



THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT
BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER
SCHOOL*

Report Date: February 2, 2018

Visit Date: November 3, 2017

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INTRODUCTION & REPORT FORMAT

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

THE INSTITUTE MAKES ALL RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON

A SCHOOL’S
APPLICATION
FOR CHARTER
RENEWAL

INFORMATION
GATHERED DURING
THE CHARTER TERM

ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE

FISCAL SOUNDNESS

LEGAL COMPLIANCE

RENEWAL
EVALUATION VISIT



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

1. Revised September 4,
2013 and available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Policies/.

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REPORT FORMAT

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



Additional information about the SUNY renewal process and an overview of the requirements for renewal under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended, the “Act”) are available on the Institute’s website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/renewal.

RENEWAL QUESTIONS

1. IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?
2. IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?
3. IS THE SCHOOL FISCALLY SOUND?
4. IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE EDUCATION CORPORATION’S AUTHORITY TO OPERATE THE SCHOOL, ARE ITS PLANS FOR THE SCHOOL REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?

2. Version 5.0, May 2012, available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Benchmarks/.

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



RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

Full-Term Renewal The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Charter Renewal of Brooklyn Ascend Charter School and renew Ascend Charter Schools' authority to operate the school for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten – 12th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 1,511 students.

To earn an **Initial Full-Term Renewal**, a school must either:



have compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or coming close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, and have in place at the time of the renewal review an educational program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks,³ is generally effective; or,



have made progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals and have in place at the time of the renewal review an education program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, is particularly strong and effective.⁴

REQUIRED FINDINGS

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the school has met the SUNY Trustees' specific renewal criteria, the Institute makes the following findings required by the Act:

1:

the school, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal, meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations;

2:

the education corporation can demonstrate the ability to operate the school in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and,

3:

given the programs it will offer, its structure and its purpose, approving the school to operate for another five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.⁵

3. The Qualitative Education Benchmarks are a subset of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

4. SUNY Renewal Policies (p. 12).

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

Enrollment and retention targets apply to all charter schools approved pursuant to any of the Institute’s Request for Proposal (“RFP”) processes (August 2010-present) and charter schools that applied for renewal after January 1, 2011. Brooklyn Ascend Charter School (“Brooklyn Ascend”) received its original charter on January 15, 2008 from the New York City Schools Chancellor (the “NYC Chancellor”), who awarded a full-term five year renewal in March 2013. Per the amendments to the Act in 2010, charter schools are required to make good faith efforts to meet enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners (“ELLs”), and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch (“FRPL”) program.

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it will put in place to meet or exceed SUNY’s enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, and FRPL eligible students. SUNY and the New York State Board of Regents (the “Board of Regents”) finalized the methodology for setting targets in October 2012, and the Institute communicated specific targets for each school, where applicable, in July 2013. Since that time, new schools receive targets during their first year of operation and others receive targets at renewal.

Brooklyn Ascend makes good-faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets. Although Brooklyn Ascend falls short of its enrollment targets, Ascend Learning, Inc. (“Ascend Learning” or the “network”) is developing a comprehensive and strategic initiative to increase recruitment of these student subgroups for the upcoming recruitment season. These efforts include:

- partnering with community organizer, Community LinkED to work in partnership with the network’s recruitment team to conduct extensive outreach at key locations and organizations that serve a large number of economically disadvantaged children, students with disabilities, and ELLs, such as Bushwick United Head Start, Nuestros Niños Child Development Center, and New Life Child Development Center; regularly updating the school’s website and social media platforms;
- advertising in English and Spanish on MTA buses;
- distributing marketing materials in English and Spanish at New York Housing Authority developments, day cares, community centers, and cultural organizations serving non-English speakers;
- conducting events at schools that serve high populations of ELLs and students with disabilities; and,

- Increasing capacity of the network’s recruitment efforts by hiring a chief operating officer that manages the student recruitment team and provides more consistent, strategic guidance and oversight of the recruitment efforts, as well as, a communications manager that supports the development of marketing materials.

For additional information on the school’s enrollment and retention target progress, see Appendix A.

CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS

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

As of the date of this report, the Institute has received no district comments in response to the renewal application. A summary of public comments submitted to the Institute appears in Appendix C.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

BACKGROUND

Brooklyn Ascend received its original charter from the NYC Chancellor on January 15, 2008, and received a full-term five year renewal in March 2013. The school merged with the SUNY authorized Canarsie Ascend Charter School (“Canarsie Ascend”) effective July 1, 2016. Brooklyn Ascend opened its doors in the fall of 2008 initially serving students in Kindergarten – 2nd grade. The school is authorized to serve 1,277 students in Kindergarten – 11th grade during the 2017-18 school year. If granted renewal, the SUNY Trustees would approve Brooklyn Ascend to grow to serve students in Kindergarten – 12th grade, with a projected total enrollment of 1,511 students. Brooklyn Ascend is the oldest school operated by Ascend Charter Schools.

The current charter term expires on June 30, 2018. A subsequent charter term would enable the school to operate through June 30, 2023. The elementary school grades of Brooklyn Ascend are located in private leased space at 205 Rockaway Parkway, Brooklyn, NY in New York City Community School District (“CSD”) 18. The middle school grades of Brooklyn Ascend are located in private leased space at 123 East 98th Street, Brooklyn, NY in CSD 17. The high school grades of Brooklyn Ascend are located in private leased space at 1501 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn, NY in CSD 23. All schools within the education corporation, operate under the management of Ascend Learning, a New York not-for-profit charter management organization based in New York City. By contract, the network provides the schools with academic, operational, facilities, and back-office assistance. Schools utilize the network’s curriculum and assessment materials. The network is also responsible for managing and evaluating the performance of each school and school leader, and reporting out to the Ascend Charter Schools board.

The mission of Brooklyn Ascend is:

“

The mission of every Ascend school is to equip our students with the knowledge, confidence, and character to succeed in college and beyond. By offering a rich liberal arts education in a supportive environment, we animate children’s natural sense of curiosity and prepare students to think on their own, thrive on their own, and engage the world as informed, responsible citizens.

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Brooklyn Ascend is one of seven schools, two of which are not yet open, that Ascend Charter Schools, a not-for-profit charter school education corporation, has authority to operate. Effective July 1, 2016, three NYC Chancellor authorized schools merged together with two SUNY authorized schools. The SUNY authorized Canarsie Ascend Charter School remained as the surviving education corporation under the name “Ascend Charter Schools.” The SUNY Trustees approved two additional schools in June 2017, to be opened in the fall of 2018. 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). It can be done through a merger with one or more education corporations, or replication under the current education corporation.



SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Brooklyn Ascend is an academic success. The school has consistently met its key Accountability Plan goals in both English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics over the current charter term and has demonstrated success in the following manner:

- Brooklyn Ascend steadily increased its absolute proficiency in ELA over the past three years. From 2014-15 to 2016-17 the school’s proficiency rate improved 20 percentage points leading them to outperform the district in 2016-17 by 18%. The school also posted a mean growth percentile of 55.6 in the most recent year, 5.6 percentile points above the target of 50.
- In mathematics, the school improved its absolute proficiency more than 20% over the past three years. Most recently, in 2016-17 the school outperformed the district by 29 percentage points. Similar to ELA, the school also surpassed its mean growth percentile goal over the past two years by 16.9 percentile points and 15.2 percentile points, respectively.
- The proficiency rate of students with disabilities on the ELA state assessment was nearly double that of their district peers. In mathematics, the proficiency rate of students with disabilities increased by 9 percentage points from 2015-16 to 2016-17.
- Brooklyn Ascend met its science goal over the charter term, exceeding the absolute target of 75 and outperforming the district by 12 percentage points during the 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years. In 2016-17, 31% of 4th grade students scored at a level 4 on the science assessment, the highest level possible.

In addition to the quantitative gains made over the charter term, the school benefits from an academic program that is qualitatively strong, as observed at the time of the renewal visit. The school’s strong instructional leadership team provides effective support to teachers in a manner that substantially improves teaching and learning. School leaders provide weekly professional development in addition to individualized coaching aligned to schoolwide priorities targeting student performance and school culture. The elementary and middle school grades implement the network-provided curriculum, whereas teachers in the high school grades have more autonomy in creating rigorous standards aligned instructional material. Teachers and school leaders at Brooklyn Ascend closely monitor student performance on formative and summative assessments. Leaders guide teachers in reviewing item and standard analyses to adjust instruction as appropriate. Together, the strong instructional leadership, deep focus on using student assessment data to drive performance, and rigorous curricular materials contribute to the high-quality instruction evident in Brooklyn Ascend classrooms.

Based on the Institute’s review of the school’s performance as posted over the charter term when it was an independent school authorized by the NYC Chancellor and following the merger; a review of the Application for Charter Renewal submitted by Ascend Charter Schools; a review of academic, organizational, governance, and financial documentation; and a visit to the school, the Institute finds that the school meets the required criteria for charter renewal.

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees grant Brooklyn Ascend an Initial Full-Term Renewal.

NOTEWORTHY

Innovative in its approach to fostering students’ love of learning, Brooklyn Ascend offers high school students a Maker’s Workshop class to engage them in hands-on learning. Maker’s creations have included joy sticks, car models, and underwater drones. The school offers the class to all students and allows students to take additional workshops as electives.

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ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

Brooklyn Ascend is an academic success. The school met its key Accountability Plan goals during the year it was authorized by SUNY and would have met its goals in years prior. Based on evidence compiled at the time of the renewal review, Brooklyn Ascend's academic program is effective and supported by strong instructional leadership.

The Act outlines the requirement that authorizers “change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems by holding [charter] schools . . . accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.”⁶ As described in this report, Brooklyn Ascend has satisfied the requirements of the Act as well as the SUNY Renewal Policies⁷ as it has made progress toward achieving its Accountability Plan goals and implements a particularly strong and effective educational program. Brooklyn Ascend's curriculum, assessment system, instructional design, and leadership combine into a demonstrably successful implementation of Ascend Learning's model. The strength of that model, detailed in Appendix E, along with the strong and sustained student performance outcomes at Brooklyn Ascend, provide the foundation for the Institute's analysis that: 1) the school posts sufficient evidence to support the conclusion it meets the academic and organizational criteria required by the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks; and, 2) the school merits a five-year renewal recommendation.

6. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

7. SUNY Renewal Policies (pp. 12-15).

8. Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision before student achievement results for the final year of a charter term become available, the Accountability Period ends with the school year prior to the final year of the charter term. For a school in an initial charter term, the Accountability Period covers the first four years the school provides instruction to students. In this renewal report, the Institute uses “charter term” and “Accountability Period” interchangeably.

9. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

10. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,⁸ 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. The Institute examines results for five required Accountability Plan measures to determine ELA and mathematics goal attainment. Because the Act requires charters be held “accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results”⁹ and states the educational programs at a charter school must “meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the Board of Regents”¹⁰ for other public schools, SUNY's required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by statewide assessments. Historically, SUNY's required measures include measures that present schools':

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

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

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

Every SUNY authorized charter school has the opportunity to propose additional measures of success when crafting its Accountability Plan. Brooklyn Ascend did not propose or include any additional measures of success in the Accountability Plan it adopted.

The Institute analyzes every measure included in the school's Accountability Plan to determine its level of academic success, including the extent to which the school has established and maintained a record of high performance, and established progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals throughout the initial charter term. Since 2009, the Institute has examined but consistently de-emphasized the two absolute measures under each goal in elementary and middle schools' Accountability Plans because of changes to the state's assessment system. The analysis of elementary and middle school performance continues to focus primarily on the two comparative measures and the growth measure while also considering the two required absolute measures and any additional evidence the school presents using additional measures identified in its Accountability Plan. The Institute identifies the required measures (absolute proficiency, absolute Annual Measurable Objective attainment, comparison to local district, comparison to demographically similar schools, and student growth) in the Performance Summaries appearing in Appendix B.

The Institute analyzes all measures under the school's ELA and mathematics goals (and high school graduation and college preparation goals for schools enrolling students in high school grades) while emphasizing the school's comparative performance and growth to determine goal attainment. The Institute calculates a comparative effect size to measure the performance of Brooklyn Ascend relative to all public schools statewide that serve the same grade levels and that enroll similar concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. It is important to note that this measure is a comparison measure and therefore any changes in New York's assessment system do not compromise its validity or reliability. Further, the school's performance on the measure is not relative to the test, but relative to the strength of Brooklyn Ascend's demonstrated student learning compared to other schools' demonstrated student learning.

The Institute uses the state's growth percentile analysis as a measure of Brooklyn Ascend's comparative year-to-year growth in student performance on the state's ELA and mathematics exams. The measure compares a school's growth in assessment scores to the growth in assessment scores of the subset of students throughout the state who performed identically on previous years' assessments. According to this measure, median growth statewide is at the 50th percentile. This means that to signal the school's ability to help students make one year's

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worth of growth in one year's time the expected percentile performance is 50. To signal a school is increasing students' performance above their peers (students statewide who scored previously at the same level), the school must post a percentile performance that exceeds 50.

The Accountability Plan also includes science and No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) goals. Please note that for schools located in New York City, the Institute uses the CSD as the local school district.



SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK :GOALS

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

Brooklyn Ascend met its key academic Accountability Plan goal in ELA throughout the charter term. After coming close to meeting its mathematics goal in 2014-15, the school met its goal in the two following years, exceeding the targets under all comparative and growth measures. Brooklyn Ascend has demonstrated a clear upward trend in absolute performance from 2014-15 through 2015-16 in both ELA and mathematics. The school also met its science and NCLB goals.

Brooklyn Ascend met its key Accountability Plan goal in ELA, posting strong performance over the charter term. The school demonstrated a consistent upward trend in absolute performance over the past three years, increasing the percentage of its students scoring at or above proficiency on the state's ELA exam by 20 percentage points from 2014-15 to 2016-17. Brooklyn Ascend also outperformed CSD 18 each year of that same period, consistently growing the gap between the school and the district. Notably, the school outperformed the district by 18 percentage points in 2016-17. In comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students, the school performed higher than expected to a large degree during 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17. The school also showed commendable growth during the charter term. After posting a mean growth percentile narrowly under the target of 50 during 2014-15, the school exceeded the target the following two years by eight and six percentile points, respectively.

Brooklyn Ascend came close to meeting its mathematics goal in 2014-15 and proceeded to meet the goal in 2015-16 and 2016-17. During 2014-15, 30% of the school's students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficiency, outperforming the district by seven percentage points. In comparison to schools across New York State with similar demographics, the school performed higher than expected to a small degree. The school posted a mean growth percentile four points under the target of 50. During the 2015-16 school year, the school increased its absolute proficiency by 14 percentage points and grew the gap between the school and the district to 21 percentage points. Brooklyn Ascend also posted improved performance against its effect size measure, exceeding the target and performing higher than expected to a large degree compared to demographically similar schools. Concomitant with its improved absolute performance, the school exceeded the target under its growth measure, posting a mean growth percentile 17 points above the state median. Brooklyn Ascend continued its laudable upward performance trend into 2016-17,

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when 54% of its students enrolled for at least two years scored at or above proficient, 29 percentage points above the district's performance. The school continued to perform higher than expected to a large degree in comparison to schools enrolling similar percentages of students who are economically disadvantaged. The school also met its growth measure, posting a mean growth percentile of 65, which is 15 points above the target

Brooklyn Ascend met its science goal over the charter term. During the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years, the school's 4th and 8th grade students enrolled in at least their second year posted proficiency rates that exceed the absolute target of 75 each year. The school outperformed the district by 12 percentage points during 2014-15 and 2015-16. Comparison data for 2016-17 is not yet available.

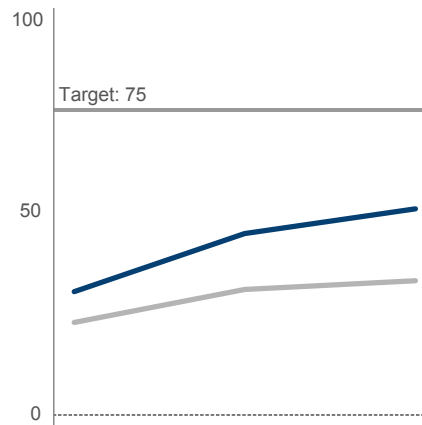
Brooklyn Ascend met its NCLB goal throughout the charter term, having never been identified as a focus or priority school.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

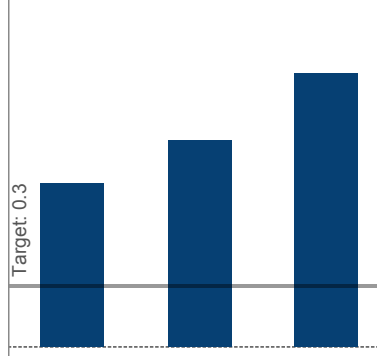
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

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**.



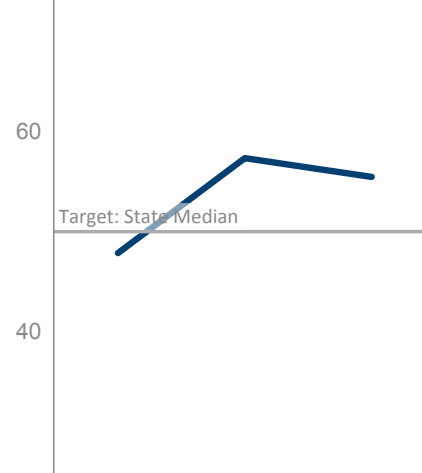
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	School %
2015	3-8	23	31
2016	3-8	31	45
2017	3-8	33	51

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.



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2015	3-8	0.79
2016	3-8	0.99
2017	3-8	1.31

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



Test Year	School Mean Growth
2015	47.9
2016	57.5
2017	55.6

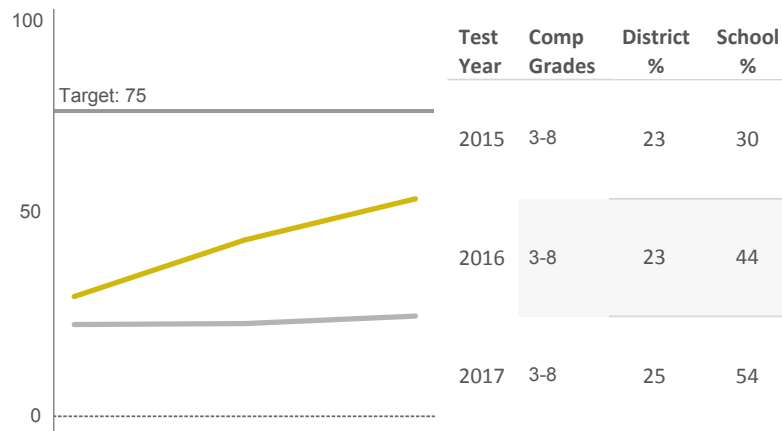
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ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

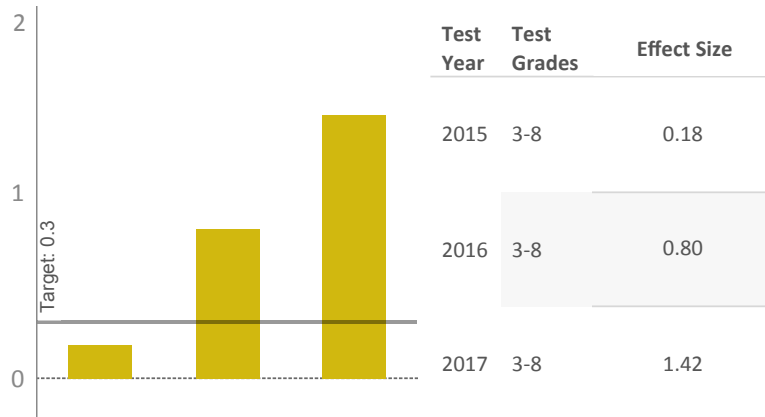
BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

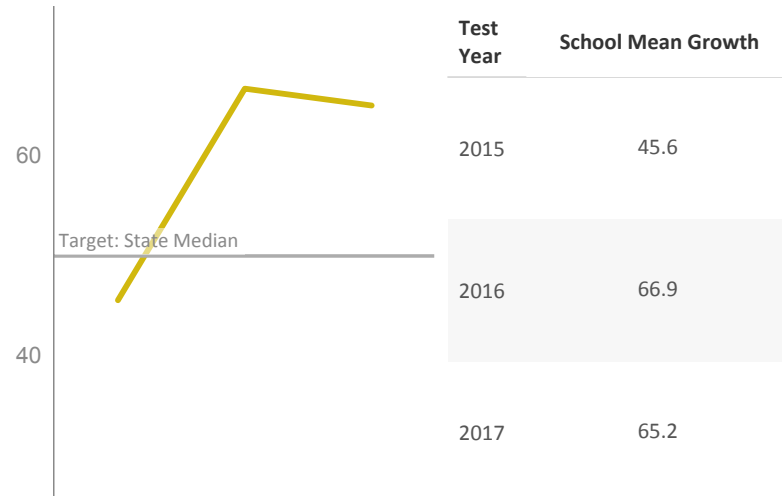
Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percentage of students at **the school** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in mathematics will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in **the district**.



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 the state's unadjusted median growth percentile in **mathematics**.



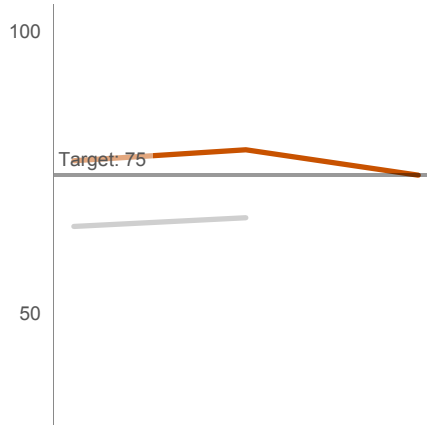
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ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

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



	District %	School %
2015	66	78
2016	67	79
2017		75

SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE

	2015	2016	2017
Enrollment Receiving Mandated Academic Services	122	168	180
Tested on State Exam	71	98	108
School Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	2.8	11.2	11.1
District Percent Proficient	4.3	6.8	6.8

	2015	2016	2017
ELL Enrollment	7	11	12
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	7	11	12
School Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress on NYSESLAT	42.9	36.4	33.3

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.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUMMARY

Brooklyn Ascend provides students with an engaging and rigorous educational program. The school's curriculum supports teachers in instructional planning. Teachers at the elementary and middle school grades work with the network curriculum team to monitor the effectiveness of the program. At the high school level, the school has curricular release days one time per quarter for each content area. During these release days, teachers review curriculum and assessments to be fully prepared to teach their upcoming units of study.

Brooklyn Ascend's assessment system improves instructional effectiveness and student learning. Teachers upload daily exit tickets, unit quizzes, and benchmark assessments into Illuminate, an online data platform, to monitor student performance. Teachers and school leaders conduct item and standards analyses to pinpoint student misunderstandings and develop effective strategies to meet students' academic needs.

Brooklyn Ascend's instructional leadership team supports teachers with intensive coaching and tailored professional development relevant to classroom practices. School leaders provide targeted training to teachers based on school priorities. Additionally, school leaders administer self-evaluation surveys designed to identify areas for further development. After identifying a need for more training in supporting at-risk students, instructional leaders are developing an agenda for professional development sessions in this area. Currently, the school supports students with disabilities, ELLs, and students struggling academically through integrated co-teaching ("ICT"), special education teacher support services ("SETSS"), and additional interventions built into the daily schedule.

Please refer to Appendix E for additional information on the Brooklyn Ascend program model and how it meets the demands of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE



IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

Brooklyn Ascend is an effective and viable organization that has in place the key design elements identified in its charter.

IS THE SCHOOL FAITHFUL TO ITS MISSION AND DOES IT IMPLEMENT THE KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS INCLUDED IN ITS CHARTER?

Brooklyn Ascend is faithful to its mission and key design elements. These can be found in the School Background section at the beginning of the report and Appendix A, respectively. Brooklyn Ascend is an effective and viable organization that promotes high levels of student achievement. The school implements the network's educational program, and the school network staff continually monitor student achievement.

ARE PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS SATISFIED WITH THE SCHOOL?

To report on parent satisfaction with the school's program, the Institute used survey data, information gathered from a focus group of parents representing a cross section of students, and data regarding persistence in enrollment.

Parent Survey Data. The Institute compiled data from the New York City Department of Education's (the "NYCDOE's") 2016-17 NYC School Survey. NYCDOE distributes the survey every year to compile data about school culture, instruction, and systems for improvement. In 2016-17, 91% of families who received the survey responded. Parents indicate strong satisfaction (93%) with the school's program. Given the high response rate, these results are considered representative of the school community.

Parent Focus Group. The Institute asks all schools facing renewal to convene a representative set of parents for a focus group discussion. A representative set includes parents of students in attendance at the school for multiple years, parents of students new to the school, parents of students receiving general education services, parents of students with special needs, and parents of ELLs. The eight parents in attendance indicated satisfaction with the educational program, frequency of communication, and individualized academic supports provided to students. Parents expressed a desire for additional after school programs, particularly in the lower school.

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:MISSION

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:SATISFACTION

Persistence in Enrollment. An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2016-17, 86% of Brooklyn Ascend students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data from previous years of the charter term is available in Appendix A.

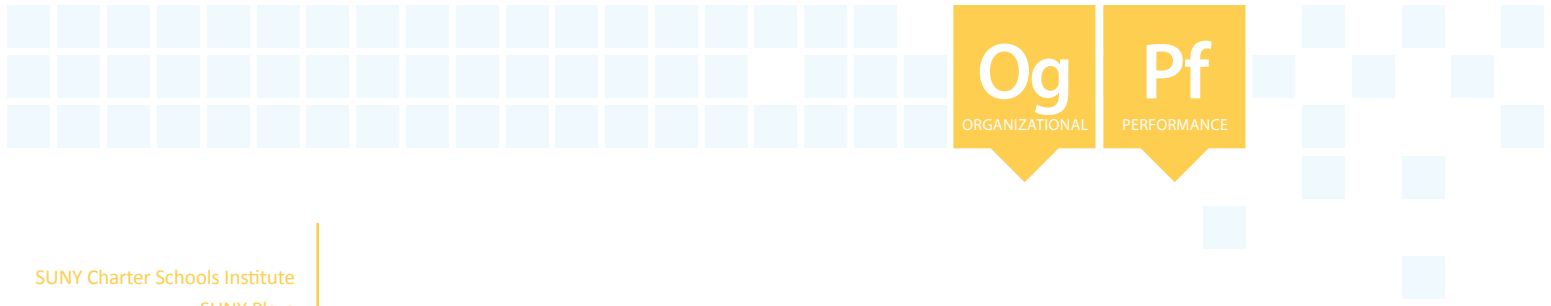
The Institute derived the statistical information on persistence in enrollment from its database. No comparative data from the NYCDOE or the New York State Education Department (“NYSED”) is available to the Institute to provide either district or statewide context.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK :POLICIES

DOES THE BOARD IMPLEMENT, MAINTAIN, AND ABIDE BY APPROPRIATE POLICIES, SYSTEMS, AND PROCESSES?

The Ascend Charter Schools board materially and substantially implements, maintains, and abides by adequate and appropriate policies, systems, and processes to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. The board demonstrates a clear understanding of its role in holding the school leadership and partner organization accountable for both academic results and fiscal soundness.

- During the current charter term, the board successfully merged its schools in order to streamline governance and operations of the schools.
- The board held its partnership organization accountable and worked together to overhaul the curriculum used in the schools, leading to better academic results.
- Recently the board requested and received an updated dashboard format from the network evidencing the board’s reflection on information it was receiving.
- In addition to the dashboard, the board receives reports from network staff, school-level staff, and board committees regarding academics, recruitment, facilities, development, and finances.
- The board works in a committee structure creating ad hoc committees for special projects. Most recently an ad hoc committee was looking into board self-evaluation.
- Regularly at board meetings, the director of one of the school sites presents regarding how that school is doing to allow the board to spend time with each school leader.
- On the heels of its academic success, the board applied for and the SUNY Trustees awarded two additional schools in June 2017, expanding Ascend Charter Schools’ portfolio based on its record and capacity to expand the program.
- The board is thoughtful as to school expansion and held its partner organization to stabilizing the current portfolio before seeking expansion.
- The board has materially complied with the terms of its by-laws and code of ethics.



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**SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK**
:COMPLIANCE

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

The education corporation substantially complied with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and provisions of its charter with one minor exception.

- **Complaints.** The Institute received no formal complaints regarding the school.
- **Compliance.** The Institute issued the school no violation letters regarding the school during the charter term.



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FISCAL PERFORMANCE



IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Based on a review of the fiscal evidence collected through the renewal review, Ascend Charter Schools is fiscally sound as is its school, Brooklyn Ascend. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard presents color-coded tables and charts indicating that Brooklyn Ascend and the education corporation have demonstrated fiscal soundness over the majority of the charter term.¹¹ (The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard for Brooklyn Ascend is included in Appendix D, and the Fiscal Dashboard for the merged education corporation is included in Appendix F). The discussion that follows relates mainly to the education corporation because the school is no longer a legally distinct fiscal entity.

Brooklyn Ascend had limited financial resources to ensure stable operations, but the school has made noticeable progress over the past year. Effective July 1, 2016, five schools merged together with Canarsie Ascend Charter School as the surviving entity. Brooklyn Ascend and two other Ascend schools originally authorized by the NYC Chancellor merged into SUNY as the authorizer. In addition to analyzing the soundness of the individual charter schools, the Institute analyzed the soundness of the not-for-profit education corporation granted the authority to operate the schools and finds it too has adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations, and that recent improvements have been made to further strengthen the financial condition. The fiscal dashboards reflect the independent entity as “fiscally needs monitoring” prior to the merger and “fiscally adequate” as a merged entity.

The Institute continues to closely monitor the financial condition of Ascend Charter Schools. Improvements have been made in the accounting systems technology and reporting alignment features. Fiscal benchmarks show improvement at the end of the charter term as reflected in Appendix F where two of the fiscal benchmarks show notable improvement.

The merger allows the schools to realize efficiencies associated with operations, and capacity to share programs and resources in the areas of academic program, fiscal management and operational support, human resources, technology, and public relations. The financial model is intended to ensure that all fully enrolled schools are financially sustainable, operating the school’s program solely through public funding.

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

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The school's management organization, Ascend Learning, supports Brooklyn Ascend in the areas of academic program, fiscal management and operational support, human resources, technology, and public relations under the terms of a management agreement. Ascend Charter Schools pays a service fee of 11.5% for the school for services provided under the agreement. The network management fee for each school within the merged education corporation varies from 11.5% to 15%, depending on the age of the school and the number of sites.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK :BUDGETS

DOES THE SCHOOL OPERATE PURSUANT TO A FISCAL PLAN IN WHICH IT CREATES REALISTIC BUDGETS THAT IT MONITORS AND ADJUSTS WHEN APPROPRIATE?

Brooklyn Ascend has in the past minimally employed budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures but has recently taken steps to improve.

- On an annual basis, the school leadership and network staff coordinate the development of the annual and long-term budget preparation and present to the Ascend Charter Schools board finance committee.
- The projected five-year renewal budget reflects steady revenues and expenses associated with full enrollment as the school will fill out the Kindergarten – 12th grade capacity for the renewal charter term in the first year thereof.
- Brooklyn Ascend lower, middle, and high school grades are all located in separate renovated leased spaces, and all are under long term leases and responsible for rent, repairs, utilities, insurance, and janitorial costs. This is a factor in each Ascend school's financial dashboard and Ascend Charter Schools overall. Charter schools in free, co-located NYCDOE space, in contrast, would have a stronger financial position.
- Effective July 1, 2016, the merger allows for operating efficiencies and purchasing power, which are shared expenses with four other charters related by common management.

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK :INTERNAL CONTROLS

DOES THE SCHOOL MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES?

Brooklyn Ascend and the merged education corporation Ascend Charter Schools have maintained fiscal policies, procedures and practices, and appropriate internal controls, and have recently taken steps to update their policies and procedures.

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- The education corporation's Financial Policies and Procedures Manual is a guide for all internal controls and procedures. Recently updated, written policies address key issues including financial reporting, cash disbursements and receipts, payroll, bank reconciliations, fixed assets, grants/contributions, capitalization and accounting, procurement, and investments.
- The Brooklyn Ascend audit report for June 30, 2017 had no findings of material deficiencies, and prior year, non-material findings have been rectified regarding the general ledger maintenance and account analysis. To directly address the issues, Ascend Learning filled the controller and other vacant finance positions. The increased staffing has provided more timely and accurate financial reporting.

DOES THE SCHOOL COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

Brooklyn Ascend and the merged education corporation Ascend Charter Schools have minimally complied with financial reporting requirements but have recently taken steps to improve charter compliance.

- The Institute has noted recent receipt of required quarterly financial reports that had previously tended to be late, incomplete, and in need of revisions.
- Independent audits of annual financial statements have received unqualified opinions with no material weaknesses or instances of non-compliance observed. In a previous year, the external auditor noted the unnecessary delays in audit work due to Ascend Charter Schools not being ready for annual audits. This has been corrected and is no longer a finding in the most recent audit report of June 30, 2017.
- The Brooklyn Ascend individual education corporation and merged entity continually filed key reports late including budgets and unaudited quarterly reports of revenue, expenses, and enrollment. Recently the school and merged education corporation required submissions have been timely, complete, and accurate.
- The Institute received the audited financial statements for June 30, 2017 by the due date of November 1, 2017, and the report shows stronger financial health of the education corporation.

**SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK**
: FINANCIAL
REPORTING

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK : OPERATIONS

DOES THE SCHOOL MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE STABLE OPERATIONS?

Brooklyn Ascend and the merged education corporation Ascend Charter Schools have maintained limited financial resources to ensure stable operations but recently have made solid improvements to the financial health.

- Brooklyn Ascend opened in 2008 with the NYCDOE as charter authorizer and generated a mix of operating surpluses and deficits from school operations since opening. The school had net assets of (\$3.7 million) and 15 days of cash on hand as of June 30, 2016, the time of the merger.
- The merged education corporation benefits from a combined balance sheet, which is a combination of individual schools' assets and liabilities. In order to track the operations of any individual school within the merged education corporation, the Institute tracks each individual school's revenues and expenses in order to report operating surpluses or deficits.
- As of the most recent audited financial statements for June 30, 2017, the merged Ascend Charter Schools had total net assets of approximately (\$427,913) and 28 days of cash on hand to pay bills coming due shortly. The benchmark is 30 days of cash on hand. The current financial condition is an improvement from the previous year when the merged total net assets were (\$1.1 million) with only 23 days of cash on hand.
- The reason for the negative net assets is that all five of the Ascend schools' balance sheets contain deferred rent as a long term liability. All rental payments are recognized on a straight-line basis as an offset to rent expense with the difference being recorded as a deferred rent liability. As of June 30, 2017, the deferred rent liability for Ascend Charter Schools was approximately \$13 million.
- As a merged entity, the dissolution fund reserve is \$75,000 for the first two schools and \$25,000 for additional schools up to a maximum of \$350,000. Ascend Charter Schools has established dissolution reserve funds and have complied with the minimum required balance of \$225,000 for the number of operating schools in the merged education corporation.

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FUTURE PLANS



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

The education corporation’s plans for the school are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. Brooklyn Ascend plans to continue to grow to Kindergarten – 12th grade.

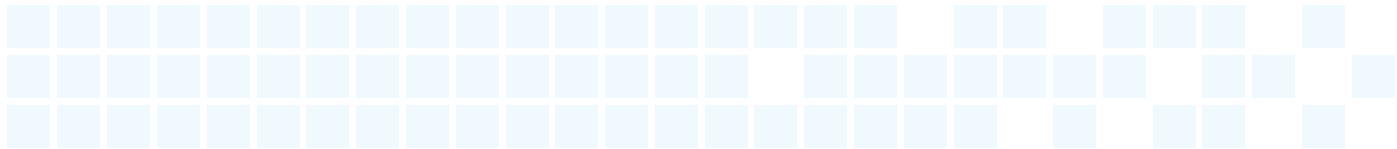
Plans for the School’s Structure. The education corporation has provided all of the key structural elements for a charter renewal and those elements are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

Plans for the Educational Program. Brooklyn Ascend plans to continue to implement the same core elements of its educational program that enabled the school to meet or exceed its key Accountability Plan goals in the current charter term. These elements are likely to enable the school to meet or exceed its academic goals in the next charter term. Over the next charter term Brooklyn Ascend will continue to grow to serve Kindergarten – 12th grade.

Plans for Board Oversight & Governance. Current board members express interest in continuing to serve Ascend Charter Schools in the future. The board may add new trustees in the next charter term.

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

	CURRENT	END OF NEXT CHARTER TERM
Enrollment	1,277	1,511
Grade Span	K-11	K-12
Teaching Staff	127	127
Days of Instruction	182	182



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Brooklyn Ascend plans to provide instruction for the lower, middle, and high school grades in the existing three renovated leased school spaces under long-term lease agreements for the next charter term.

The school’s Application for Charter Renewal contains all necessary elements as required by the Act. The proposed school calendar allots an appropriate amount of instructional time to meet or exceed instructional time requirements, and taken together with other academic and key design elements, should be sufficient to allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals.



Brooklyn
Ascend

Ax

APPENDICES

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FISCAL DASHBOARD

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ED CORP OVERVIEW

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EF^F
ED CORP FISCAL

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APPENDIX A: School Overview

BOARD OF TRUSTEES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS THAT HOLD THE AUTHORITY TO OPERATE BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

CHAIR	TRUSTEES
Stephanie Mauterstock	Shelly Cleary
VICE CHAIR	Oral Walcott
Kathleen Quirk	Kwaku Andoh
TREASURER	Christine Schlendorf
Katya Levitan-Reiner	
SECRETARY	
Amanda Craft	

SCHOOL LEADERS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIRECTOR
<i>Johana Andujar (2014-15 to Present)</i>
<i>Janna Gerzlinger (2013-14)</i>
<i>Brandon Sorlie (2010-11 to 2013-14)</i>
<i>Keisha Sykes (2009-10 to 2010-11)</i>
<i>Nikki Khosla (2008-09 to 2009-10)</i>

MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR
<i>Marsha Gadsden (2015-16 to Present)</i>
<i>Janna Genzlinger (2014-15)</i>
<i>Zelda Washington, Interim (January 2014 to June 2014)</i>
<i>Samantha Pugh (September 2013 to January 2014)</i>
<i>Eunice Chao (2011-12 to 2012-13)</i>

HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTOR
<i>Erica Smith (2017-18 to Present)</i>
<i>Melissa Cedeno (2015-16 to 2016-17)</i>

SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

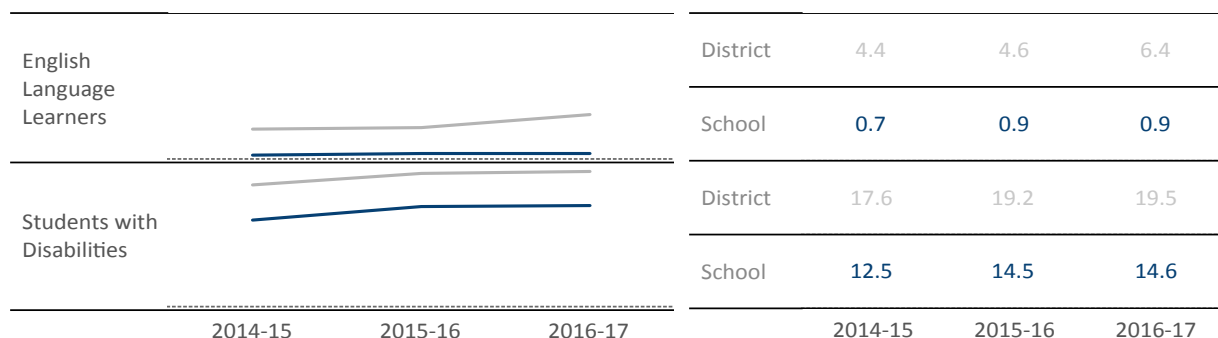
SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	PROPOSED GRADES	ACTUAL GRADES
2013-14	879	847	96%	K-7	K-7
2014-15	976	973	100%	K-8	K-8
2015-16	1,150	1,161	101%	K-9	K-9
2016-17	1,204	1,258	104%	K-10	K-10
2017-18	1,376	1,401	102%	K-11	K-11

APPENDIX A: School Overview

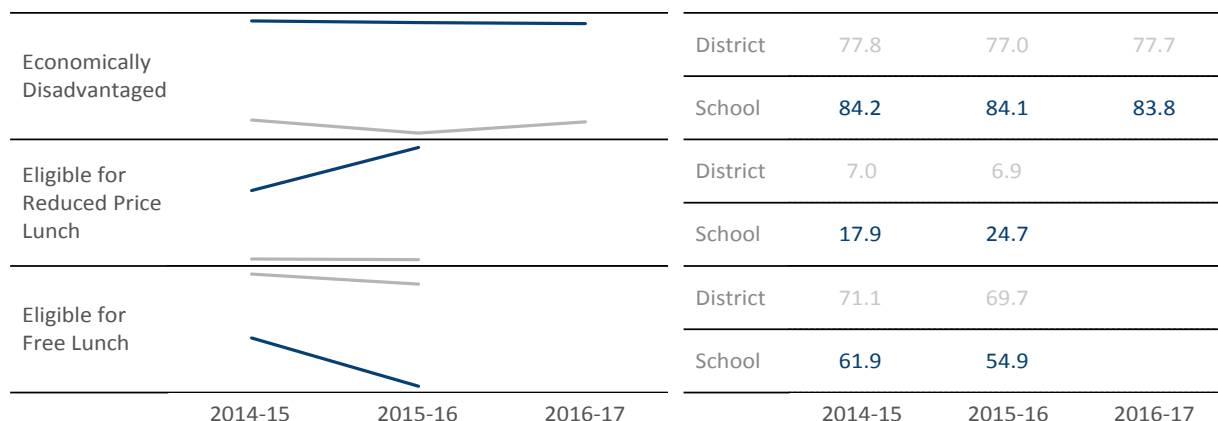
Brooklyn Ascend Charter School

Brooklyn CSD 18

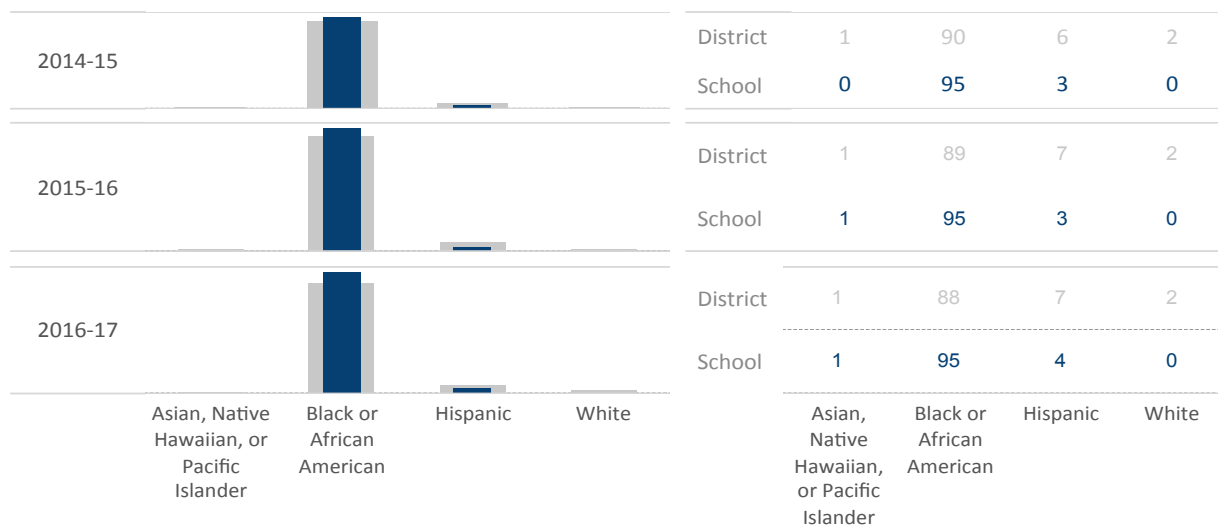
Student Demographics: Special Populations



Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



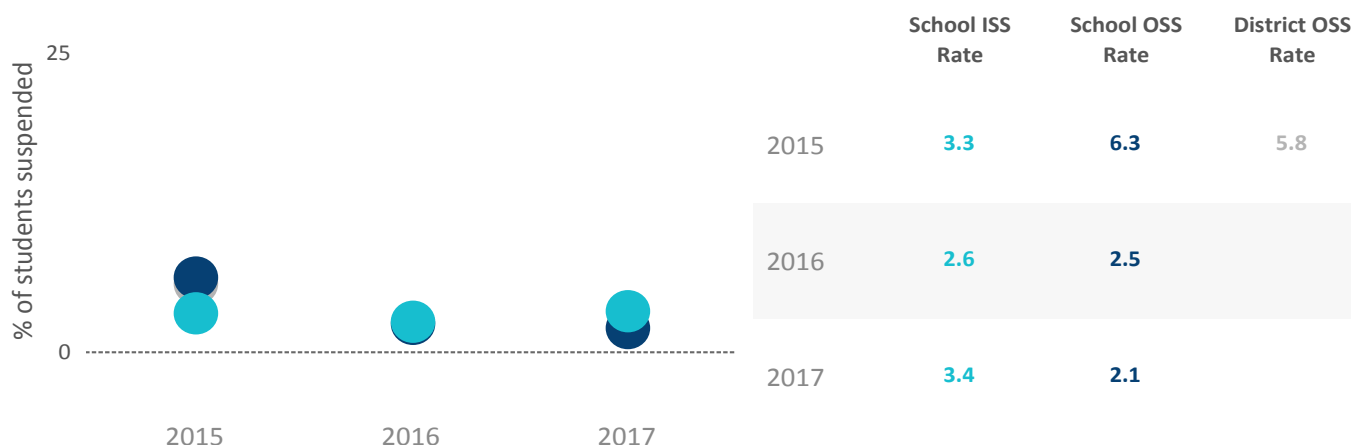
Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



APPENDIX A: School Overview

Brooklyn Ascend Charter School

Brooklyn CSD 18



Although Community School District ("CSD") and school suspension rates are presented on the same graph, a direct comparison between the rates is not possible for three primary reasons. Available CSD data includes Kindergarten through high school grades and school data includes only the grades served by the school. CSD data are not available that show multiple instances of suspension of a single student, the overall number of suspensions, the duration of suspensions, or the time of year when the school administered the suspension. CSD data showing the difference between in-school and out-of-school suspensions are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by the New York City Department of Education ("NYCDOE"): the total the number of students receiving an in school or out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

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

2014-15	86.8
2015-16	86.3
2016-17	86.2

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

2015	2016	2017
0	0	0

Brooklyn Ascend Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2016-17

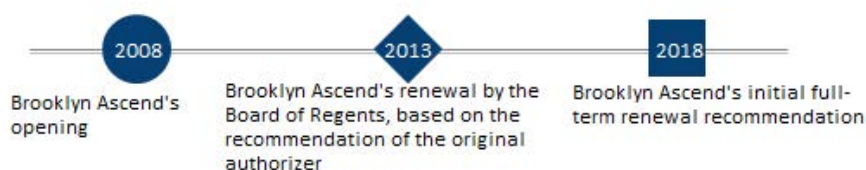
			District Target	School
Enrollment	Economically disadvantaged		84.1	83.8
	English language learners		5.3	1.1
	Students with disabilities		15.8	14.3
Retention	Economically disadvantaged		90.0	83.1
	English language learners		89.5	86.7
	Students with disabilities		90.1	93.9

APPENDIX A: School Overview

PARENT SATISFACTION: SURVEY RESULTS

RESPONSE RATE 91%	TRUST 96%	EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP 95%	STRONG FAMILY COMMUNITY TIES 92%
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TIMELINE OF CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL



SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2017-18	Initial Renewal	November 3, 2017

CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL VISIT

DATE(S) OF VISIT	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
November 3, 2017	Chastity McFarlan, Ph. D.	Senior Analyst
	Hannah Colestock	School Evaluation Analyst

APPENDIX A: School Overview

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS:

ELEMENT	EVIDENT?
Ascend’s Common Core curriculum;	+
The Ascend Culture based upon the Responsive Classroom model and restorative justice practices; and,	+
Teacher planning and development.	+

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts Brooklyn Ascend Charter School

	2014-15 Grades Served: K-8				2015-16 Grades Served: K-9				2016-17 Grades Served: K-10				MET
	All Students		2+ Years Students		All Students		2+ Years Students		All Students		2+ Years Students		
	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	37.3 (134)	38.9 (126)		3	51.4 (144)	55.6 (117)		3	61.2 (147)	65.6 (122)		
	4	34.5 (113)	36.6 (101)		4	51.0 (143)	54.0 (124)		4	48.9 (131)	48.8 (127)		
	5	17.4 (109)	16.5 (79)		5	32.7 (107)	33.0 (88)		5	50.4 (121)	51.3 (119)		
	6	18.8 (80)	21.7 (69)		6	30.2 (106)	32.9 (82)		6	30.1 (103)	34.1 (88)		
	7	27.3 (77)	26.8 (71)		7	42.3 (78)	43.7 (71)		7	49.1 (108)	49.5 (99)		
	8	34.6 (52)	38.3 (47)		8	42.7 (82)	41.3 (75)		8	50.6 (79)	52.0 (75)		
	All	28.7 (565)	30.6 (493)		All	42.7 (660)	44.9 (557)		All	49.2 (689)	51.0 (630)		
				NO				NO				NO	
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO		
	3-8	100	97		3-8	124	104		3-8	133	111		
				YES				YES				YES	
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Brooklyn District 18				Comparison: Brooklyn District 18				Comparison: Brooklyn District 18				
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		
	3-8	30.6	23.1		3-8	44.9	31.2		3-8	51.0	33.3		
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	Effect Size				Effect Size				Effect Size				
	% ED	Actual	Predicted		% ED	Actual	Predicted		% ED	Actual	Predicted		
	86.1	28.7	17.9	0.79	83.8	42.7	26.6	0.99	85.5	49.2	27.4	1.31	
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		
	4	45.4			4	49.7			4	48.5			
	5	40.4			5	53.2			5	59.2			
	6	46.4			6	61.9			6	58.1			
	7	61.6			7	70.2			7	60.6			
	8	50.9			8	53.2			8	51.8			
	All	47.9	50.0		All	57.5	50.0		All	55.6	50.0		
				NO				YES				YES	

APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Brooklyn Ascend Charter School

	2014-15 Grades Served: K-8				2015-16 Grades Served: K-9				2016-17 Grades Served: K-10				MET
	All Students		2+ Years Students		All Students		2+ Years Students		All Students		2+ Years Students		
	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	40.3 (134)	41.3 (126)		3	47.2 (144)	48.7 (117)		3	69.2 (146)	70.2 (121)		
	4	30.1 (113)	30.7 (101)		4	62.2 (143)	64.5 (124)		4	50.8 (132)	50.8 (128)		
	5	22.0 (109)	22.8 (79)		5	37.4 (107)	38.6 (88)		5	58.7 (121)	59.7 (119)		
	6	23.5 (81)	27.1 (70)		6	34.6 (107)	37.3 (83)		6	47.1 (102)	49.4 (87)		
	7	22.1 (77)	22.5 (71)		7	20.5 (78)	21.1 (71)		7	52.8 (108)	53.5 (99)		
	8	21.2 (52)	23.4 (47)		8	33.3 (81)	35.1 (74)		8	27.8 (79)	28.0 (75)		
	All	28.1 (566)	29.8 (494)	NO	All	42.0 (660)	43.6 (557)	NO	All	53.2 (688)	53.7 (629)	NO	
	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO		
	3-8	95	94	YES	3-8	119	101	YES	3-8	136	109	YES	
	Comparison: Brooklyn District 18				Comparison: Brooklyn District 18				Comparison: Brooklyn District 18				
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		
	3-8	29.8	22.9	YES	3-8	43.6	23.1	YES	3-8	53.7	25.0	YES	
	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	
	86.1	28.1	25.4	0.18	83.8	42.0	26.7	0.80	85.5	53.2	26.3	1.42	
	NO				YES				YES				
	Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	4	36.8			4	72.7			4	50.9			
	5	35.7			5	65.4			5	55.2			
	6	46.5			6	61.4			6	73.1			
	7	59.9			7	58.4			7	79.1			
	8	63.3			8	74.4			8	75.1			
	All	45.6	50.0	NO	All	66.9	50.0	YES	All	65.2	50.0	YES	

APPENDIX C: District Comments

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The NYCDOE held its required hearing on Brooklyn Ascend Charter School’s renewal on October 3, 2017. Twenty-five people were present at the hearing. Eight individuals spoke in favor of the school’s renewal, citing positive examples of the work the school does to support students.

APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

SCHOOL INFORMATION

BALANCE SHEET

Opened 2008-09

Assets

Current Assets

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

Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1

Property, Building and Equipment, net

Other Assets

Total Assets - GRAPH 1

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities

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

Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1

L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities

Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1

Net Assets

Unrestricted
Temporarily restricted

Total Net Assets

Total Liabilities and Net Assets

ACTIVITIES

Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment
Students with Disabilities

Grants and Contracts

State and local
Federal - Title and IDEA
Federal - Other
Other
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program

Total Operating Revenue

Expenses

Regular Education
SPED
Regular Education & SPED (combined)
Other

Total Program Services

Management and General
Fundraising

Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 & 4

Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations

Support and Other Revenue

Contributions
Fundraising
Miscellaneous Income
Net assets released from restriction

Total Support and Other Revenue

Total Unrestricted Revenue

Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue

Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 & 3

Change in Net Assets

Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2

Prior Year Adjustment(s)

Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
-	-	346,910	50,202	824,257
-	-	66,693	366,146	346,256
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	34,897	23,244	394,495
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	448,500	439,592	1,565,008
-	-	2,491,011	2,627,182	3,184,636
-	-	81,499	82,310	90,422
-	-	3,021,010	3,149,084	4,840,066

-	-	426,786	339,596	628,510
-	-	401,627	483,181	616,515
-	-	-	-	20,326
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	415,195	473,537	756,332
-	-	1,243,608	1,296,314	2,021,683
-	-	6,388,569	6,509,469	6,510,462
-	-	7,632,177	7,805,783	8,532,145

-	-	(4,611,167)	(4,656,699)	(3,692,079)
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	(4,611,167)	(4,656,699)	(3,692,079)
-	-	3,021,010	3,149,084	4,840,066

-	-	12,617,347	14,558,872	15,971,387
-	-	-	-	1,826,533

-	-	66,262	106,932	740,338
-	-	439,419	125,362	454,388
-	-	137,147	494,210	47,925
-	-	-	142,041	-
-	-	-	-	229,120
-	-	13,260,175	15,427,417	19,269,691

-	-	10,857,099	10,852,196	11,982,919
-	-	2,165,978	3,048,044	3,868,540
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	13,023,077	13,900,240	15,851,459
-	-	1,923,246	1,759,177	2,635,517
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	14,946,323	15,659,417	18,486,976

-	-	(1,686,148)	(232,000)	782,715
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-	-	1,010	25,001	7,175
-	-	8,515	-	-
-	-	51,926	161,467	174,730
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	61,451	186,468	181,905

-	-	13,321,626	15,613,885	19,451,596
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	13,321,626	15,613,885	19,451,596

-	-	(1,624,697)	(45,532)	964,620
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-	-	(2,986,470)	(4,611,167)	(4,656,699)
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-	-	-	-	-
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-	-	(4,611,167)	(4,656,699)	(3,692,079)
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APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

Functional Expense Breakdown

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Personnel Service	-	-	-	-	2,367,932
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	-	-	-	6,396,141
Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	78,408
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	-
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	6,073,408	7,421,497	-
Total Salaries and Staff	-	-	6,073,408	7,421,497	8,842,481
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	-	-	1,071,652	1,374,676	1,548,859
Retirement	-	-	-	-	-
Management Company Fees	-	-	1,139,606	1,180,198	1,919,527
Building and Land Rent / Lease	-	-	3,532,827	2,726,390	2,911,333
Staff Development	-	-	85,326	123,025	47,616
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	-	-	1,213,349	436,059	544,956
Marketing / Recruitment	-	-	40,568	16,249	251,759
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	-	-	309,816	446,001	468,021
Depreciation	-	-	326,274	328,588	365,988
Other	-	-	1,153,497	1,606,737	1,586,436
Total Expenses	-	-	14,946,323	15,659,420	18,486,976

SCHOOL ANALYSIS

ENROLLMENT

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Chartered Enroll	-	-	-	-	-
Revised Enroll	-	-	-	-	-
Actual Enroll - GRAPH 4	-	-	876	975	1,161
Chartered Grades	-	-	K-7	K-8	K-9
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-

Primary School District:

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)	-	-	13,527	13,527	13,777
Increase over prior year	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	1.8%

PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

Revenue

Operating	-	-	15,137	15,823	16,597
Other Revenue and Support	-	-	70	191	157
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	-	-	15,207	16,014	16,754

Expenses

Program Services	-	-	14,867	14,257	13,653
Management and General, Fundraising	-	-	2,195	1,804	2,270
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	-	-	17,062	16,061	15,923
% of Program Services	0.0%	0.0%	87.1%	88.8%	85.7%
% of Management and Other	0.0%	0.0%	12.9%	11.2%	14.3%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5	0.0%	0.0%	-10.9%	-0.3%	5.2%

Student to Faculty Ratio

-	-	-	-	11.8
---	---	---	---	------

Faculty to Admin Ratio

-	-	-	-	3.3
---	---	---	---	-----

Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

Score	0.0	0.0	(1.0)	(0.6)	(0.2)
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	N/A	N/A	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring

Working Capital - GRAPH 7

Net Working Capital	0	0	(795,108)	(856,722)	(456,675)
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	0.0%	0.0%	-6.0%	-5.5%	-2.3%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.8
Risk (Low ≥ 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	N/A	N/A	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Rating (Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	N/A	N/A	Poor	Poor	Poor

Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.6
Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Poor	Poor	Poor

Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

Score	0.0	0.0	2.5	2.5	1.8
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Poor	Poor	Poor

Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

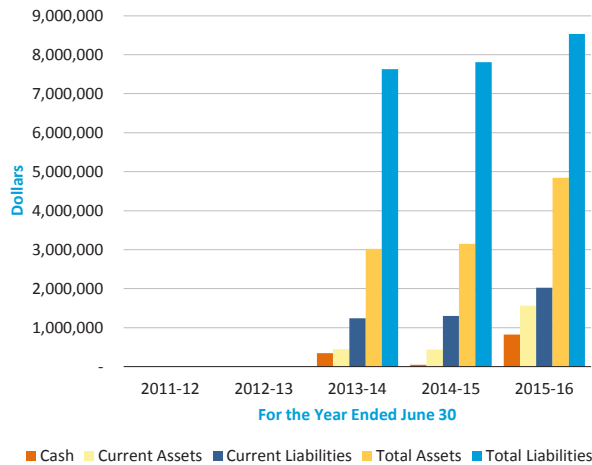
Score	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.5
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	N/A	N/A	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	N/A	N/A	Poor	Poor	Poor

APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

GRAPH 1

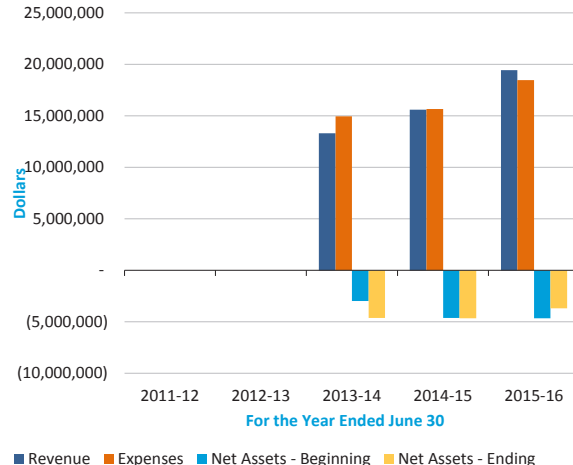
Cash, Assets and Liabilities



This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 thru 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right; and, generally speaking, the bigger that gap, the better.

GRAPH 2

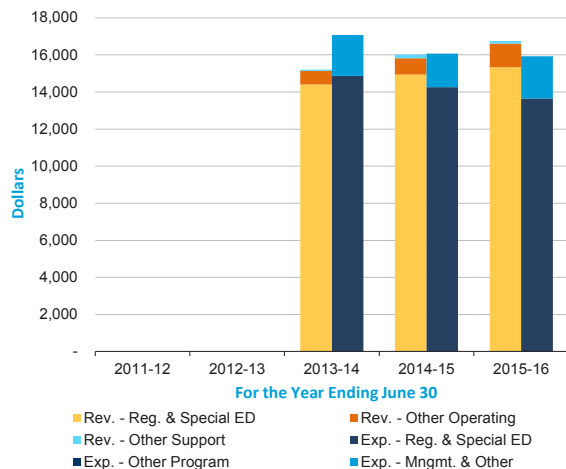
Revenue, Expenses and Net Assets



This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year-to-year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year building a more fiscally viable school.

GRAPH 3

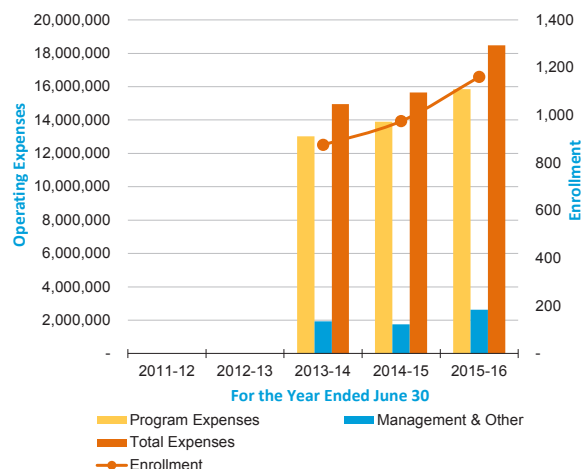
Revenue & Expenses Per Pupil



This chart illustrates the breakdown of revenue and expenses on a per pupil basis. Caution should be exercised in making school-by-school comparisons since schools serving different missions or student populations are likely to have substantially different educational cost bases. Comparisons with similar schools with similar dynamics are most valid.

GRAPH 4

Enrollment vs. Operating Expenses



This chart illustrates to what extent the school's operating expenses have followed its student enrollment pattern. A baseline assumption that this data tests is that operating expenses increase with each additional student served. This chart also compares and contrasts growth trends of both, giving insight into what a reasonable expectation might be in terms of economies of scale.

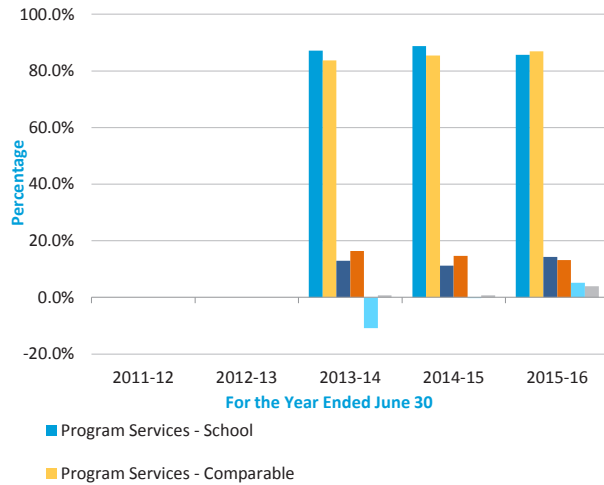
APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

BROOKLYN ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOL

Comparable School, Region or Network: All SUNY Authorized Charter Schools (Including Closed Schools)

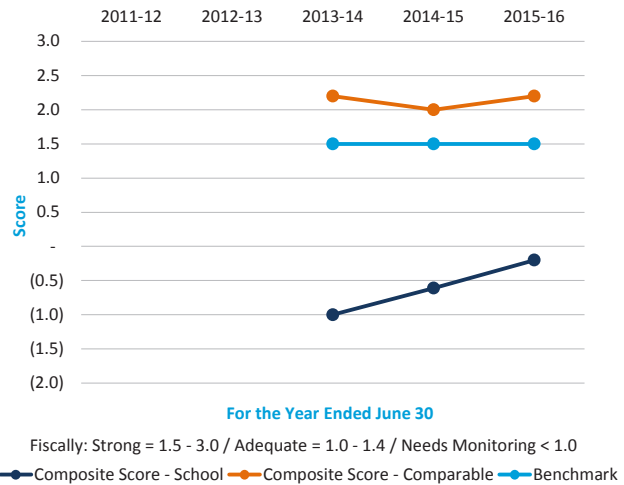
* Average = Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term

GRAPH 5 % Breakdown of Expenses



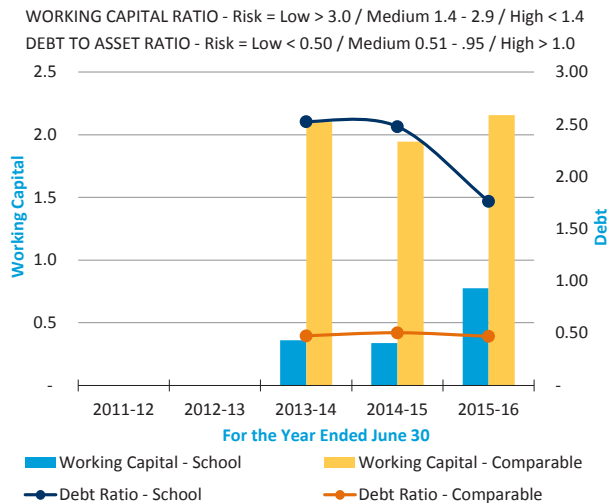
This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding expenses should not be negative. Similar caution, as mentioned on GRAPH 3, should be used in comparing schools.

GRAPH 6 Composite Score



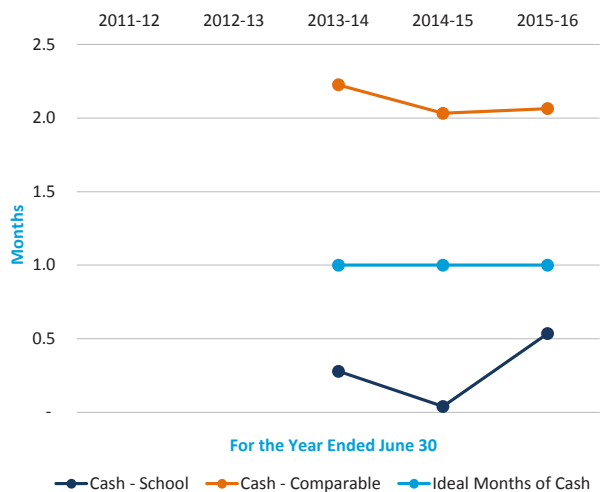
This chart illustrates a school's composite score based on the methodology developed by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) to determine whether private not-for-profit colleges and universities are financially strong enough to participate in federal loan programs. These scores can be valid for observing the fiscal trends of a particular school and used as a tool to compare the results of different schools.

GRAPH 7 Working Capital & Debt to Asset Ratios



This chart illustrates Working Capital and Debt to Asset Ratios. The Working Capital ratio indicates if a school has enough short-term assets to cover its immediate liabilities/short term debt. The Debt to Asset ratio indicates what proportion of debt a school has relative to its assets. The measure gives an idea to the leverage of the school along with the potential risks the school faces in terms of its debt-load.

GRAPH 8 Months of Cash



This chart illustrates how many months of cash the school has in reserves. This metric is to measure solvency – the school's ability to pay debts and claims as they come due. This gives some idea of how long a school could continue its ongoing operating costs without tapping into some other, non-cash form of financing in the event that revenues were to cease flowing to the school.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1B

ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS¹

For strong performing SUNY authorized charter schools that implement a common school design across multiple schools, the Institute provides an analysis and description of the schools' academic design structured using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks. This subset of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks focuses on assessment, curriculum, instruction, leadership, at-risk programs, board oversight, and organizational capacity. The following program description analyzes and reports on the school design that produced the high quality outcomes captured in the body of this renewal report.

DOES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS HAVE AN ASSESSMENT SYSTEM THAT IMPROVES INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT LEARNING?

Ascend Charter Schools ("Ascend") uses a robust and rigorous assessment system to elevate instructional effectiveness and to improve student learning. Ascend schools administer a variety of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to establish a clear picture of achievement for each student. Ascend schools administer the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress ("MAP")² assessment in ELA one to three times per year based on the grade level and in mathematics once per year to measure student growth against the growth of a national sample of similarly situated students. Instructional staff members administer the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress ("STEP")³ assessment to students in Kindergarten – 4th grade every nine weeks to measure reading proficiency. The network academic team develops assessments internally. Students take content- and unit-based assessments aligned to the Ascend Learning curriculum and state standards every three to five weeks to measure ongoing progress towards content mastery. Additionally, students in 2nd – 8th grade take benchmark assessments in ELA and mathematics two times per year as well as a yearly mock assessment, modeled after the New York state assessments for students in 3rd – 8th grade. Leaders use the benchmark and mock exam results to predict student performance on the state ELA and mathematics assessments. The network stores and analyzes assessment data using Illuminate, an online data management system that allows teachers and leaders to immediately access and analyze data.

Ascend uses their robust system of assessment data to support and inform a myriad of practices aimed at strengthening the academic program and increasing student achievement including evaluating the academic program, identifying areas where students require skill-building practice, and supporting teachers in their instructional practice. Throughout the year, the network provides teachers with extensive training to facilitate data-driven instruction during benchmark assessment data meetings, teacher planning and development meetings, and all-day professional development days. Ascend Learning launched the teacher planning and development program ("TPD") in 2016 to create a platform for teacher collaboration through more dedicated time in teachers' and leaders'

1. Ascend Charter Schools is a not-for-profit charter school education corporation that is served by Ascend Learning, Inc., a New York, not-for-profit charter management organization (the "network" or "CMO"). For additional information, please visit www.ascendlearning.org.

2. The MAP assessment is a nationally normed assessment that measures student performance against grade level standards. For more information, please refer to www.nwea.org/.

3. The STEP Assessment measures student reading growth and performance. For more information please refer to www.uchicagoimpact.org/steptm-assessment-kit/.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

schedules for analysis of student work, tracking data, and developing teacher strategies for improving responses to students' performance during lessons. Staff surveys from 2016-17 indicate general satisfaction with the TPD program. Teachers and leaders credit the launch of the TPD program with an increase in student achievement in 2016-17.

Additionally, school leaders use assessment data to identify teachers in need of additional instructional support, detect schoolwide trends, and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's educational model. The network also provides school leaders access to school-level data across the network which allows leaders to regularly assess their own school's progress relative to the network. School leaders also use this data to identify best instructional practices in the network and develop professional development based on those best practices. School leaders provide the Ascend board of trustees (the "board") with assessment data on a regular basis. The board uses the data to monitor schools' effectiveness and evaluate the school leaders' performance.

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

Ascend's rigorous and comprehensive internally developed curriculum supports teachers in their instructional planning within and across grade levels. Since the 2014-15 school year, the network has implemented this Ascend educational model. Ascend made the decision to move to an internally created curriculum after evaluating its previous academic program, and determining it was not effective in supporting students to master grade level standards. The percentage of students meeting grade level standards has steadily improved since shifting the curriculum. The network saw growth in ELA and mathematics state assessment results between the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years; the percent of students proficient increased by 6% in ELA and by 11% in mathematics. The network regularly measures the effectiveness of the curriculum. The internal assessment system is one example of this; teachers and leaders regularly review data and student work samples to monitor whether they have successfully implemented the curriculum, and whether it is effective for students. The network elicits curricular feedback from teachers via surveys, annual town hall meetings, and email. This system of ongoing feedback allows the network to make immediate curricular adjustments.

Ascend creates documents that guide teachers in their daily planning process and inform teachers of what to teach and when to teach it. In all content areas, teachers receive curricular materials such as pacing charts, unit guides, assessments, and examples of exemplary student work that guide them in the planning process. The TPD program also supports teachers in the planning and delivery of curricular components. Teachers attend multiple TPD meetings per unit that involve deepening their content knowledge, planning instruction, modeling lessons, and conducting quantitative and qualitative analyses of

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APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

student work. Based on the student work analyses, teachers develop strategies for re-teaching content where students performed below expectations, and also provide curricular feedback to the network curriculum team based on students' progress with the curriculum. This feedback allows the network team to identify trends across schools and decide if curricular adjustments are necessary to ensure students are successful with the academic content.

The Ascend educational model relies on a combination of network-developed and commercial curricula. ELA program components include the Foundations⁴ phonics program (Kindergarten – 2nd grade), literature circle, read aloud, and guided reading (Kindergarten – 4th grade), independent reading (Kindergarten – 8th grade), shared text (2nd – 8th grade), writing (Kindergarten – 8th grade), and humanities English and humanities social studies (5th – 8th grade). The program draws resources from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project⁵ and other external curricula to create an ELA program that enhances students' literacy skills through small group discussion, close reading, and frequent assessment of student understanding. Beginning in 5th grade, students participate in a network-created humanities program that expands the core knowledge base of students in history, geography, and the arts while also facilitating independent thought and discourse, a key component of developing critical thinking skills in students, as well as developing reading and writing skills. Ascend's mathematics program draws upon curricular materials from Singapore Math,⁶ EngageNY,⁷ Math in Context,⁸ and Cognitively Guided Instruction ("CGI").⁹ The program, consisting of number stories (Kindergarten – 4th grade), mathematics workshop, and mathematics routines (Kindergarten – 8th grade), fosters a strong conceptual understanding of mathematics, along with reasoning, logic, and problem solving skills. The instructional approach to mathematics blends direct instruction, inquiry learning, CGI, and daily practice in math fluency. The science program is inquiry-based and aligns to the Next Generation Science Standards and state standards. The elementary school employs MacMillan/McGraw-Hill's A Closer Look¹⁰ science program. At the middle school level, students study standards-based science in the context of intriguing personal and society issues through Science Education for Public Understanding Program ("SEPUP").¹¹

4. For additional information, please visit www.wilsonlanguage.com/.

5. For additional information, please visit www.readingandwritingproject.org/.

6. For additional information, please visit www.singaporemath.com/.

7. For additional information, please visit www.engageny.org/.

8. For additional information, please visit www.mathincontext.eb.com/.

9. For additional information, please visit www.heinemann.com/cgimath/.

10. For additional information, please visit www.mhschool.com

11. For additional information, please visit www.sepuplhs.org/.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1D

IS HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS?

High quality instruction that incorporates carefully structured direct instruction, inquiry-based learning experiences, and college-style discussion creates an environment focused on academic achievement and critical thinking at Ascend schools. Pedagogical approaches vary in an intentional way to foster engagement and deep conceptual understanding of core content in students. During visits to Ascend schools, the Institute team has consistently observed classrooms with well-designed lessons, clear objectives, effective checks for understanding, and lessons that provide students with multiple opportunities for peer-to-peer discussion. Additionally, Ascend schools establish learning environments that have a clear focus on academic achievement and that are positively reinforced through the Responsive Classroom model in Kindergarten—8th grade and restorative practices in the high school grades, respectively.

Ascend believes that direct instruction alone will not foster the critical thinking and conceptual understanding necessary to master state standards and, therefore, utilizes a variety of pedagogies. Consistent in all lessons are clear learning objectives that build on students' previous skills and knowledge. Lesson activities are purposeful and align to the identified and carefully crafted learning objective. Teachers' assignments are often open-ended, requiring students to produce high quality work products. Teachers also employ strong checks for understanding and in-the-moment data collection. Teachers then use this information to immediately adjust their instruction, ensuring students reach the intended lesson objective. Teachers at Ascend schools regularly challenge students with questions and activities that develop their higher order thinking and problem solving skills. Teachers provide students with opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer discussions in which they are able to push one another in their own thinking.

Teachers and leaders establish and maintain learning environments that are filled with a sense of urgency and a consistent focus on academic achievement. They do this using the Responsive Classroom model and positive reinforcement discipline methodology, as well as restorative practices at the high school level. This represents a shift away from the previous "No Excuses" disciplinary system. With the prior discipline system the network identified a need to be more culturally responsive and provide students with the opportunity to build agency. Ascend Learning shifted to the new culture model in 2014.

DOES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS HAVE STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

Ascend has instructional leadership with the structure, capacity, and expertise to lead network schools to strong academic outcomes. The chief schools officer and three network managing director positions make up the network schools team and provide schools with extensive coaching and professional development designed to accelerate teacher effectiveness and student achievement. The school level instructional leadership team includes the school director, dean(s) of instruction, dean(s) of students, and dean of student services. The school director is the school's head instructional leader and responsible for

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1E

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

managing and coaching the deans. The dean of instruction is responsible for teaching, learning, and academic data at the school. This includes coaching and developing the teaching staff, and managing successful implementation of the Ascend instructional model. The dean of students supports teachers in implementing effective instructional techniques, coaches teachers in using the Responsive Classroom model to build strong student culture, and maintains a safe environment with strong procedures throughout the school. The dean of student services is responsible for overseeing that students with disabilities fully participate in the educational program and receive supports and services mandated by their Individualized Education Programs (“IEPs”). Leadership team members have clear roles and responsibilities, which provide clear reporting structures for teachers, and allow instructional staff to focus on teaching and learning.

Ascend provides leaders with intensive, ongoing professional development throughout the year, and provides the framework for teacher professional development led by school leaders. This starts with pre-service training in the summer and continues through the school year with professional development days, after-school sessions, weekly grade-team meetings, and ongoing in-the-moment instructional coaching. During the summer pre-service training, the network provides two weeks of professional development specifically for the leadership team. New teachers participate in four weeks of professional development and returning teachers participate in two weeks of professional development. During the school year, staff members attend four full-day professional development sessions and weekly professional development on Friday afternoons. For school year training sessions, school leadership determines the topics based on the specific needs of the school and ongoing analysis of student data and leads the professional development activities. The TPD program also plays a significant role in developing teachers’ content knowledge and skills. Deans of instruction and grade team leaders facilitate TPD meetings during regular grade team meetings. Through the facilitation of TPD meetings, leaders help teachers develop their content knowledge, instructional delivery, and data analysis skills.

Ascend provides network-wide coaching for specialized leadership roles. The managing director and chief schools officer develop and evaluate the school director and meet monthly for coaching sessions. School directors also participate in a professional learning community focused on school leadership skills with school leaders across the network. The school director manages and coaches their school-based deans, meeting regularly to check-in on their goals. Deans also participate in numerous professional development sessions per year specific to their role with deans across the network. For example, deans of instruction attend sessions on in-the-moment instructional coaching, instructional action plans, and unit studies.

DOES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS MEET THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS?

Ascend has systems and procedures in place to identify and meet the needs of at-risk students. Ascend administers diagnostics tests at the start of each school year to identify students struggling academically and that may require remediation under the Response to Intervention (“RTI”) program. School leaders regularly review assessment data to identify students who are academically at-risk.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

The dean of student services, dean of students, dean of instruction, and classroom teachers form a committee to review data about students they have identified for RTI. The committee reviews academic assessment data, behavior records, and teacher observations, then the team develops a plan for interventions to meet the needs of the student. In Ascend's RTI system, tier 1 interventions take place within the general classroom provided by the classroom teacher. These types of interventions include small group re-teaching, intentional partner pairing, or peer instruction. Tier 2 interventions consist of weekly small-group and supplemental instruction during the school day in ELA and mathematics. Students assigned to tier 3 may be in the evaluation process for special education services or currently have an IEP. Students who were previously retained in their grade level also start the next academic school year receiving tier 3 supports. Teachers provide additional tutoring in small groups outside of regular mathematics and ELA instructional time, including before and after school sessions, to students who are not making progress with tier 2 and 3 supports. Some Ascend schools also provide a Saturday morning peer tutoring program in which students with strong academic achievement will assist peers in mastering specific concepts in ELA and mathematics.

To meet the needs of students with IEPs mandating academic services, Ascend schools implement a number of instructional settings including push-in and pull-out special education teacher support services ("SETSS"), and classrooms with integrated co-teaching ("ICT"), in which students have a general education teacher and special education teacher supporting them in core content.

To identify English language learners ("ELLs"), Ascend employs a home language identification survey and administers the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners. The school's staff is also responsible for detecting potential limited English language proficiency among students and is trained accordingly by the network. Ascend Learning schools provide ELLs with a structured English immersion setting. Ascend Learning schools use research based English language acquisition strategies as well as several intervention programs to support its ELLs, such as leveled literacy intervention and aspects of the general education curriculum designed to focus on phonics, reading, fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary acquisition. ELL teachers push-in to the literature circle block and pull-out during shared text and guided reading blocks to provide more individualized instruction to ELLs. Students requiring additional support with English language development also spend time using Lexia,¹² a computer-based program that provides language acquisition instruction to students. Ascend annually measures its ELLs' proficiency using the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test ("NYSESLAT").

Ascend provides opportunities for classroom teachers and at-risk program staff to collaborate regularly. The schools' at-risk program staff attend grade team meetings and TPDs that relate to their student caseloads. Teachers also share resources electronically and meet with at-risk staff on an as needed basis. Classroom teachers are aware of students' IEP goals and check-in with at-risk staff frequently to address student needs. Co-teachers in ICT classrooms plan together daily. The network director of student services provides ongoing professional development and training on at-risk populations to the school teams, which provides an additional opportunity for classroom teachers and at-risk staff to work together.

12. For additional information, please visit www.lexialearning.com/.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 2C

DOES ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS EFFECTIVELY SUPPORT THE DELIVERY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?

Ascend has operational systems in place that support high-level academic achievement and the successful delivery of Ascend's educational model. The network has clearly defined roles within its organization, which allows network- and school-based instructional leaders to focus on student learning and teacher support. The organizational design has managing directors of schools supporting the network's school directors, who are the schools' primary instructional leaders. The network provides differentiated coaching and development to deans, the secondary instructional leaders, and school-based directors of operations.

Ascend implements a variety of effective initiatives to support the recruitment and retention of high quality staff. At the end of the 2016-17 school year, leaders promoted 12 teachers to leadership roles within the network. Ascend has established a resident director program to develop an internal pipeline for future school leaders. The network strategically pairs program participants with a high performing school director, who provides close mentorship and support for up to two years. The network finance, operations, and human resources teams plan and facilitate professional development sessions as part of the resident director program to ensure future leaders at Ascend schools have appropriate training on non-instructional components necessary for running a high quality school. The network has also established a teaching fellows program as a pipeline to develop lead teachers. Ascend plans to grow this program substantially over the next charter term; currently there are four fellows in the program. The network talent team uses teacher satisfaction and performance data to inform the network's practices related to recruitment, onboarding, and retention. Additionally, the network's talent team effectively collaborates with the chief schools officer and managing directors to evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of Ascend's leadership and instructional staff. For example, the network collects performance data on new hires and uses the data to refine the onboarding process and plan for future professional development.

Ascend has sufficient resources to support the educational model. The network provides quality school facilities, sufficient materials for students, funding for schoolwide staffing, and staff and student recruitment support from the network office. The network finance team meets monthly with school directors and directors of operations to review finance reports and develop the schools' annual budgets. The network provides school leaders autonomy in this process while also providing the appropriate network oversight.

The network manages the student recruitment process and provides effective student recruitment support for the schools. Additionally, the network monitors each school's enrollment and retention targets. In response to the majority of schools not meeting the enrollment targets for ELLs and students with disabilities, Ascend Learning established a strategic and targeted recruitment strategy to specifically target these two subgroups of students during the upcoming recruitment season. For example, the network is partnering with Community LinkED, a Brooklyn-based community organizer, to support the network with improving its recruitment strategies. Additionally, Ascend also hires temporary staff to conduct on-the-ground outreach during the peak recruitment season. The recruitment

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

team targets areas with high populations of ELLs and economically disadvantaged students, as well as local programs that service students with disabilities for its outreach. The network also provides a website designed for families and a family newsletter. Each school holds three open houses per year for prospective families. As of August 2017, Ascend has a waitlist of over 4,500 prospective students.

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

DOES THE ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS EDUCATION CORPORATION BOARD WORK EFFECTIVELY TO ACHIEVE SCHOOLS' ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOALS?

The Ascend board works effectively to achieve all open schools' Accountability Plan goals. Of the seven schools the board oversees, five schools are currently operating in the borough of Brooklyn: Brooklyn Ascend, Brownsville Ascend, Bushwick Ascend, Canarsie Ascend, and Central Brooklyn Ascend. The two additional schools, Central Brooklyn Ascend 2 and Central Brooklyn Ascend 3, will open in Brooklyn in August 2018 with students in Kindergarten and 1st grade.

The board is comprised of members with diverse skill sets from a variety of sectors such as education, finance, talent, insurance, and law. The board possesses the necessary expertise to provide oversight of the schools with student outcomes as the central focus. The board utilizes a committee structure including finance, hiring, nominating, executive, academics, and an ad hoc committee for strategy and growth.

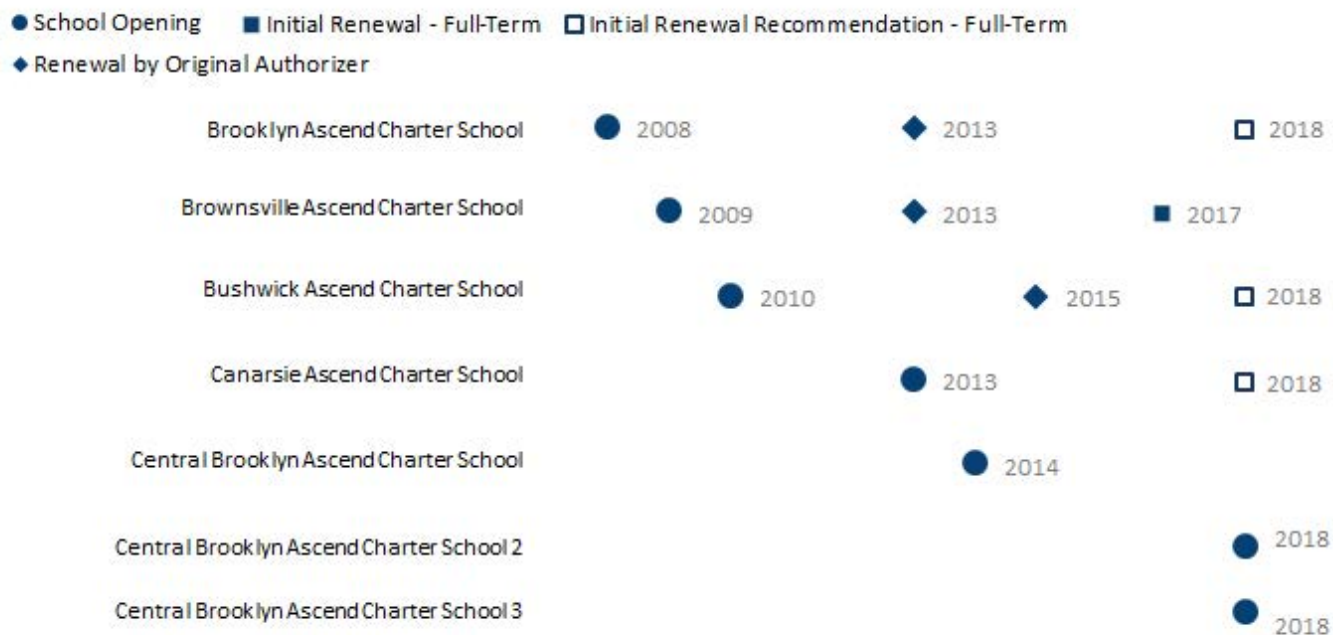
The board regularly assesses whether Ascend Learning complies with the management agreement by monitoring educational, operational, and financial indicators and regularly monitoring the schools' progress towards their Accountability Plan goals. The network provides the board with a dashboard at each meeting to provide an at-a-glance summary of academic and operational performance. This dashboard includes data on academics by grade and content area, enrollment, attendance, attrition, and finances. If applicable, recent assessment data is also included, such as annual state assessment results. The board uses the dashboard to inform its oversight and evaluation of the Ascend educational model. Additionally, school directors and network staff provide monthly reports orally or in writing at each meeting.

With support from Ascend network staff, the board evaluates the school directors annually in areas such as academic performance, mission alignment, student and parents relations, and financial and operational management. The board has the authority to select and hire school directors.

SUNY
RENEWAL
BENCHMARK
2D

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

EDUCATION CORPORATION TIMELINE OF CHARTER RENEWAL



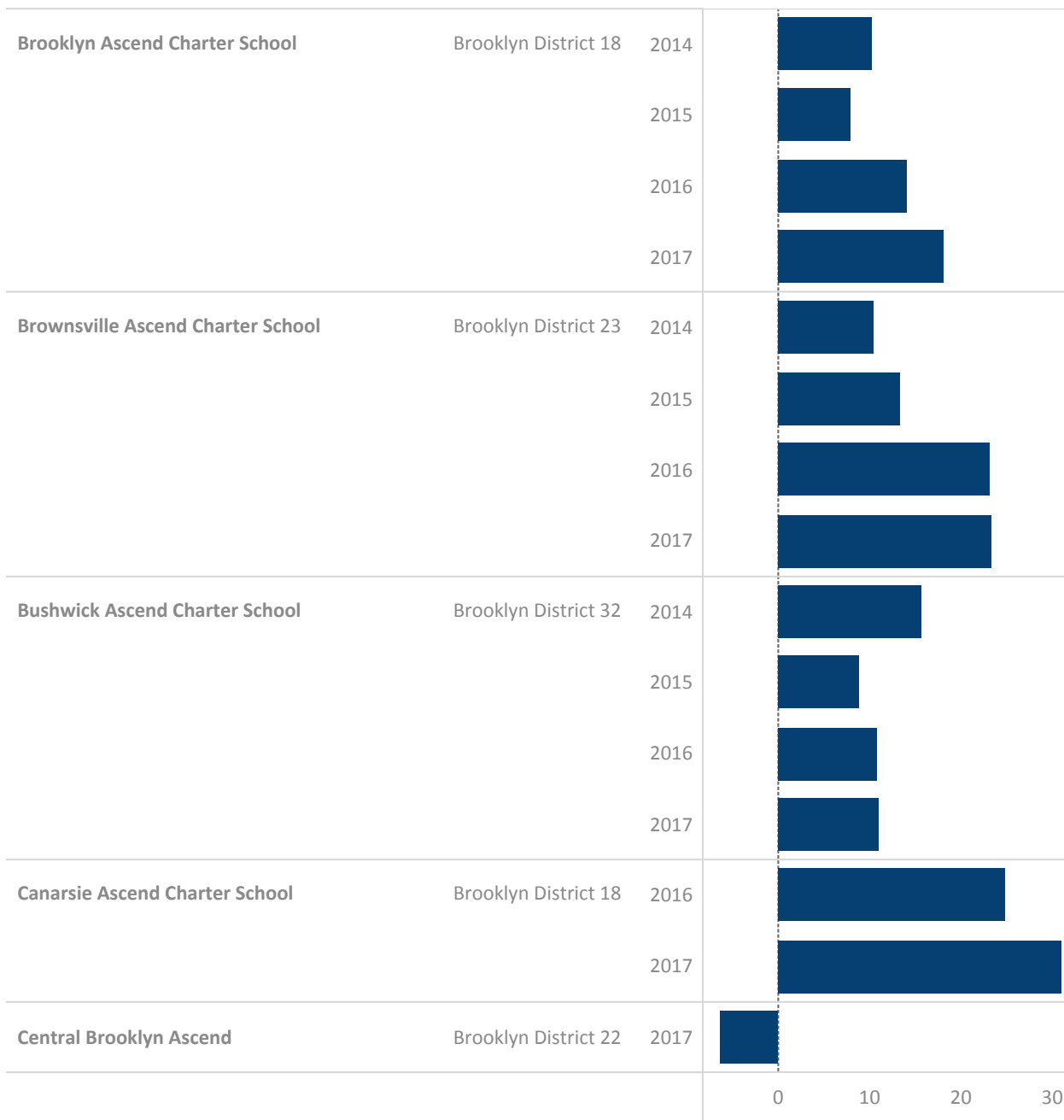
APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

EDUCATION CORPORATION SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

School	Local District	Co-located?	Chartered Enrollment	Grade Span
Brooklyn Ascend Charter School	CSD 18	No	1,277	K-11
Brownsville Ascend Charter School	CSD 23	No	1,028	K-8
Bushwick Ascend Charter School	CSD 32	No	889	K-8
Canarsie Ascend Charter School	CSD 18	No	616	K-5
Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School	CSD 22	No	413	K-4
Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School 2	CSD 19	Not Open	Not Open	Not Open
Central Brooklyn Ascend Charter School 3	CSD 19	Not Open	Not Open	Not Open

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

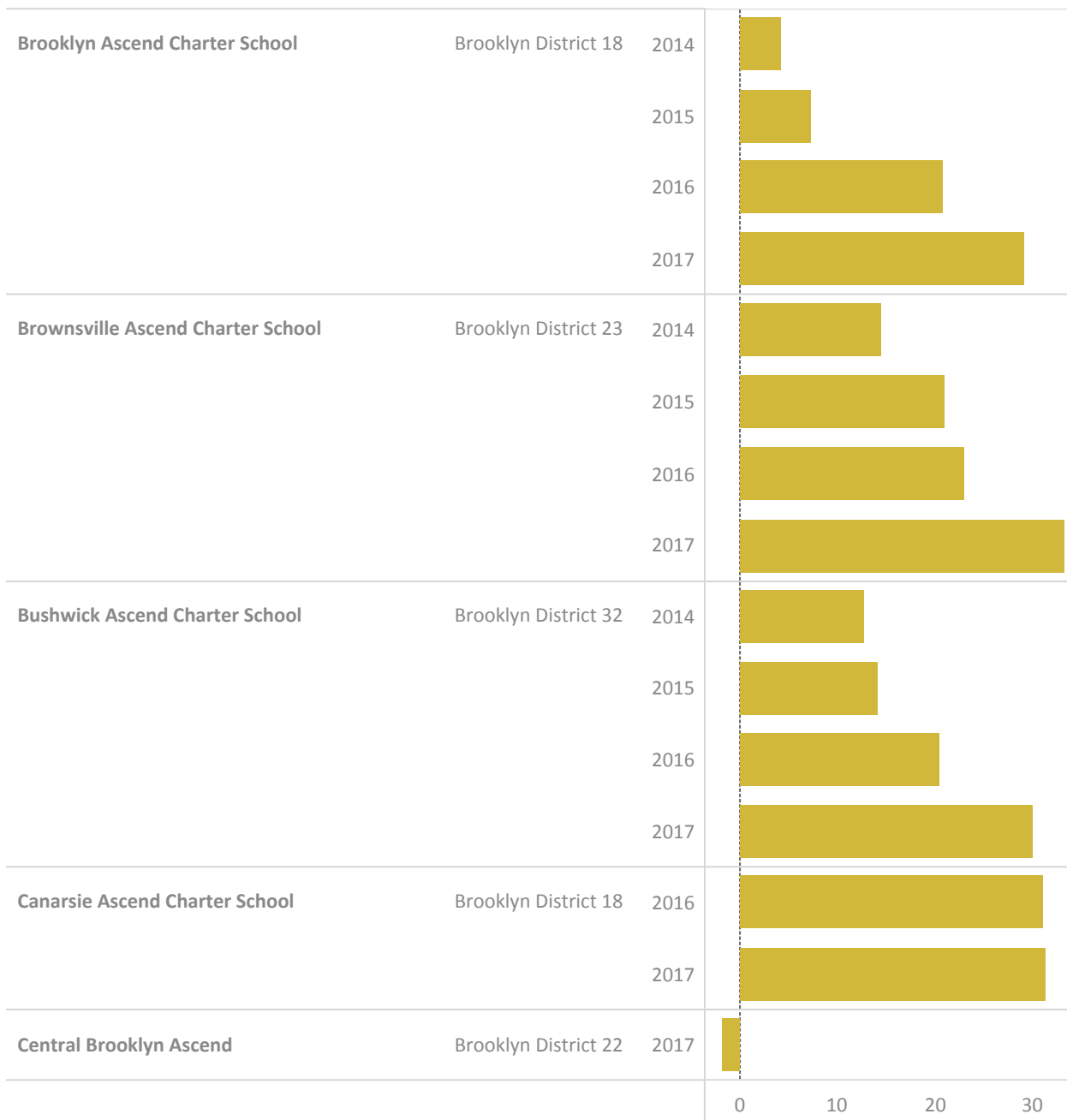
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT SCORES: ELA



District difference for each year broken down by school and district (in NYC, the Institute uses the CSD). These charts compare a school's performance to that of the district. Each bar represents the difference between the school's performance and the district's. A positive result (showing the bar to the right of zero) indicates the amount by which the school outscored the district. A negative result (with the bar to the left of zero) illustrates the amount by which the school performed lower than the district. A score of zero indicates that the school performed exactly even with the district. School scores reflect the achievement of students enrolled for at least two years per the schools' Accountability Plans.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

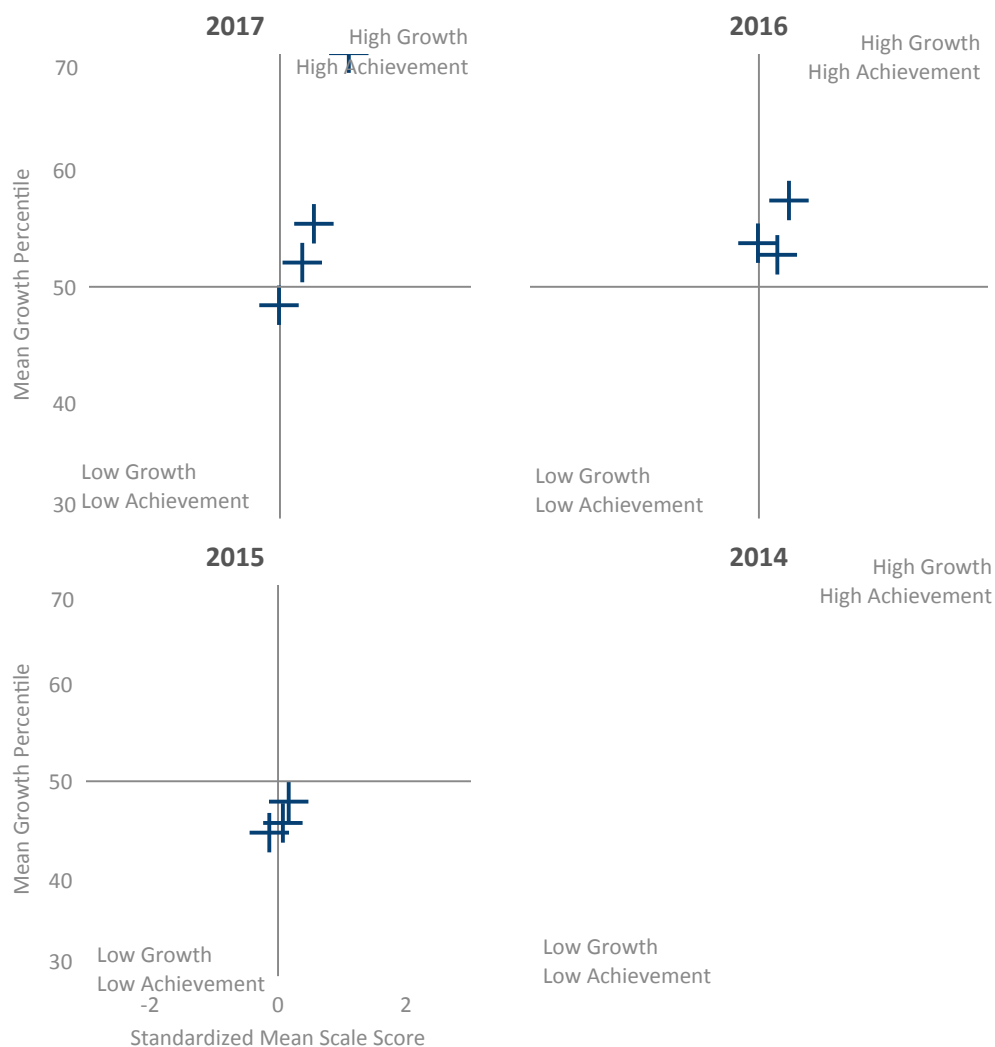
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT SCORES: MATH



District difference for each year broken down by school and district (in NYC, the Institute uses the CSD). These charts compare a school's performance to that of the district. Each bar represents the difference between the school's performance and the district's. A positive result (showing the bar to the right of zero) indicates the amount by which the school outscored the district. A negative result (with the bar to the left of zero) illustrates the amount by which the school performed lower than the district. A score of zero indicates that the school performed exactly even with the district. School scores reflect the achievement of students enrolled for at least two years per the schools' Accountability Plans.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

ELA GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT: 2013-14 THROUGH 2016-17

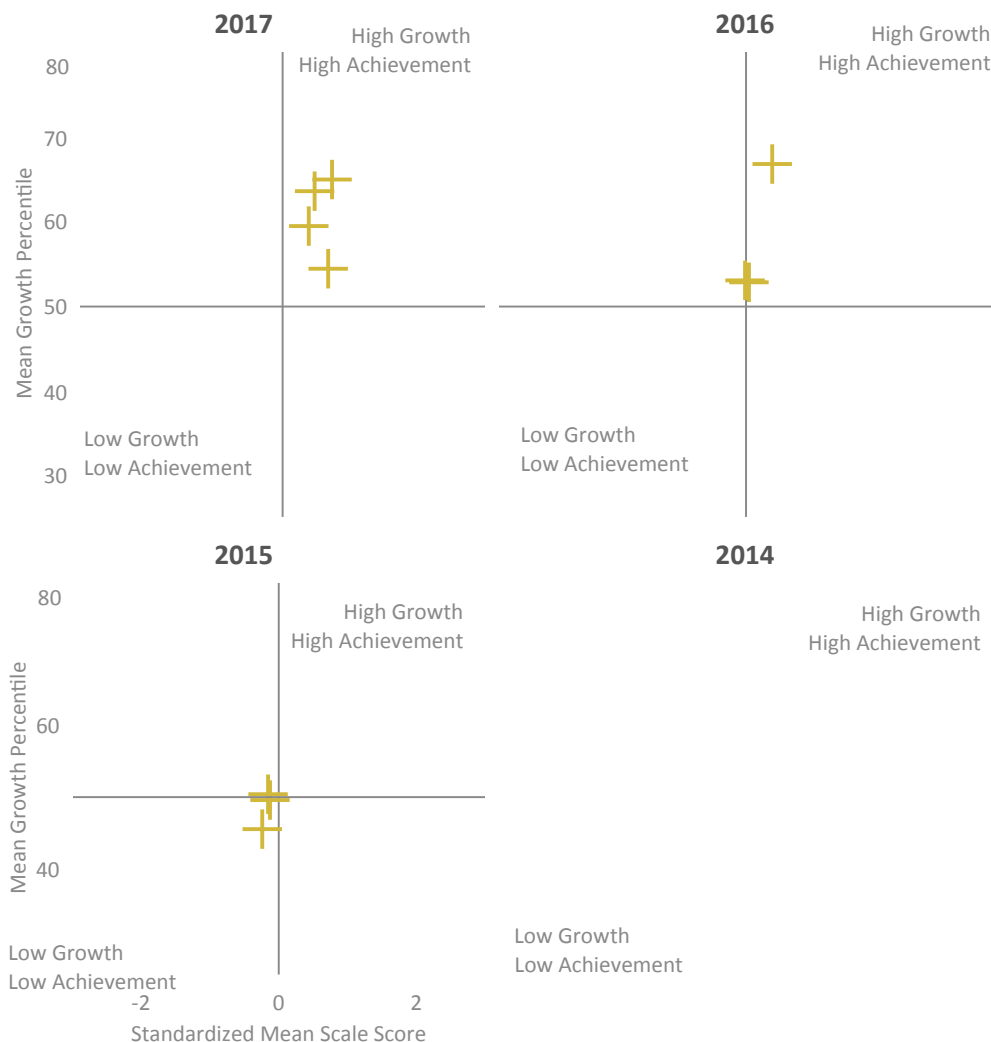


These charts compare a school's ability to grow student achievement with a school's absolute student performance. Schools located in the upper right hand quadrant of each chart show strong results in helping students make learning gains while at the same time helping students achieve strong absolute scores on state assessments. Schools in the lower right hand quadrant show strong absolute scores but lower growth. Because the student growth percentile uses the previous year's scale score as a baseline, it becomes more difficult for a school to maintain strong overall growth scores when students already post high absolute scores.

These charts are produced by comparing growth as measured by the state's student growth percentile to its overall achievement as measured by scale score standardized to the statewide grade level mean over each year for which data are available during the charter term. The growth axis (labeled Mean Growth Percentile) represents the statewide median growth score. The achievement axis (labeled Standardized Mean Scale Score) represents the statewide mean-centered achievement level for each grade served by each school.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

MATH GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT: 2013-14 THROUGH 2016-17



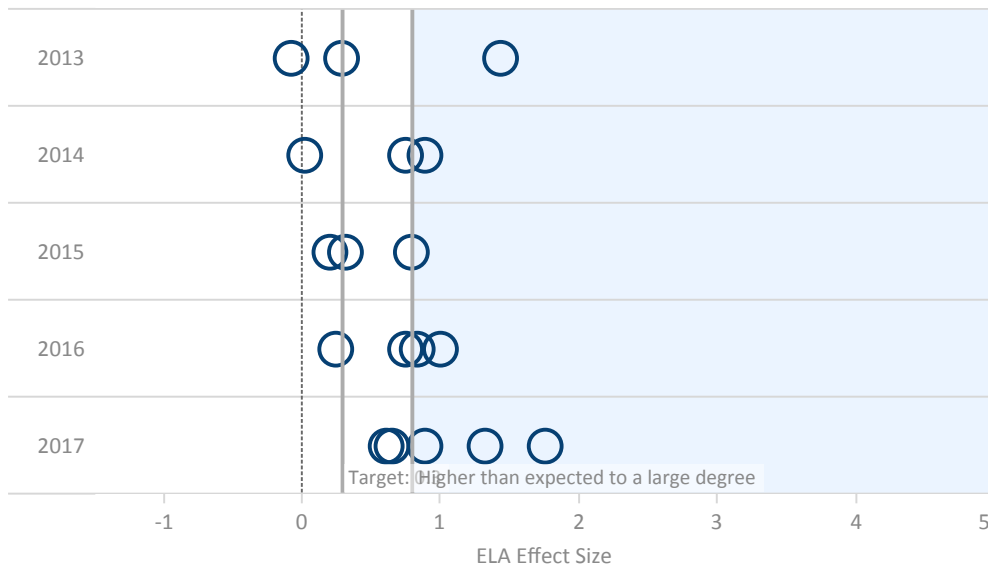
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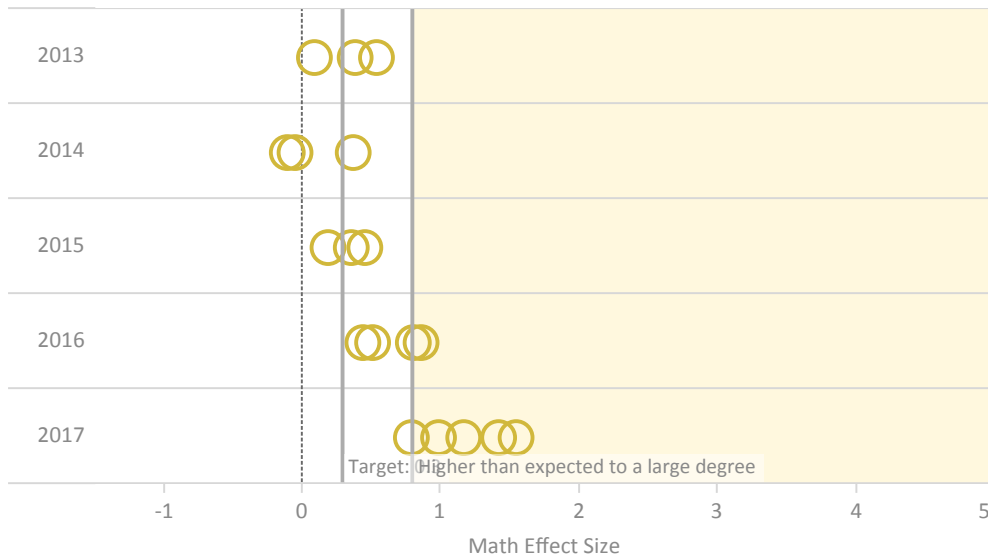
APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

ELA AND MATH EFFECT SIZE DOT PLOTS: 2012-13 THROUGH 2016-17

ELA Effect Size by Year and School



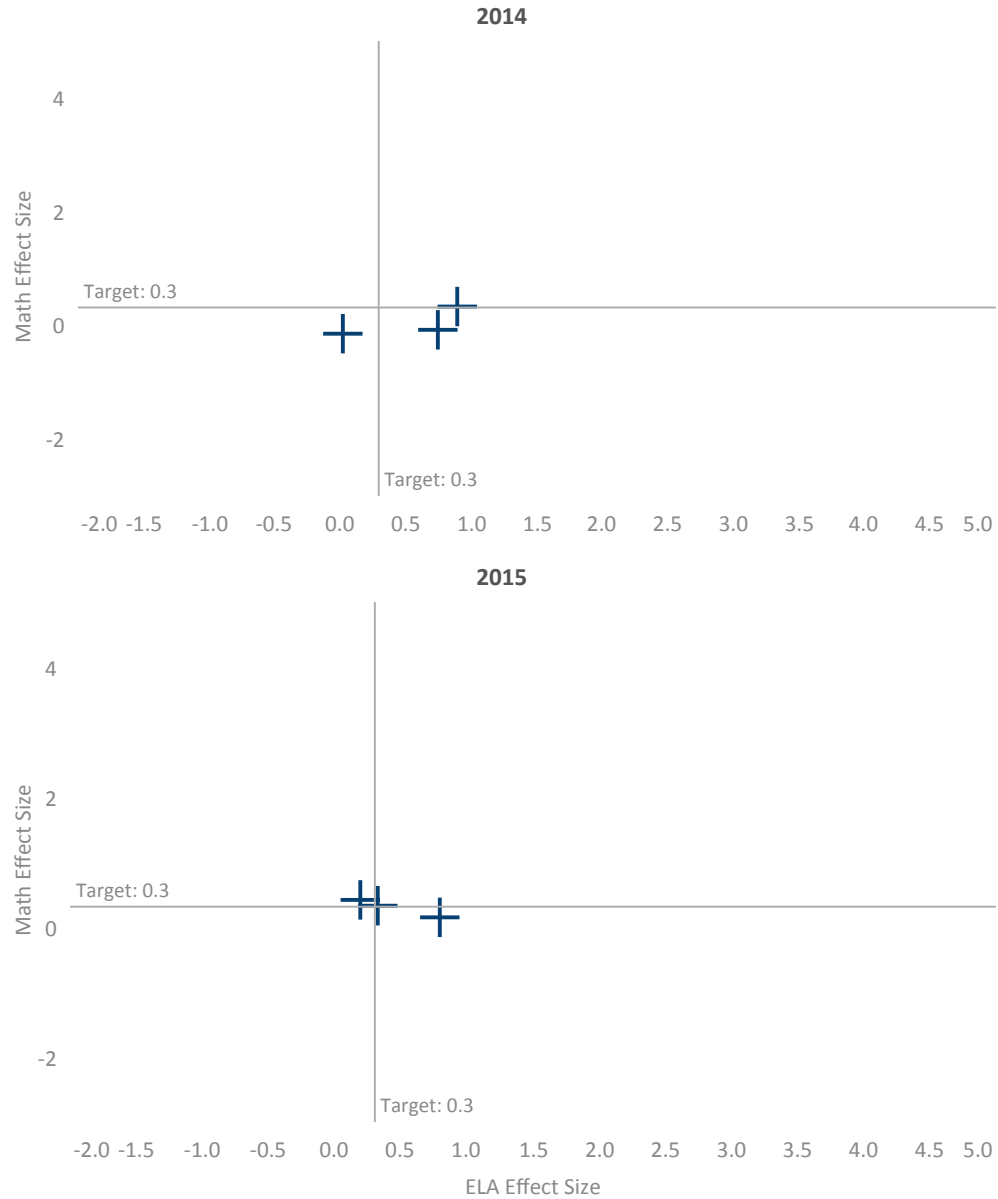
Math Effect Size by Year and School



The charts illustrate the comparative effect size performance at each school across the ed corp by each year for which data are available throughout the charter term. Schools performing at or above 0.3 are meeting SUNY's benchmark for the measure. Schools performing at or above 0.8 are performing higher than expected to a large degree in comparison to schools enrolling similar levels of economically disadvantaged students.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

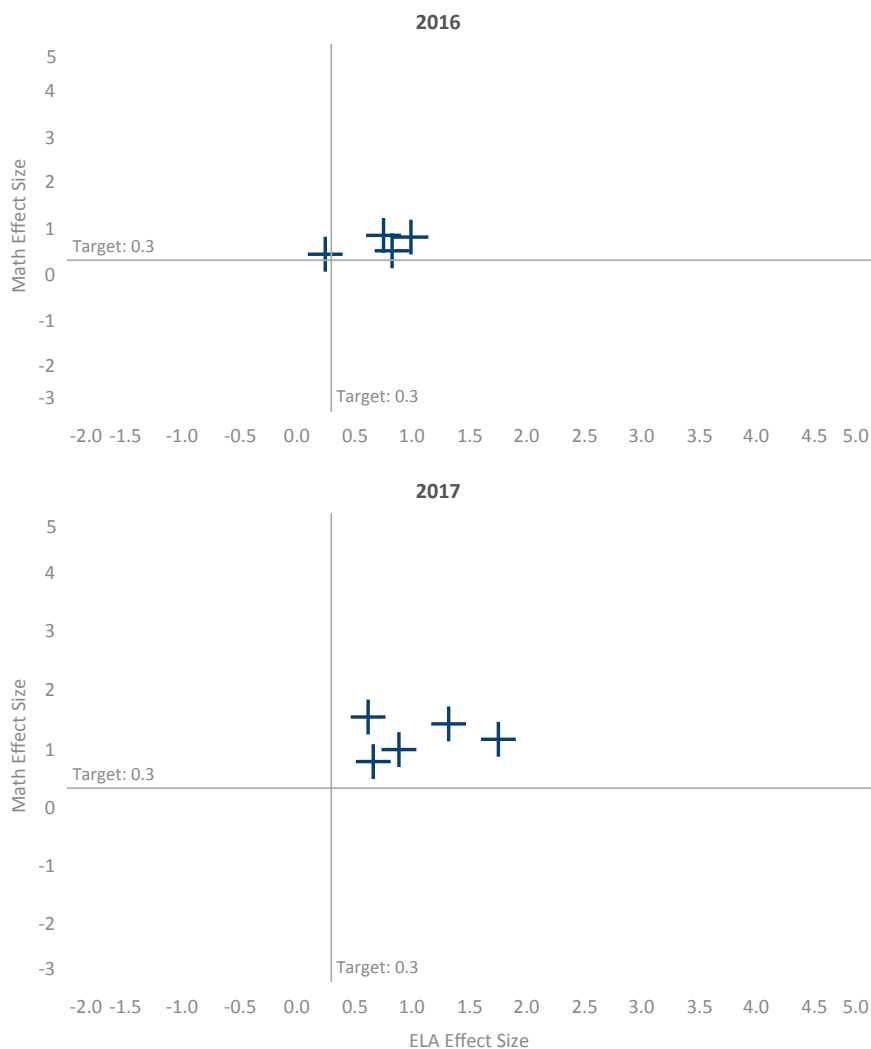
ELA AND MATH EFFECT SIZE SCATTER PLOTS 2013-14 THROUGH 2014-15



The charts compare a school's ELA and math effect sizes over each year for which data are available during the charter term. An effect size measures school performance in comparison to other schools statewide enrolling students with similar proportions of economic disadvantage. Schools with an ELA or math effect size that is less than 0 performed lower than expected based on the economic disadvantage statistic. Schools posting an effect size greater than 0 but less than 0.3 perform about the same as the comparison schools. Schools with an ELA or math effect size greater than 0.3 (SUNY's performance target for the measure) outperformed similar schools statewide to a meaningful degree, while schools with effect sizes greater than 0.8 perform higher than expected to a large degree.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

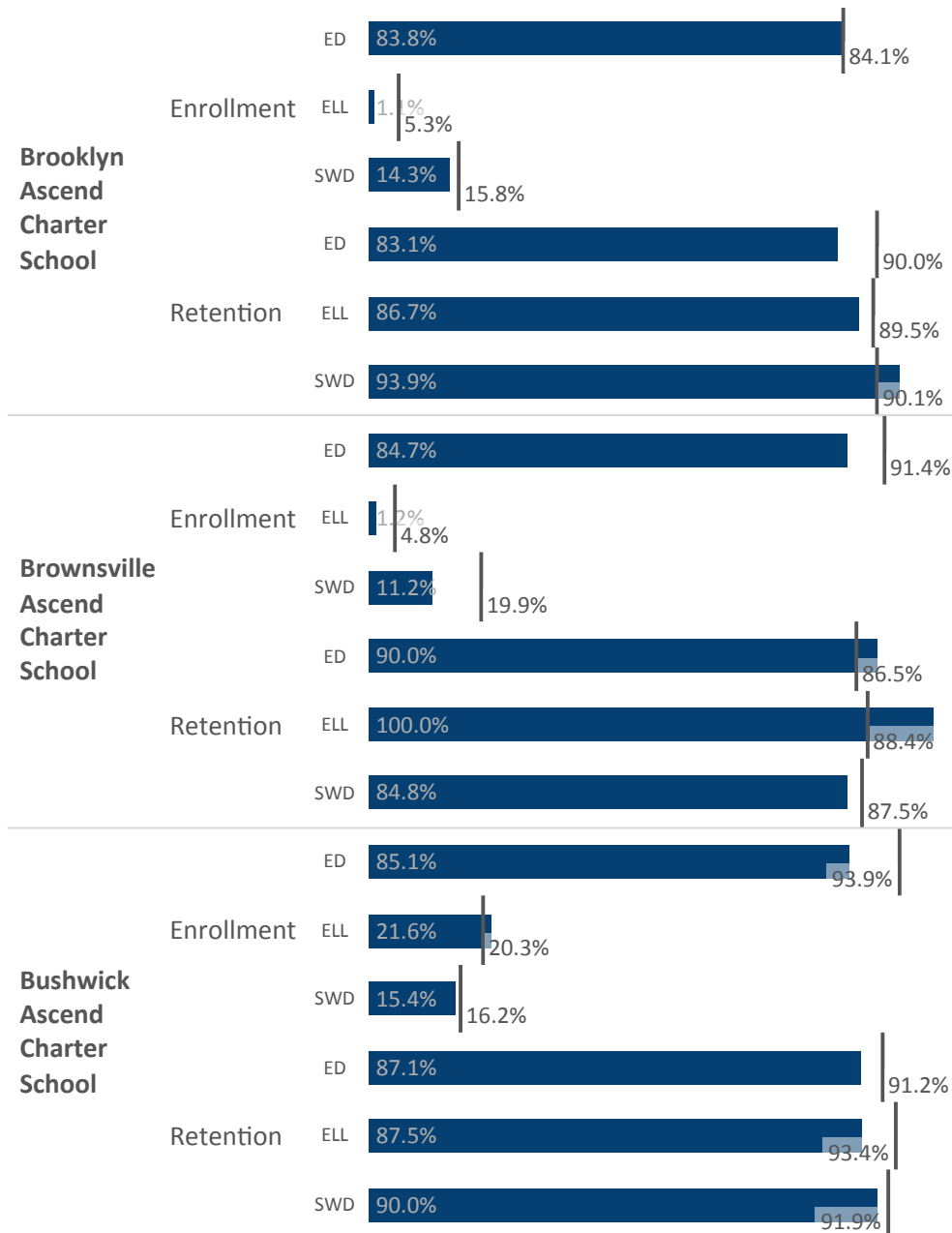
ELA AND MATH EFFECT SIZE SCATTER PLOTS 2015-16 THROUGH 2016-17



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APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

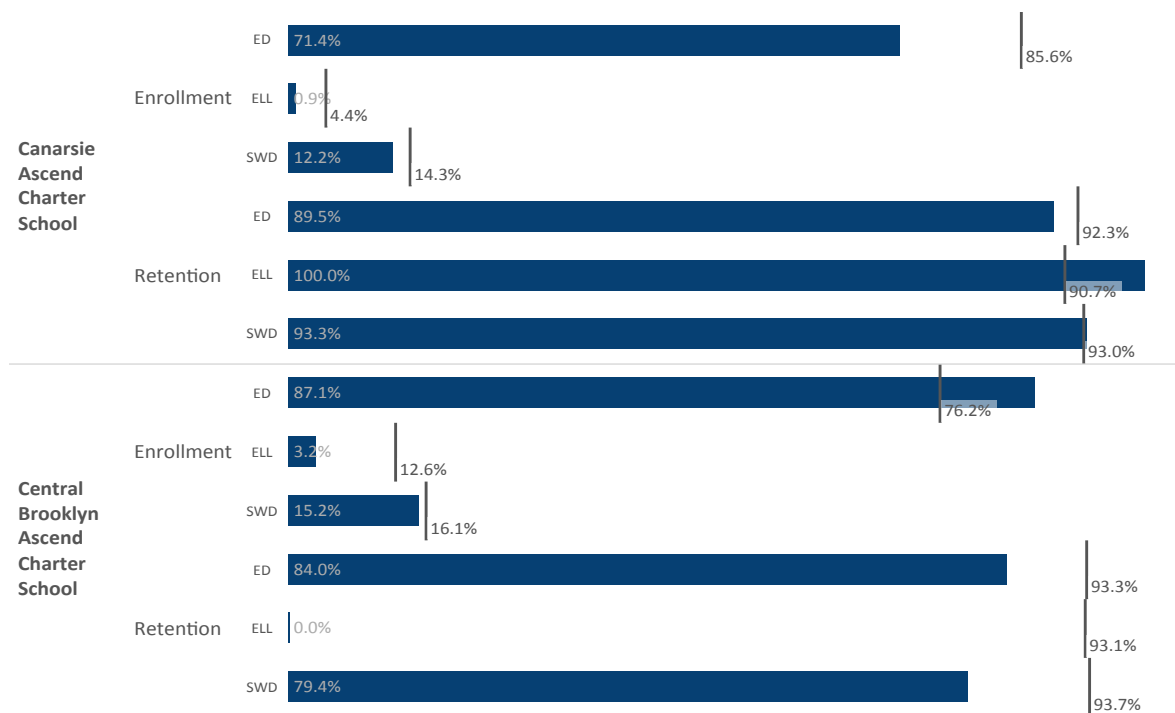
ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS



The chart illustrates the **current enrollment and retention percentages** against the **enrollment and retention targets** for each operating school in the education corporation. As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it has, and will, put in place to meet or exceed SUNY's enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, and FRPL students. This analysis is based on the 2016-17 enrollment and retention data supplied to the Institute by the network.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

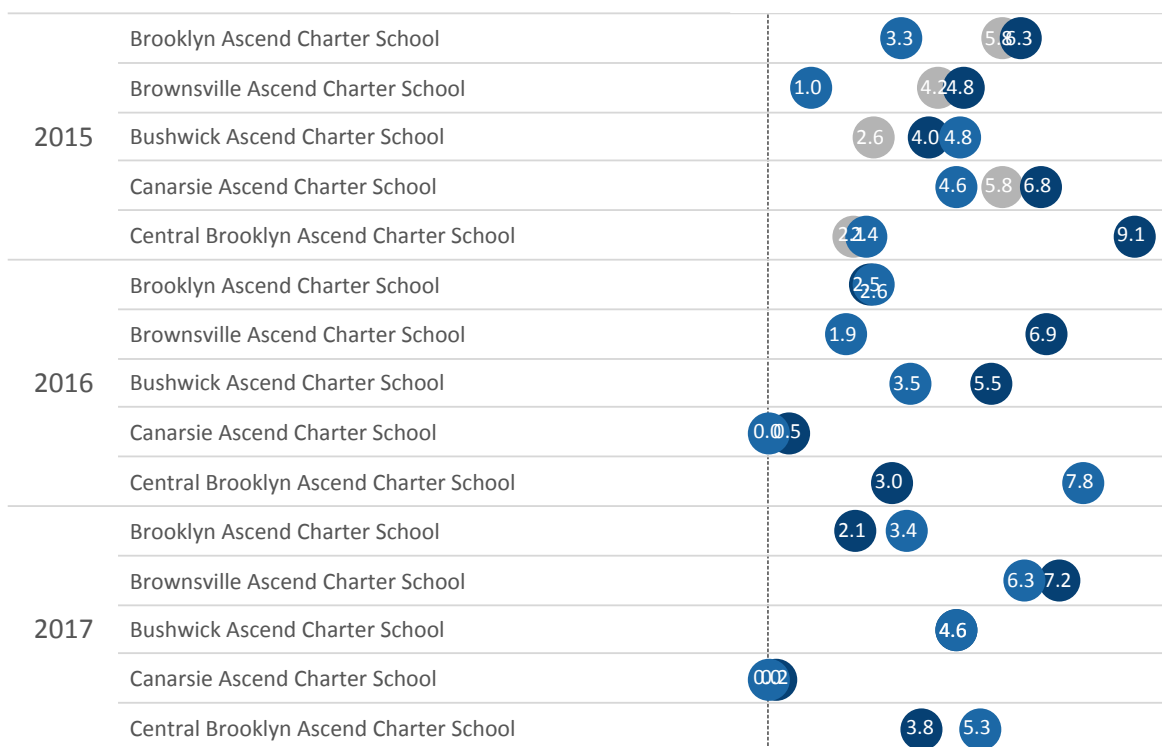
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APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

Suspensions: Ascend Charter Schools' out of school suspension rate, in school suspension rate, and the district overall suspension rate.



Although Community School District (“CSD”) and school suspension rates are presented on the same graph, a direct comparison between the rates is not possible because available CSD data includes Kindergarten through 12th grades and school data includes only the grades served by the school. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by the New York City Department of Education: the total the number of students receiving an out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

During the school years ending in 2015, 2016, and 2017 Ascend Charter Schools expelled 0 students.

APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

PERSISTENCE IN ENROLLMENT



APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (MERGED)

SCHOOL INFORMATION

BALANCE SHEET

Assets

Current Assets

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

Total Current Assets - **GRAPH 1**

Property, Building and Equipment, net

Other Assets

Total Assets - **GRAPH 1**

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities

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

Total Current Liabilities - **GRAPH 1**

L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities

Total Liabilities - **GRAPH 1**

Net Assets

Unrestricted
Temporarily restricted

Total Net Assets

Total Liabilities and Net Assets

ACTIVITIES

Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment
Students with Disabilities

Grants and Contracts

State and local
Federal - Title and IDEA
Federal - Other
Other

Food Service/Child Nutrition Program

Total Operating Revenue

Expenses

Regular Education
SPED
Regular Education & SPED (combined)
Other

Total Program Services

Management and General
Fundraising

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

Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations

Support and Other Revenue

Contributions
Fundraising
Miscellaneous Income
Net assets released from restriction

Total Support and Other Revenue

Total Unrestricted Revenue

Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue

Total Revenue - **GRAPHS 2 & 3**

Change in Net Assets

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

Prior Year Adjustment(s)

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

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
254,418	977,910	1,854,497	3,938,163	5,696,217
48,607	387,326	1,565,724	2,055,542	3,121,856
-	-	-	44,316	-
132,859	145,372	86,605	740,931	519,892
656	200,000	572,220	-	-
436,540	1,710,608	4,079,046	6,778,952	9,337,965
1,854,352	14,242,674	15,221,313	20,598,249	23,198,550
117,534	302,070	360,013	434,454	339,542
2,408,426	16,255,352	19,660,372	27,811,655	32,876,057

318,675	1,198,630	1,467,089	2,068,289	1,200,165
244,600	1,048,644	1,380,160	1,813,801	2,252,678
8,871	-	-	64,651	1,626,649
-	366,941	240,293	27,564	501,773
-	-	630,321	299,651	81,250
2,246,197	728,364	929,565	1,546,758	109,840
2,818,343	3,342,579	4,647,428	5,820,714	5,772,355
500,000	16,636,112	17,668,741	23,109,122	27,531,615
3,318,343	19,978,691	22,316,169	28,929,836	33,303,970

(909,917)	(3,723,339)	(2,655,797)	(1,118,181)	(427,913)
-	-	-	-	-
(909,917)	(3,723,339)	(2,655,797)	(1,118,181)	(427,913)
2,408,426	16,255,352	19,660,372	27,811,655	32,876,057

7,599,973	33,022,368	42,765,866	47,642,864	57,478,104
-	187,080	208,110	5,096,223	5,779,185

42,999	247,347	781,670	3,334,599	298,512
305,393	1,995,302	1,903,391	1,531,684	867,713
85,841	219,552	898,330	265,388	3,355,124
-	-	553,835	628,004	3,742,361
245,840	-	-	1,141,784	-
8,280,046	35,671,649	47,111,202	59,640,545	71,521,000

7,966,314	27,607,477	32,324,000	37,408,694	44,816,221
1,257,891	5,226,094	7,681,868	11,412,633	14,237,572
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-

9,224,205	32,833,571	40,005,868	48,821,327	59,053,793
1,125,940	5,601,029	6,694,929	9,480,005	12,129,335
-	-	-	-	-
10,350,145	38,434,600	46,700,797	58,301,332	71,183,128

(2,070,099)	(2,762,951)	410,405	1,339,213	337,872
-------------	-------------	---------	-----------	---------

45,000	51,010	27,601	11,228	172,558
-	26,592	19,124	5,056	-
2,573	58,318	610,412	182,119	179,838
-	-	-	-	-
47,573	135,920	657,137	198,403	352,396

8,282,619	35,807,569	47,768,339	59,838,948	71,873,396
45,000	-	-	-	-
8,327,619	35,807,569	47,768,339	59,838,948	71,873,396

(2,022,526)	(2,627,031)	1,067,542	1,537,616	690,268
1,112,609	(1,096,308)	(3,723,339)	(2,655,797)	(628,258)
-	-	-	-	(489,923)
(909,917)	(3,723,339)	(2,655,797)	(1,118,181)	(427,913)

APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (MERGED)

SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

Functional Expense Breakdown

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

Total Expenses

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
-	119,406	92,727	6,836,305	-
-	1,090,101	2,597,626	18,507,382	-
-	210,870	128,595	447,384	-
3,255,173	13,834,177	17,402,949	-	32,670,741
3,255,173	15,254,554	20,221,897	25,791,071	32,670,741
600,621	2,860,646	3,830,003	4,579,163	5,939,054
-	-	-	-	-
-	2,998,379	4,653,308	7,131,077	8,527,882
1,467,081	7,857,918	7,957,819	9,096,485	11,582,037
21,885	230,710	446,991	266,552	482,608
867,460	3,228,062	1,432,999	1,885,770	1,887,836
52,404	246,804	142,358	470,006	226,599
117,783	799,048	1,637,306	1,621,394	1,543,523
153,389	1,104,191	1,256,031	1,600,684	2,064,964
1,051,711	3,854,288	2,303,140	5,858,927	6,257,884
7,587,507	38,434,600	43,881,852	58,301,129	71,183,128

SCHOOL ANALYSIS

ENROLLMENT

Chartered Enroll
Actual Enroll - **GRAPH 4**
Chartered Grades
Revised Grades

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1,695	2,305	2,860	3,473	3,848
1,674	2,274	2,789	3,443	3,976
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-

Primary School District:

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

13,527	13,527	13,877	13,877	14,027
0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	0.0%	1.1%

PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

Revenue

Operating
Other Revenue and Support
TOTAL - GRAPH 3

4,946	15,687	16,890	17,323	17,988
28	60	236	58	89
4,975	15,747	17,126	17,380	18,077

Expenses

Program Services
Management and General, Fundraising
TOTAL - GRAPH 3
% of Program Services
% of Management and Other
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5

5,510	14,439	14,343	14,180	14,853
673	2,463	2,400	2,753	3,051
6,183	16,902	16,743	16,934	17,903
89.1%	85.4%	85.7%	83.7%	83.0%
10.9%	14.6%	14.3%	16.3%	17.0%
-19.5%	-6.8%	2.3%	2.6%	1.0%

Student to Faculty Ratio

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

Faculty to Admin Ratio

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

Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

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

(1.0)	(1.0)	(0.3)	0.2	0.2
Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring

Working Capital - GRAPH 7

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

(2,381,803)	(1,631,971)	(568,382)	958,238	3,565,610
-28.8%	-4.6%	-1.2%	1.6%	5.0%
0.2	0.5	0.9	1.2	1.6
HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good

Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

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

0.1	0.5	0.9	1.0	1.5
HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Good

Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

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

1.4	1.2	1.1	1.0	1.0
HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor

Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

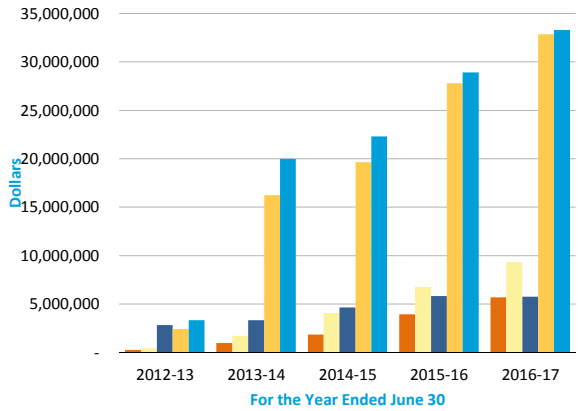
Score
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)

0.3	0.3	0.5	0.8	1.0
HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good

APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (MERGED)

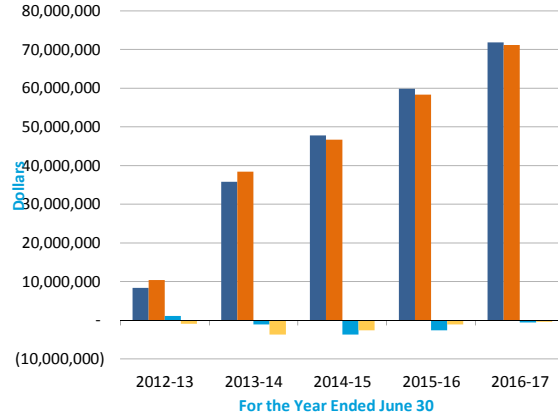
GRAPH 1 Cash, Assets and Liabilities



■ Cash ■ Current Assets ■ Current Liabilities ■ Total Assets ■ Total Liabilities

This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 thru 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right; and, generally speaking, the bigger that gap, the better.

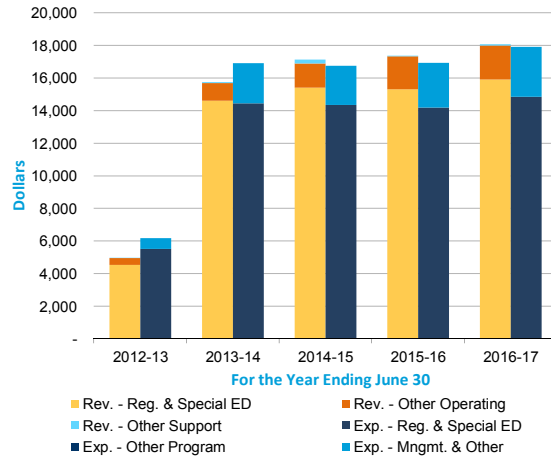
GRAPH 2 Revenue, Expenses and Net Assets



■ Revenue ■ Expenses ■ Net Assets - Beginning ■ Net Assets - Ending

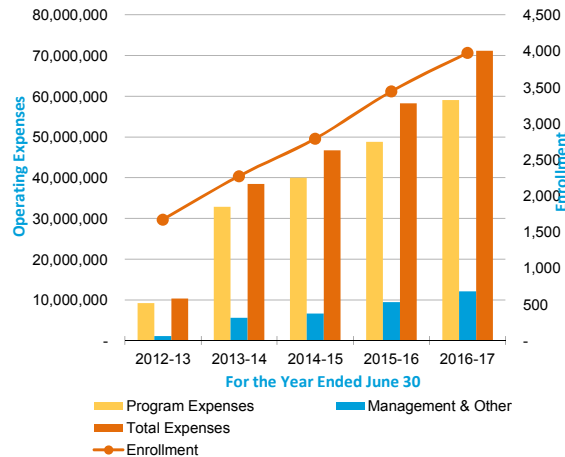
This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year-to-year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year building a more fiscally viable school.

GRAPH 3 Revenue & Expenses Per Pupil



This chart illustrates the breakdown of revenue and expenses on a per pupil basis. Caution should be exercised in making school-by-school comparisons since schools serving different missions or student populations are likely to have substantially different educational cost bases. Comparisons with similar schools with similar dynamics are most valid.

GRAPH 4 Enrollment vs. Operating Expenses



This chart illustrates to what extent the school's operating expenses have followed its student enrollment pattern. A baseline assumption that this data tests is that operating expenses increase with each additional student served. This chart also compares and contrasts growth trends of both, giving insight into what a reasonable expectation might be in terms of economies of scale.

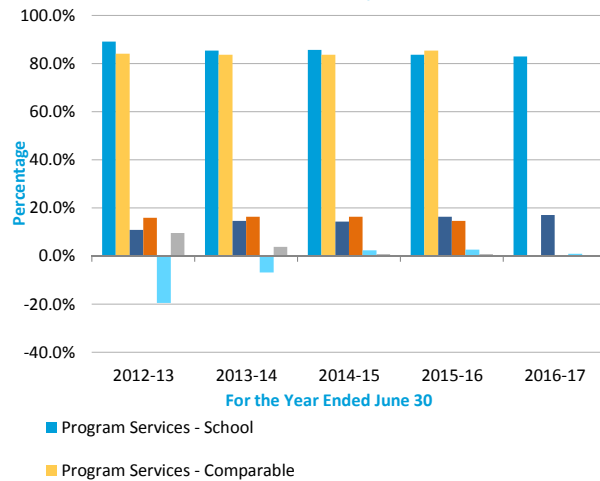
APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

ASCEND CHARTER SCHOOLS (MERGED)

Comparable School, Region or Network: All SUNY Authorized Charter Schools (Including Closed Schools)

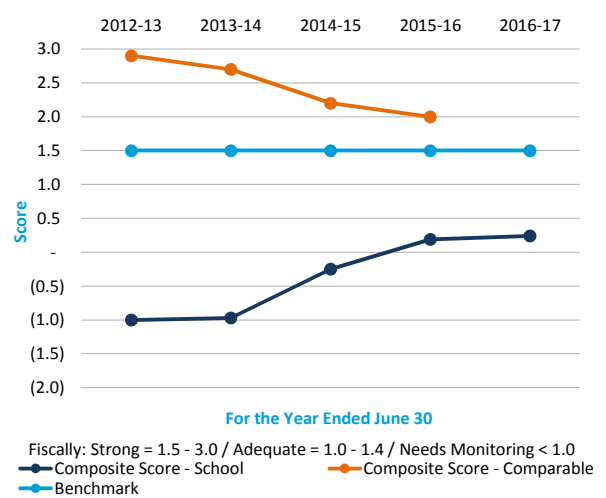
* Average = Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term

GRAPH 5 % Breakdown of Expenses



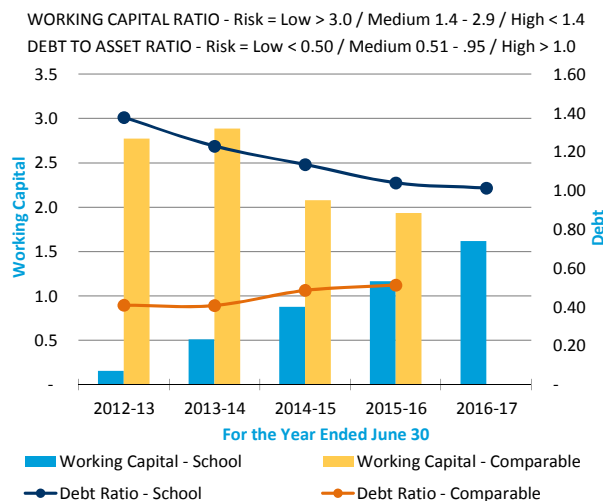
This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding expenses should not be negative. Similar caution, as mentioned on GRAPH 3, should be used in comparing schools.

GRAPH 6 Composite Score



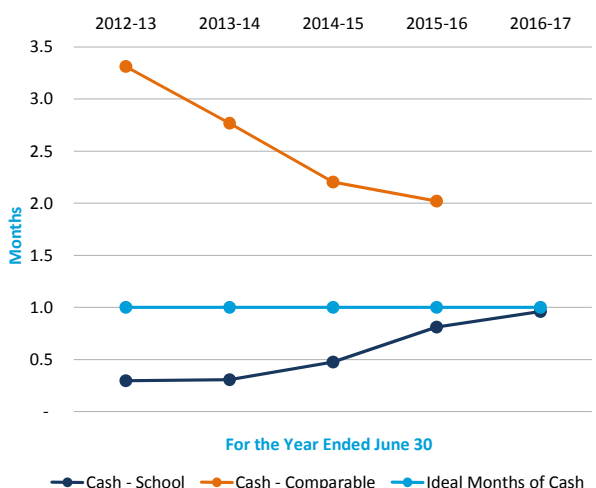
This chart illustrates a school's composite score based on the methodology developed by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) to determine whether private not-for-profit colleges and universities are financially strong enough to participate in federal loan programs. These scores can be valid for observing the fiscal trends of a particular school and used as a tool to compare the results of different schools.

GRAPH 7 Working Capital & Debt to Asset Ratios



This chart illustrates Working Capital and Debt to Asset Ratios. The Working Capital ratio indicates if a school has enough short-term assets to cover its immediate liabilities/short term debt. The Debt to Asset ratio indicates what proportion of debt a school has relative to its assets. The measure gives an idea to the leverage of the school along with the potential risks the school faces in terms of its debt-load.

GRAPH 8 Months of Cash



This chart illustrates how many months of cash the school has in reserves. This metric is to measure solvency – the school's ability to pay debts and claims as they come due. This gives some idea of how long a school could continue its ongoing operating costs without tapping into some other, non-cash form of financing in the event that revenues were to cease flowing to the school.

