom with research-backed supports and strategies that scale-up with constant data review and monitoring. The identification and support of an at-risk student is reviewed and monitored continuously. We have work to do to ensure all scholars are receiving top-notch, targeted and effective supports, but we are committed to improvement, particularly in the development of our supports for English language learners. We are working quickly to refine the program for English language/Multi-language learners.

Trustees are working alongside leaders to achieve the accountability plan goals.

The Trustees have continued to practice strong governance. As noted above, the SIP 2020-25 created this year outlines short-term and long-term strategies to improve performance directly aligned with the SUNY renewal benchmarks. This plan also set clear goals to help monitor improvement efforts and outcome data. The Trustees are mindful of the need to align all evaluation tools (self-evaluation, network evaluation, School performance monitoring/dashboards) to the accountability metrics, renewal benchmarks and our mission and model. Recently, the Board formalized key committees (real estate,



parent outreach and marketing and communications) which will provide structure and will lead efforts to tackle some of the looming challenges ahead.