



# THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT  
EXPLORE EMPOWER CHARTER  
SCHOOL*

# Charter Schools Institute

Report on the Charter Schools Institute's Review of the State University of New York's Charter Schools

Report prepared for the State University of New York's Charter Schools Institute

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**Report Date: December 23, 2016**

**Visit Date: October 24-25, 2016**

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

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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”).<sup>1</sup>

## 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/](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Policies/).



## REPORT FORMAT

This renewal recommendation report compiles the evidence below using the **State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks** (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”),<sup>2</sup> 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.

## 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?

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.



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](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/renewal).

2. Version 5.0, May 2012, available at: [www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Benchmarks/](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/SUNY-Renewal-Benchmarks/).



# RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

**Short-Term Renewal** The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Charter Renewal of Explore Empower Charter School for a period of three years and renew Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn’s authority to operate the school with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 540 students.

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



have compiled a mixed or limited record of educational achievement in meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, but have in place and in operation at the time of the renewal inspection visit (i) an academic program of sufficient strength and effectiveness, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks,<sup>3</sup> which will likely result in the charter school’s being able to meet or come close to meeting those goals with the additional time that renewal would permit, and (ii) a governing board and organizational structures both in the charter school and its education corporation with a demonstrated capacity to meet the charter school’s academic Accountability Plan goals and to operate the charter school in an educationally and fiscally sound fashion; or,



have compiled an overall record of meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals but, at the time of the renewal inspection visit, have in place an educational program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, is inadequate in multiple and material respects.<sup>4</sup>

## 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:

3. This is Explore Empower’s first renewal as a SUNY authorized school. Therefore, the SUNY Trustees will consider the school’s renewal as an initial renewal pursuant to the SUNY Renewal Policies and all initial renewal outcomes including Short-Term renewal are available. See SUNY Renewal Policies at pp. 12-13.

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

5. SUNY Renewal Policies (pp. 12-13).

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

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

given the programs it will offer, its structure and its purpose, approving the school to operate for another three years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.<sup>6</sup>

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. Explore Empower Charter School ("Explore Empower") received its original charter on December 16, 2008 and was renewed in 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.

Explore Empower uses the following strategies to enroll and retain students and will continue to use these strategies to meet future targets:

- **Family Information Sessions.** Information sessions are offered at different days and times during the week to increase availability to potential families and included specific information about services for students with disabilities. Fliers and informational materials are available in English and Spanish, and applications are available in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole.
- **Direct Mailing Campaign.** In partnership with Vanguard Direct, Explore Empower engages in direct mailing campaigns to encourage Kindergarten enrollment by informing families in the immediate community about Explore Empower as a choice for their students and providing them with information about the school and an application.

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

# RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

- **Community Organizations, Daycare and Pre-Kindergarten Program Outreach.** During the Kindergarten recruitment season, Explore Empower staff members research and contact community organizations, daycare and pre-Kindergarten programs in the neighborhood to inform program staff about the school enrollment process, in some cases visiting such programs and presenting information to families.
- **Parent Referral Campaign.** Explore Empower leverages its current families to spread the word to other families about the school enrollment process. In particular, the school's leadership reaches out to families of ELL students and asks for help engaging other ELL families in the enrollment process.
- **Website, Social Media, and Language Accessibility.** Explore Empower leverages its website and Facebook page to spread the word about its recruitment efforts. The website offers information about family information sessions, the enrollment process, services provided to students with disabilities, and its set-aside lottery preference for ELLs.
- **Retaining Students with Disabilities.** Explore Empower provides robust support services for students with disabilities or require additional academic support. The school employs four learning specialists, two social workers and a school counselor. These staff members provide services and support for students who need it, as well as maintain communication with families to apprise them of student progress and how families can work with students at home.

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.*



# SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EXPLORE EMPOWER CHARTER SCHOOL

### BACKGROUND

Having received its original charter on December 16, 2008 from the New York City Schools Chancellor (“NYC Chancellor”), Explore Empower is one of six schools within a merged education corporation. Explore Charter School (authorized by the NYC Chancellor) and Explore Empower, together with three SUNY authorized schools merged into Explore Excel Charter School (authorized by the SUNY Trustees), effective July 1, 2015.

Two SUNY authorized schools, Explore Enrich and Explore Envision Charter Schools, are scheduled to open in 2018-19 and 2019-20, respectively. At the time of the merger, Explore Excel Charter School was renamed Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn. 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).

Explore Empower was first renewed by the NYC Chancellor in 2013. It opened its doors in the fall of 2009 initially serving 180 students in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. The school is authorized to serve 498 students in grades Kindergarten - 8 during the 2016-17 school year with a projected total enrollment of 540 students. The charter term of authority to operate the school expires on June 30, 2017. If renewed by the SUNY Trustees, a subsequent term would enable the school to operate through July 31, 2022. The school is co-located in a New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) building at 188 Rochester Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11213, in Community School District (“CSD”) 17. The building also houses M.S. K394, a district school that serves students in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

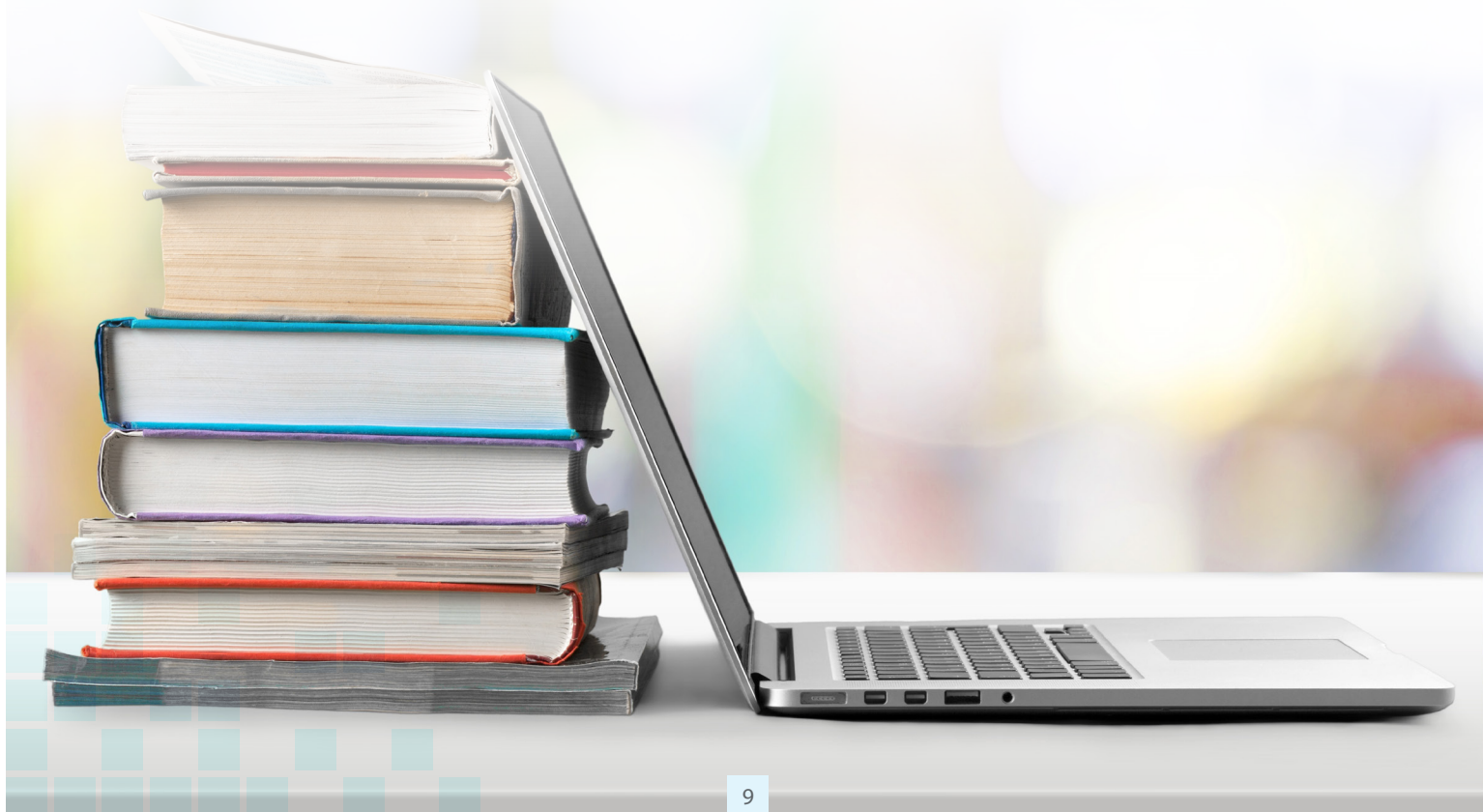
The mission of Explore Empower is:



*The mission of Explore Schools is to provide students with the academic skills and critical-thinking abilities they need to succeed in a college-preparatory high school. We know that all children can succeed in an environment with high expectations, rigorous academics, and caring and committed adults. We are committed to serving all students, including students with special needs and English Language Learners.*



All schools within the education corporation, operate under the management of Explore Schools, Inc. (“Explore Schools” or the “network”), a New York not-for-profit charter management organization based in New York City. The network by contract provides the schools with academic, operational and back-office assistance. Schools utilize the network’s curriculum and assessment materials, all purchased or designed by network curriculum teams. The network is also responsible for managing and evaluating the performance of each school and school leader.



# SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Explore Empower is building a program that is growing its academic success. Prior to 2015-16, the school posted a record of mixed academic results. During 2015-16, the school posted improved scores under its key academic Accountability Plan goal areas of English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics that resulted from changes to the school’s curriculum and the introduction of new instructional leadership. Explore Empower continues to face high rates of teacher turnover and has developed a system to become fully compliant with federal regulations for support services for English language learners (“ELLs”), coming into compliance at the time of the renewal review. The board addresses these and other issues in its three year strategic plan to improve its academic outcomes and organizational capacity. The school and the education corporation have sufficient resources to support the school’s operations and execution of its education program.

Based on the Institute’s review of the school’s performance as posted over the charter term; a review of the Application for Charter Renewal submitted by the school; a review of academic, organizational, governance and financial documentation; and a visit to the school, the Institute recommends the school for renewal.





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# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



## IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

Based on evidence collected throughout the renewal process and during the renewal visit, the school organization and its academic program have strengths that, given the additional time that a short-term renewal would allow, are likely to develop into a strong academic program.

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,<sup>7</sup> 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”<sup>8</sup> and states the educational programs at a charter school must “meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents”<sup>9</sup> for other public schools, SUNY’s required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by state wide 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 PERFOR-  
MANCE, I.E., HOW DID THE  
SCHOOL DO AS COMPARED  
TO SCHOOLS IN THE  
DISTRICT AND SCHOOLS  
THAT SERVE SIMILAR  
POPULATIONS OF ECO  
NOMICALLY DISADVAN-  
TAGED 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. Explore Empower did not propose or include any additional measures of success in the Accountability Plan it adopted.

7. 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.

8. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

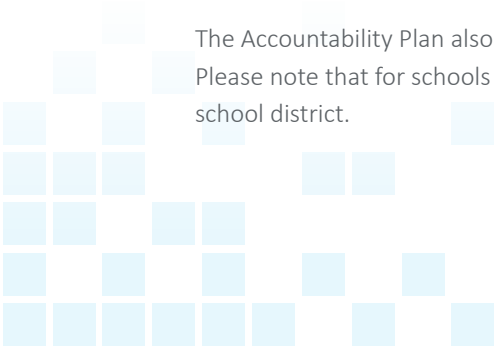
9. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).



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 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 Explore Empower relative to all public schools statewide that serve the same grade levels and that enroll students who are similarly economically disadvantaged. 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 Explore Empower's demonstrated student learning compared to other schools' demonstrated student learning.

The Institute uses the state's growth percentile analysis as a measure of Explore Empower'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 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. This means that to signal the school's ability to help students make one year's 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.

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## SUNY RENEWAL BENCHMARK 1A

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

Beginning in 2012-13, Explore Empower has posted a mixed record of meeting SUNY's accountability standard. Although the school struggled to meet its ELA goal, Explore Empower adjusted its curriculum during 2015-16 and improved its overall achievement. Explore Empower met its mathematics goal during every year since 2012-13 with the exception of 2014-15. The school met its science goal during 2013-14 but has not met that mark in subsequent years. Explore Empower met its NCLB goal in that it has not been identified as a focus or priority school under the state's NCLB accountability system.

Explore Empower met its ELA goal for the first time in 2015-16, the same year that the school implemented its new ELA curriculum. From 2012-13 to 2014-15, the performance of Explore Empower's students who were enrolled in the school for at least two years performed lower than students enrolled in similar grade levels in the district by roughly four percentage points. During 2015-16, Explore Empower's achievement improved when it managed to match the performance of the district. From 2012-13 until 2015-16, the school performed lower than expected in comparison to schools enrolling similar concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. After a recent improving trend, the school's ELA performance in 2015-16 was higher than expected in comparison to demographically similar schools to a small degree when it posted a comparative effect size of 0.18. Throughout the charter term, the school posted mean growth percentiles indicating that each year it grew the ELA learning of its students at rates similar to their peers who posted identical baseline scores during the prior year.

Explore Empower met SUNY's required mathematics accountability standard during each year from 2012-13 with the exception of 2014-15. During 2012-13, the school posted strong performance as measured by the state's mathematics exam: it outperformed the district by 16 percentage points and performed higher than expected to a large degree in comparison to schools enrolling similar concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. During the two subsequent years, the school's mathematics performance declined until, during 2014-15, Explore Empower did not meet SUNY's performance standard for meeting its mathematics goal. During that year, the school's percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency was 1 point below the district's, the schools' performance in comparison to demographically similar schools was lower than expected, and its average growth percentile was 36, 14 points below the state's average of 50. However, during 2015-16, Explore Empower managed



to lift its mathematics performance, primarily within its middle school grades. During that year, the school exceeded the district's performance by five percentage points and performed higher than expected in comparison to schools enrolling similar concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. Notably, half of the school's 7<sup>th</sup> graders enrolled for at least two years scored at or above proficiency on the state's mathematics exam. The 7<sup>th</sup> graders also posted a comparative effect size of 1.81, and posted a mean growth score of 74, well above the state's average growth score of 50.

During 2012-13, Explore Empower met SUNY's accountability standard for science when 100 percent of its 4<sup>th</sup> graders scored at or above proficiency on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade science exam. That result exceeded both SUNY's absolute target of 75 percent and the district's proficiency rate of 82 percent. Since that year, the school has not met SUNY's standard for science achievement. During 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16, the school performed lower than SUNY's target of 75 percent of students scoring at or above proficiency and lower than the district.

Explore Empower has been in good standing according to the state's NCLB accountability system since 2012-13 having never been identified as a focus or priority school.

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# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and ELLs appears below, although not tied to separate goals in the school's formal Accountability Plan.

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Enrollment (N) Receiving Mandated Academic Services		(86)	(102)	(121)
RESULTS	Tested on State Exams (N)	(56)	(72)	(78)
	Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	3.6	5.6	12.8
	Percent Proficient Statewide	5.0	5.8	7.9

		2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
ELL Enrollment (N)		(10)	(13)	(18)
RESULTS	Tested on NYSESLAT <sup>*</sup> Exam (N)	(10)	(13)	(18)
	Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress <sup>†</sup> on NYSESLAT	0.0	46.2	27.8

<sup>\*</sup> New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, a standardized state exam.

<sup>†</sup> Defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into five categories/proficiency levels: Entering (formerly Beginning); Emerging (formerly Low Intermediate); Transitioning (formerly Intermediate); Expanding (formerly Advanced); and, Commanding (formerly Proficient).





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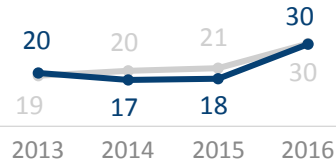
# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## EXPLORE EMPOWER CHARTER SCHOOL

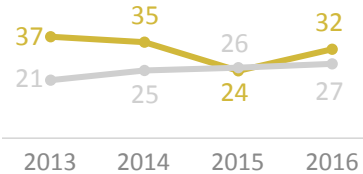
### REQUIRED MEASURE DESCRIPTION

**Comparative Measure: District Comparison.** Each year, the percentage of students at Explore Empower in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency in **ELA** and **mathematics** will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in CSD 17.

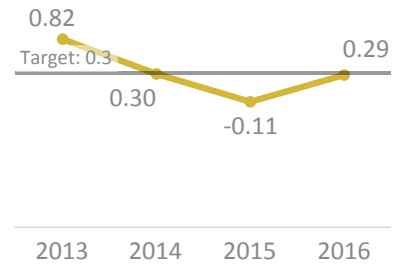
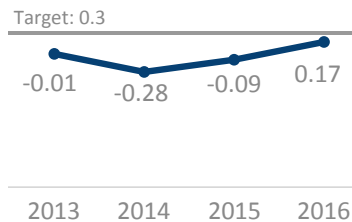
### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



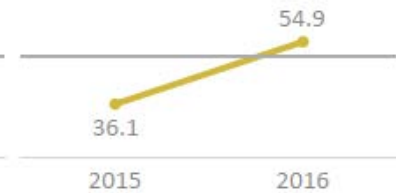
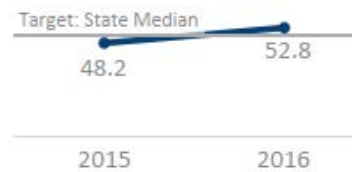
### MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



**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** and **mathematics** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

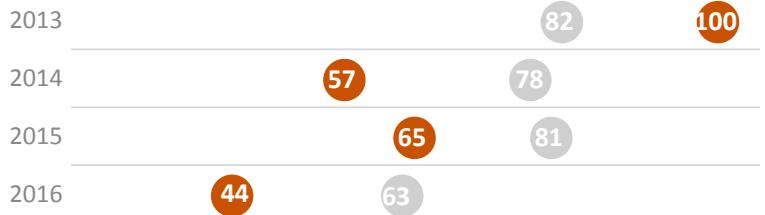


**Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.** Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile in **ELA** and **mathematics**.



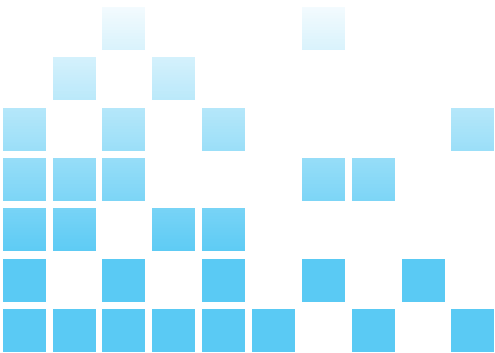
### SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

**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.



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

Explore Empower administers a wide variety of assessments to gauge student performance throughout the academic year. Regularly scheduled assessments inform daily classroom strategies, such as small group instruction, as well as longer term intervention supports. These practices notwithstanding, the school does not consistently use data to develop the competencies of all teachers.

- Explore Empower regularly administers valid and reliable assessments aligned to the school's curriculum that allows teachers and school leaders to monitor individual student performance. In literacy, the school now administers curriculum-based Core Knowledge assessments in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, as well as Teachers College's on-demand writing assessments, and F&P assessments in all grades.
  - The school also administers network-created mathematics assessments for all grades and Power Reading interim assessments for 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - The school uses valid processes for scoring and analyzing assessments. Teachers meet in content teams during pre-service professional development, school-wide data days, and during Professional Learning Communities ("PLC") to analyze student assessments collectively and norm scoring using a network- or curriculum-provided rubric.
  - The school continues to provide teachers with a wealth of student assessment data. Teachers and school leaders across the network meet after the conclusion of each term to discuss student performance on interim assessments. Teachers then break out into grade teams across the network to discuss strategies for reteaching and intervention supports. School leaders continue these discussions during in-service data days to identify student groupings and instructional strategies for targeted intervention and enrichment blocks. In addition to school-wide assessments, teachers use daily informal assessments, such as exit tickets and individual student conferencing, to develop instructional strategies.
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**SUNY  
RENEWAL  
BENCHMARK  
1B**

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- In addition to network-wide data meetings, leaders and teachers access the school's overall proficiency rates on interim assessments as well as student-level performance data. Although school leaders discuss student performance with teachers during coaching sessions, the school does not aggregate student-level data to visualize performance trends for individual classes or for particular subgroups (e.g., students with disabilities).
- School leaders consider student performance when developing coaching agendas and teachers' individual goals.
- The school formally communicates to parents/guardians about students' progress and growth five times per year.

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

Teachers receive sufficient materials and support from network staff to guide their instructional planning. Due to longstanding dissatisfaction with student achievement results, Explore schools implemented a variety of commercial curriculum materials across all grades. However, network leaders did not revise the curriculum with sufficient urgency, as schools did not implement the ELA curriculum until the most recent academic year and the mathematics curriculum until the current academic year.

- Due to longstanding dissatisfaction with student achievement results, Explore Schools recently implemented a variety of commercial curriculum materials across all grades that provide a fixed, underlying structure, aligned to state standards across grades. However, the school did not have a curriculum aligned to standards until late in the charter term. The network attempted to revise instructional content to align the curriculum to state standards but was unsuccessful. After researching effective curricula and consideration of teachers' preferences, the network executed a multi-year rollout strategy of its new curriculum. Explore Empower implemented Core Knowledge in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and Expeditionary Learning in 3<sup>rd</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> grade for ELA instruction in 2015-16. For mathematics instruction, the school implemented TERC Investigations for Kindergarten- 5<sup>th</sup> grades and Math in Focus for 6<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> grades at the start of the 2016-17 academic year. The school continues to use Teachers College Writing workshop to guide writing instruction across all grades.



- Teachers have sufficient instructional materials that provide a bridge between the curriculum framework and lesson plans. The network curriculum team, consisting of the chief academic officer, the director of literacy, director of mathematics, and the director of early childhood instruction, provide teachers with unit overviews, scope and sequence documents, and planning maps.
- Teachers at Explore Empower meet frequently to discuss curriculum implementation and tailor the lessons to meet the needs of their students. Teachers meet in grade level teams across the network two weeks prior to the start of a new module to discuss execution. Teachers also meet during weekly PLCs based on content to complete lesson plans and tailor instruction to meet students' needs. Instructional leaders and grade team teachers facilitate these meetings and guide teachers in implementing lesson plans, analyzing student data, and differentiating instruction.
- Teachers know what to teach and when to teach it based on curriculum documents. With support from the network, Explore Empower evaluates and revises its curriculum documents. The school monitors student achievement through analyses of classroom assignments and school-wide assessments to determine allocations to small group instruction as well as materials to reteach in class and during intervention and enrichment blocks. At the network level, the curriculum team analyzes student progress using state, Fountis & Pinnell, and termly interim assessments.
- The network then determines, with input from teachers using surveys and informal conversations, large-scale curricular changes. Given implementation of more rigorous state standards and dissatisfaction with student performance for at least three years, Explore Schools put in place a comprehensive standards-aligned curriculum for the 2016-17 school year.

## IS HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION EVIDENT THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL?

While there are pockets of high quality instruction across Empower, instruction that is insufficient to consistently support strong student learning is evident across many classrooms. Teachers do not consistently provide lessons that promote academic rigor and did not display during the renewal visit effective classroom management techniques that fully engage students in the lesson material on a regular basis. As shown in the chart below, during the renewal visit the Institute team members conducted 33 classroom observations following a defined protocol used in all school evaluation visits.

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## NUMBER OF CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

	GRADE									
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
<b>CONTENT AREA</b>										
<b>ELA</b>	1	2		1	1	1		2	3	11
<b>Writing</b>					1	1		1	1	4
<b>Math</b>			2	3	1	2	3	2	2	15
<b>Science</b>							1			1
<b>Soc Stu</b>							1			1
<b>Specials</b>								1		1
<b>Total</b>	1	2	2	4	3	4	5	6	6	33

- Across the school, teachers generally deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives aligned to the school's curriculum (25 out of 33 classrooms observed). Most teachers communicate learning objectives to students for each lesson by requiring students to write them down or telling students the purpose of the day's lesson. The most effective teachers require students to explain learning objectives in their own words either at the beginning of class or during a learning activity. Teachers frequently begin classes by activating students' past skills and knowledge and describing how the day's lesson connects to prior course content. Teachers present concepts and vocabulary accurately in clear and age-appropriate terms. Additionally, a small number of teachers differentiate their instruction for students in ways that students readily understand. Co-teachers generally have clearly delineated roles within co-taught classrooms, such as engaging in parallel teaching, small group pull-outs, or having one teacher redirect student misbehavior while the other teacher focuses on the main instruction.
- Half of teachers both regularly and effectively use techniques to check for student understanding (17 out of 33 classrooms). Teachers that do not effectively check their students' understanding call on a small number of the most engaged students, fail to take up in-class opportunities to review student work, or do not structure their lessons to include opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the learning objective. While a significant number of teachers respond to students' levels of understanding through in the moment adjustments during lessons, many teachers adhere to their lesson plans without adaptability. In contrast, half of the school's teachers regularly and effectively check for students understanding. These teachers use a variety of creative questioning techniques to effectively gauge student knowledge and understanding,

including: cold calling by drawing popsicle sticks out of a container; rotating between choral responses, “everyone call out if you know it” questions, and whole-class “agree or disagree” checks; and requiring students to use evidence or arguments to support their answers. Many of these teachers integrate checks for understanding without interrupting the main flow of instruction, such as circulating with purpose to review student work during independent or small group activities.

- Few teachers challenge students with opportunities to develop depth of understanding, higher-order thinking, and problem solving skills (8 out of 33 classrooms). Most teachers reduce opportunities to acquire and demonstrate deeper understanding of content by lowering the rigor of their lessons, such as using multiple choice questions, drawing pictures, or having students frequently copy from the board. While many teachers provide some opportunities for peer interaction during lesson activities, such as “turn and talk” time, these peer interactions do not consistently support academic student discourse. Even when opportunities for higher-order thinking are present, many teachers rely on a small number of the most engaged students to perform the higher order thinking for the rest of the class. A few teachers actively challenge students to create meaningful connections between the classroom and the real world as well as require students to explain and justify their answers to open-ended questions, though these instructional practices are not implemented by all teachers schoolwide.
- Half of teachers establish and maintain a classroom environment with a consistent focus on academic achievement (18 of 33 classrooms). Teachers are generally prepared with materials and arrange classrooms to enable students to readily access materials as needed throughout a lesson. The teachers who most effectively engage students have efficient transitions between learning activities, use proximity and quick requests to redirect student behavior, and incorporate opportunities such as “stretch breaks” or “time outs” for the class to collect itself and refocus. While most teachers communicate clear directions and expectations to students along with a sense of urgency, only half of teachers consistently enforce expectations in these regards. Most teachers do not maintain appropriate pacing throughout lessons as significant instructional time is lost to behavior management. For example, teachers’ “first five” or “do now” activities often take three times as long to complete as scheduled. Moreover, teachers regularly permit low-level student misbehavior and allow some students to opt-out of learning activities.



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### DOES THE SCHOOL HAVE STRONG INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP?

Empower deploys several instructional leaders to support teachers in providing quality instruction. Teachers and instructional leaders identify the skills and competencies most necessary to develop. However, instructional leaders do not establish clear targets for the academic outcomes desired as a result of the coaching, thus hindering the coaches and the teachers' ability to determine progress in improving the strength of instructional delivery.

- Explore Empower is working to establish high expectations for teacher performance. Although the network and the school share a set objectives aimed at improving the school's overall academic performance this year, instructional and school culture leaders have not developed a set of strategies to operationalize the objectives in a meaningful way during the school day. Leaders are therefore left without succinct expectations for teachers' pedagogical practice. In some cases, leaders provide input on which goals a teacher might choose. At the end of the year, leaders do not include an assessment of teachers' goal attainment in final evaluation documents. As a result, evaluations do not make clear which teachers are meeting or exceeding expectations as opposed to those who are not meeting expectations. Teachers do not receive clear messages about the extent to which they might need to improve their practice.
- Explore Empower employs an upper school academic director and a lower school academic director. In addition to some teacher coaching responsibilities, the lower school academic director oversees the work of two academic coordinators. The coordinators divide their responsibility by grade level, with one coordinator coaching and supporting teachers in Kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and the other coaching teachers in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This year, the academic coordinator overseeing 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade is also serving as the academic director for 4<sup>th</sup> grade in training as part of a leadership development program. At the upper school, the academic director oversees the work of one academic manager. The instructional leadership staff is sufficient by number to provide coaching and support to the teachers at the school. The leaders confer biweekly to discuss observations and norm expectations for the quality of teacher practice. These meetings may take the form of school walkthroughs with common observation time; other meetings might include the use of video observations to norm observations and feedback. Although the structure is complex, teachers report that they are clear about the roles and responsibilities and lines of accountability at each grade level.

- Across the network of schools, Explore Empower included, leaders and teachers focused the first term of the school year on establishing the school's culture and developing classroom management routines. At the time of the renewal visit during the start of the second term, some teachers have successfully established a classroom culture that engages students and focuses on academic achievement. Instructional and cultural leaders continue to work with a few teachers to meet classroom management goals. Also at the time of the visit, instructional leaders were transitioning coaching routines to focus on academic routines in the classroom. The leaders have differentiated coaching routines based on past performance and this year's baseline data about students' literacy and math performance. Some teachers requiring more support receive coaching a few times each week while other teachers receive coaching once every other week. This differentiation enables the leaders to push the overall achievement of the school higher by bringing the lowest teachers up. It is not known if the strategy effectively pushes the already high teachers even higher.
- Each year, one teacher from each school across the network is designated as the grade and content level planner for the year. Each term, these teachers meet to discuss unit plans and learning objectives. After this initial meeting, they return to their respective schools (Explore Empower included) to generate lesson plans for the school. The planning teachers meet at least weekly with other teachers to plan curriculum and instruction during PLC meetings: teachers at the lower school meet several times each week as content area groups; teachers at the upper school meet at least weekly, also as content area groups. During the PLC meetings, teachers also have opportunities to practice questioning and other pedagogical techniques. Teachers then submit the plans to the academic directors for their review and critique. Teachers do not always consistently submit plans but, when they do, the academic directors provide critique and feedback about improving the quality of the lesson.
- The network and the school now provide three weeks of pre-service professional learning during the summer. During the school year, teachers have professional development time on Wednesdays when students are released early. The topics address a combination of network and school driven priorities. Teachers report that the development topics are relevant and relate directly to classroom practice. Professional development sessions also allow teachers time to analyze data and plan instruction. For instructional leaders, the professional development sessions focus on developing the skills necessary to provide guidance to groups of teachers.

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- Although instructional leaders conduct evaluations of teacher performance each year the criteria for those evaluations are not clear. Each evaluation contains narrative information about the teacher's contribution to the school that year followed by areas of strength and areas for growth. Teachers and leaders collaborate to develop growth goals at the beginning of each school year but evaluations do not provide a clear and concise assessment about the teacher's attainment of those goals. Lacking that assessment, it is difficult to discern the difference between an evaluation of a teacher who has met the goals from the evaluation of a teacher who has not met the goals. Teachers also report that they are not always clear on the criteria that form the basis of their evaluation. The school's evaluations also fail to hold teachers accountable for meeting school wide expectations for student performance growth and achievement: they lack any mention of the school's identified targets for growth.

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

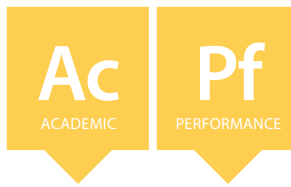
Explore Empower has adequate intervention systems in place to meet the needs of its at-risk students.

- The school uses clear procedures for identifying at-risk students including students with disabilities, ELLs, and those struggling academically. The school utilizes its child study team ("CST"), the composition of which depends on the particular student but often consists of general education teachers, counselors, learning specialists, grade team leads and a school leader, as the chief mechanism for identifying students with disabilities and those who are struggling significantly. The school typically convenes a CST at the request of a teacher. The CST creates academic and/or behavioral support plans with specific goals for individual students that the CST monitors and evaluates. CSTs refer students to special education evaluation if students do not respond to the academic and/or behavioral supports. The school identifies ELLs using the Home Language Identification Survey and the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners.
- Explore Empower serves its students with disabilities through integrated co-teaching ("ICT") classrooms and special education teacher support services ("SETSS"). There is at least one ICT classroom in each grade of the lower school. The upper school employs three subject-specific ICT teachers in mathematics, reading, and writing that provide services in their areas of expertise across grades 6-8 and has an additional part-time ICT teacher in grade 6. The school has four learning specialists and a support services specialist that provide SETSS. The school also employs two counselors and a social worker that help meet the needs of students with disabilities.

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- The school uses a response to intervention (“RtI”) approach to provide interventions and supports to students struggling academically. Tier 1 instruction entails general education teacher supports appropriate for the majority of students in a classroom. Groups of students receive Tier 2 interventions, such as small group pull-outs, if one or more students are not meeting performance standards. Tier 3 refers to CST in which individual student goals are set and tracked. Teachers report a greater emphasis this year on the school requiring proof that the teacher attempted Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions prior to moving a student to Tier 3. The school’s leveled literacy intervention (“LLI”) program is also designed to help meet the needs of struggling students through offering a methodology to use during homogenous reading groups. Notably, this school year for grades 6-8 school leaders observe LLI instruction to determine whether teachers are implementing the LLI program with fidelity and create teacher LLI plans accordingly.
- Explore Empower has adequate supports for ELLs. One of the school’s special education teachers also acts as an ELL specialist for the school and network, supporting schools to systematize the ELL identification process, help providing training on helping teachers differentiate, and creating plans to meet the needs of ELLs. That ELL specialist is certified in English to Speakers of Other Languages (“ESOL”) and provides support to general education teachers and learning specialists.
- The school adequately monitors the progress and success of at-risk students. Learning Specialists and ICT teachers regularly review students’ progress to ensure that students are receiving the required services and making adequate progress toward their individualized education program (“IEP”) goals. Some general education and SETSS teachers have begun administering assessments for students with disabilities throughout the year, rather than wait until the end of the 12-month period for IEP re-assessment, in an attempt to better identify the possible disabilities of students. There is a concern among some general education and SETSS teachers that the information in an IEP may not be fully reflective of, or sufficiently specific on, students’ disabilities thus those teachers are pro-actively examining a remedy. Teachers report this year that teachers are more regularly using student work portfolios to assess student progress. Teachers regularly review students’ F&P and other end-of-term and assessment results to determine to what extent struggling students, including ELLs, are progressing. The school also examines the year-end the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) results to assess the progress of its ELLs.
- Teachers are aware of their students’ progress toward meeting IEP goals, achieving English proficiency or improving academic performance in the case of struggling students. At the beginning of the school year the school provides all teachers with rosters consisting of their students who have IEPs and ELL designations, their required services



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and accommodations, their IEP goals and their language proficiency goals. ICT and some SETSS teachers participate in weekly teacher PLC meetings, in which the individual at-risk needs of students are sometimes discussed; however, not all SETTS teachers regularly attend PLC meetings and the school does not schedule additional times for SETTS teachers to meet with general education teachers.

- The school provides adequate training and professional development to identify and help teachers meet the needs of at-risk students. The school and network provide a wealth of training on how to meet the needs of students with disabilities and struggling students including professional development on: how to write an IEP (required training for ICT and SETSS teachers); classifications and characteristics of particular disabilities (required training for ICT and SETSS teachers); LLI strategies and planning; CST processes; and differentiation. ICT teachers across the network meet weekly to discuss, and receive trainings on, strategies to meet the needs of students with IEPs. The school and network have already provided training that all teachers attended on how to identify ELLs, what the various proficiency levels of ELLs mean, and what supplemental materials and strategies could benefit ELLs.





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## IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

Explore Empower has created an administrative structure with sufficient capacity to deliver the educational program effectively. Board members bring a wealth of skills and expertise to bear on school oversight and regularly review Explore Empower's progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals.

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

Explore Empower 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.

## ARE PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STUDENTS SATISFIED WITH THE SCHOOL?

To report on parent satisfaction with the school's program, the Institute used satisfaction 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 NYCDOE's 2015-16 NYC School Survey. NYCDOE distributes the survey every year to compile data about school culture, instruction and systems for improvement. This year, 67% of families who received the survey responded. The majority of survey respondents (94%) indicate satisfaction with the school, and the response rate is sufficient to be useful in framing the results as 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. Among 10 parents in attendance at the focus group, almost all selected the school because of bad experiences with their zoned district school in the past. Most parents expressed satisfaction and loyalty to Explore Empower. Parents were extremely satisfied with the frequency and depth of communication from teachers and other staff members at the

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school. One parent opted to remove a student from Explore Empower in favor of a district school that could provide more a more appropriate special education setting. That same parent continues to enroll another child at Explore Empower.

**Persistence in Enrollment.** One indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2015-16, 84.4% of Explore Empower 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 state wide context.

## DOES THE SCHOOL’S ORGANIZATION WORK EFFECTIVELY TO DELIVER THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?

Explore Empower, with support from its network, has put in place an organizational structure with the resources to deliver an effective educational program.

- Explore Empower has an administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program. The school has a leadership team consisting of two academic directors, one director of school culture, and a director of operations to manage the instructional, behavioral, and operational aspects of leading a school. The administrative structure additionally includes several secondary leaders including two academic coordinators that support implementation of the academic program. The organizational structure has clear lines of accountability with increasingly defined roles and responsibilities across the organization.
- The school has a discipline system in place. The director of culture, a position created in the school last year, oversees the implementation of the discipline system along with two deans and two culture associates. In comparing the 2015-16 academic year to the previous academic year, there were only 29 in-school suspension this year compared to 79 in-school suspensions last year (decrease of 63%) and only 164 out-of-school suspensions this year compared to 218 out-of-school suspensions last year (decrease of 25%). The school links the reduction in suspensions to its new approach to discipline and culture and the improved responsiveness and timeliness of the culture team. The discipline system focuses on: increased parent communication and involvement; issuing

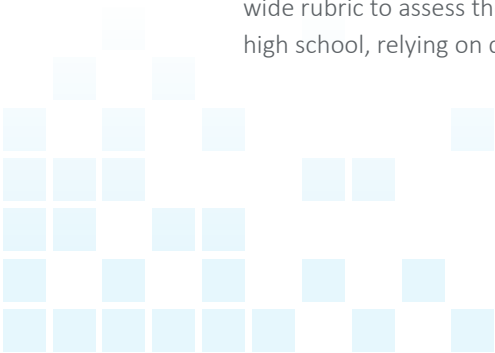
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non-suspension consequences to students that are related to their misbehavior; and increased efforts to deescalate students in classrooms or with quick pullouts as much as possible. The culture team utilizes network-provided rubrics for conducting systematic “culture walkthroughs” on a biweekly basis. The data from the walkthroughs are provided to both leadership and the faculty as a whole, and these data are used to inform teacher coaching needs and allocation of culture team resources. The culture team is increasing its use of culture and discipline data tracking to promote consistent schoolwide treatment of students and responses to infractions. However, teachers report not having clear understandings of how the culture team works with students once infractions are submitted or whether the culture team is consistently applying the school’s discipline policy.

- Explore Empower maintains adequate student enrollment. At the time of the renewal visit the school enrolled 511 students with a chartered enrollment of 540. There is a significant waitlist of 1,155 students. All grades were actively backfilled through the summer with the school reaching the full 540 chartered enrollment, however many families chose to leave before the start of the school year or early into the school year. Grades K-7 were actively backfilled through term one with selected grades continuing to be backfilled. Parents report that the top reasons for removing their students from Explore Empower are: financial strain of living in the area and needing to relocate, commute time between the school and their home, and deciding to attend another nearby charter school. Empower has added more touch points and check-in’s with backfilled students to assist these students with onboarding into the school.
- Teacher turnover is a significant issue for Explore Empower with 35% of teachers leaving the school between 2015-16 and 2016-17 and 30% of teachers leaving the school between 2014-15 and 2015-16. The school engaged in several activities last year to reduce and identify teacher turnover, however these efforts were not as successful as expected. Based on formal and informal feedback from both staying and exiting teachers, school leadership is continuing to invest in teachers’ development and opportunities for growth. This year leadership is purposefully implementing its teacher development plan process earlier and more broadly than last year, providing more teachers with more connections with leadership with more clearly defined expectations and supports for development, feedback, and coaching. The lead teacher role is being further expanded and supported this year to provide more leadership opportunities to teachers.

- Explore Empower has three schoolwide priorities for the current academic year related to: interactive mathematics learning opportunities and mathematical problem-solving, “obsessing” about student work and student discourse, and consistent authentic student engagement. While teachers, staff, and leaders are able to consistently name these three schoolwide priorities, overall there is no consistent understanding of what specific strategies, practices, or milestones teachers and staff should be using or seeking to achieve. For example, teachers consistently report a schoolwide goal of studying and using student work and student discourse, however no two teachers identified similar understandings of specifically how to leverage student work in their teaching practice.
  - Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn’s resources support the school in meeting its academic goals. The school’s operations team and leadership team regularly review teachers’ and students’ needs and work to deliver needed resources in support of the school’s academic goals. For example, last year the school adopted new ELA curricula schoolwide. Based on teacher feedback, the school identified the need to purchase optional student handbooks to support students in organizing their work and additional instructor resources to allow teachers to maximize co-teaching, parallel teaching, and small group instruction opportunities. These materials were purchased and provided to teachers at the start of this year.
  - Explore Empower regularly monitors and evaluates its programs and makes changes if necessary. For example, this year the school is adopting new mathematics curricula. Based on lessons learned from last year’s adoption of new ELA curricula, the operations and leadership teams are actively seeking early feedback from math teachers and lead teachers regarding their resource needs (e.g., mathematics manipulatives) to allow for faster midyear purchases to provide teachers with needed materials as quickly as possible.
  - Explore Empower is enrolling its graduates in college preparatory high schools, a core element of their mission. Last year was the school’s first year of graduating eighth grade students. 43 of 44 graduating eighth graders (97%) enrolled into one of their top three high school choices and 43 of 44 graduating eighth graders (97%) enrolled in what the school terms a “strong college preparatory high school.” The school uses a network-wide rubric to assess the extent to which a high school is a strong college preparatory high school, relying on quantitative (e.g., high school graduation rate, post-secondary
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enrollment rate) and qualitative (e.g., evidence of a college-going culture, evidence of academically rigorous curriculum and instruction) information. The school's high school placement coordinator works closely with all eighth grade families to provide information, guidance, and specific high school recommendations to support families in the application process. Additionally, this coordinator provides workshops, assistance with enrolling in exam preparation programs, and other opportunities to the school's sixth and seventh graders. The school is currently developing systems for communicating with its alumni and tracking their progress in high school.

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

Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn continues to develop its ability to provide effective oversight to Explore Empower. The board currently monitors several data elements about the school's academic program and organizational health, and it is now focusing on using that information to drive improvements in the school's academic outcomes and staff retention. The board continues to lack systems for evaluating the performance of the network.

- The board members' experience in finance, law and non-profit work enable the board to monitor the school's fiscal health and operational efficiency. Although a stated priority, the board continues to lack members with experience in K-12 education. The board monitors Explore Empower's academic performance data but, lacking members with K-12 education experience, it continues to rely on the network's interpretation of the data to inform its decisions about adjustments to the academic program. The board would also like to recruit a member who would better keep them abreast of political developments that would directly affect schools within the education corporation.
- Two years ago, the board collaborated with the network to develop a three year strategic plan to improve Explore Empower's organizational and academic performance. The board uses its dashboard to monitor the school's academic program performance, organizational capacity and its fiscal health. The data elements in the board's dashboard align with the priorities in its strategic plan; however, the data contained in the dashboard obfuscate clear strengths and weaknesses in the academic program. Meeting minutes indicate that the board discusses organizational and fiscal issues in depth but reflect less time discussing academic data. The board has not set clear benchmarks to monitor the trajectory for success of its three year plan.

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- Explore Empower has successfully developed internal talent to take key leadership positions within the school. The board relies on the network to support and develop its school leaders and has little contact with them directly. The board expected teacher turnover to be much lower than in previous years and set a staff retention goal of 90%. Of the 2015-16 teachers Explore Empower hoped to retain, 69% returned for the current school year.
- The board has yet to establish a systematic method for using data to evaluate the network's performance. The board identifies a three year plan designed to improve, among other things, the school's overall academic achievement. The board states a priority to continue to develop the skills and capacities of school personnel with a commitment to maintaining a continuity of culture.
- The board has included a non-voting ex-officio parent representative. It is not clear that the school's board regularly and effectively communicates with the school community. While a board member visits each school once per year, this may not be sufficient in providing a fulsome understanding of the challenges and successes at each school.

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

The board implements adequate and appropriate systems and procedures to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. While the board does demonstrate a clear understanding of its role in holding the school leadership and Explore Schools accountable for fiscal soundness, it has yet to implement regular practices that provide the board an independent analysis of the academic program's strengths or areas in need of growth thereby allowing it to more effectively hold the network accountable for academic improvement.

- The board has materially complied with the terms of its by-laws and code of ethics.
- The board provides common oversight of four operating charter schools.
- The board appears to manage the non-academic aspects of its work clearly. Board minutes reflect that the board has continually received reports and monitored finances, employment issues and management contract negotiations.

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- Board minutes reflect little regarding the time the board may spend analyzing school performance data, how it evaluates the progress of the network in improving the academic program at the school as well as non-academic student-level data except an annual report of high school placements.
- The board would benefit from including additional academic expertise to its membership or by regularly engaging an independent entity to analyze the effective implementation of its schools' academic program.

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

The education corporation generally and substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.

- **Complaints.** The Institute has received no formal or informal complaints regarding the school.



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10. 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.

## IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Based on a review of the fiscal evidence collected through the renewal review, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn is fiscally sound as is its school, Explore Empower. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard presents color-coded tables and charts indicating that Explore Empower and the education corporation have demonstrated fiscal soundness over the majority of the charter term.<sup>10</sup>

Explore Empower has adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. Effective July 1, 2015, six Explore schools merged with Explore Excel being the surviving entity, one of those that merged from NYCDOE into SUNY was Explore Empower. The merger combined all the existing Explore schools under SUNY as the authorizer. In addition to analyzing the soundness of the individual charter school, the Institute analyzed the soundness of the not-for-profit education corporation granted the authority to operate the school and finds it to be fiscally sound. Since the merger just recently took effect the fiscal dashboard in Appendix D reflects the financial condition for the first three years of the charter term when the school was an independent entity.

Explore Schools supports Explore Empower in the area of academic program, fiscal management and operational support, human resources, technology and public relations under the terms of a management contract that provides Explore Schools a fee that is 12% of the per pupil dollars that come to the school. The Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn financial model is intended to ensure that all fully enrolled schools are financially sustainable, operating the school's program solely through public funding.

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

Working in partnership with Explore Schools, Explore Empower has employed clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures throughout the charter term.

- Explore School's chief financial officer coordinates the development of annual and long-term budget preparation procedures with input from the school leadership staff and the board finance committee.

**SUNY  
RENEWAL  
BENCHMARK  
3A**

- The projected five-year renewal budget reflects anticipated revenues and expenses associated with steady enrollment as the school is at its full capacity with Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade for the next renewal charter term.
- The individual education corporation prepared long-term budgets which were updated on an annual basis.
- Explore Empower is located in shared NYCDOE facility space since opening in 2012. Explore Empower is not responsible for rent, utilities, custodial services, maintenance and school safety services on the facility.
- Effective July 1, 2015, Explore Empower merged under SUNY with other charters into Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn. The merger allows for operating efficiencies and purchasing power with shared expenses between the network and five other charters related by common management.

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

Explore Empower and the merged education corporation, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn, have a history of sound fiscal policies, procedures and practices and maintain appropriate internal controls.

- The network Financial Policies and Procedures Manual is the guide for all internal controls and procedures at Explore Empower. The manual contains fiscal policies and procedures that undergo ongoing reviews. The most recent update to the manual included federal guidelines for grant management, other recent updates included the conflict of interest policy.
- The Explore Empower audit reports had no findings of deficiencies. With the effective merger dated July 1, 2015, the schools now report on a combined financial audit which also had no findings of deficiencies as of June 30, 2016.

SUNY  
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BENCHMARK  
**3B**

SUNY Charter Schools Institute  
41 State Street, Suite 700  
Albany, New York

# FISCAL PERFORMANCE

SUNY  
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BENCHMARK  
3C

## DOES THE SCHOOL COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

Explore Empower and the merged education corporation, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn, have complied with financial reporting requirements.

- The Institute has received required financial reports that are on time, complete and follow generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).
- Independent audits of annual financial statements have received unqualified opinions with no material weaknesses or instances of non-compliance observed.
- The individual education corporation and merged entity have generally filed key reports timely and accurately including: audit reports, budgets, unaudited quarterly reports of revenue, expenses and enrollment. The individual education corporation and Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn have maintained adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations.



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

Explore Empower and the merged education corporation, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn, have maintained adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations.

- The individual school fiscal dashboard in Appendix D reflects fiscally strong going into the effective date of the merger.
- As a merged entity, the board has established a designated reserve fund for unforeseen facility, personnel and other issues, as of June 30, 2016 the board designated reserve was \$3.285 million.
- The merged entity has substantial assets available, total net assets of approximately \$11.7 million, cash on hand of \$12.8 million which is 5.1 months of cash available to pay bills coming due shortly as reported in the most recent audit report.
- As a merged entity, the dissolution fund reserve is to be \$75,000 for the first two schools and \$25,000 for additional schools up to a maximum of \$350,000. Explore Charter schools of Brooklyn has established the dissolution reserve fund and maintains a balance of \$290,942 as of June 30, 2016 audited financial statements.

**SUNY  
RENEWAL  
BENCHMARK  
3D**



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Albany, New York

# 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?

As it has made progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals and has a promising educational program in place, Explore Empower is an academic success. The school organization operates capably to deliver the academic program successfully. With the additional time afforded by renewal, Explore Empower is likely to meet or come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals in the future. Therefore, the plans for the school's future are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

**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.** Explore Empower plans to strengthen the core elements of its program that have enabled the school to make progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals in the current charter term.

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

	CURRENT	END OF NEXT CHARTER TERM
Enrollment	513	540
Grade Span	K - 8	K - 8
Teaching Staff	50	49
Days of Instruction	180	180

**Fiscal & Facility Plans.** Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, including a review of the 5-year financial plan, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn 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.

The school plans to continue co-locating in NYCDOE public school space.

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. The education corporation has amended, and the Institute will work with the board as it further amends and aligns its by-laws and code of ethics to comply with various updated provisions of the New York Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, Public Officers Law and the General Municipal Law, as appropriate.



Explore  
Empower

# Ax

## APPENDICES

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SCHOOL  
OVERVIEW

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DISTRICT  
COMMENTS

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**EO**<sup>E</sup>  
ED CORP OVERVIEW

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**EF**<sup>F</sup>  
ED CORP FISCAL

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# APPENDIX A: School Overview

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### CHAIR

Henry Mannix

### VICE CHAIR

Kimesha Carnegie

### TREASURER

Peter Walker

### TRUSTEES

Morty Ballen

Jana Reed

Beth Cohen

## SCHOOL LEADERS

### PRINCIPAL

*Stephanie Clagnaz (2009-2011)*

*Beth Doyle (2011-2013)*

*Brian Ferreira (2013-2015)*

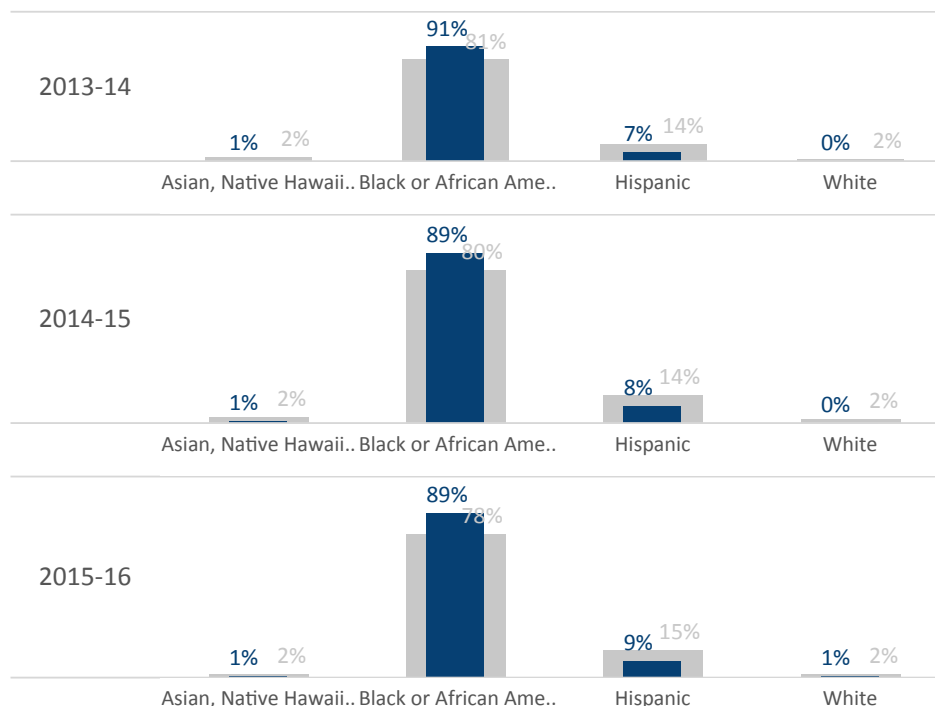
*Christina Cotter (2015-Present)*

## SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

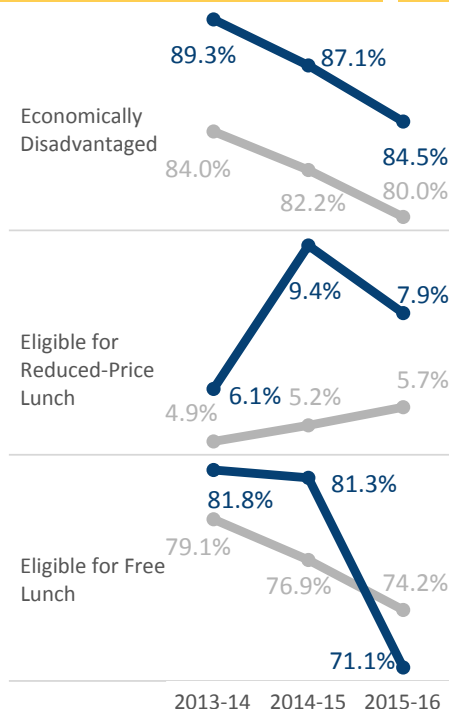
SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	PROPOSED GRADES	ACTUAL GRADES
2012-13	360	355	99%	K-5	K-5
2013-14	420	411	98%	K-6	K-6
2014-15	480	469	98%	K-8	K-8
2015-16	540	498	92%	K-8	K-8
2016-17	540	513	95%	K-8	K-8



## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS: RACE/ETHNICITY

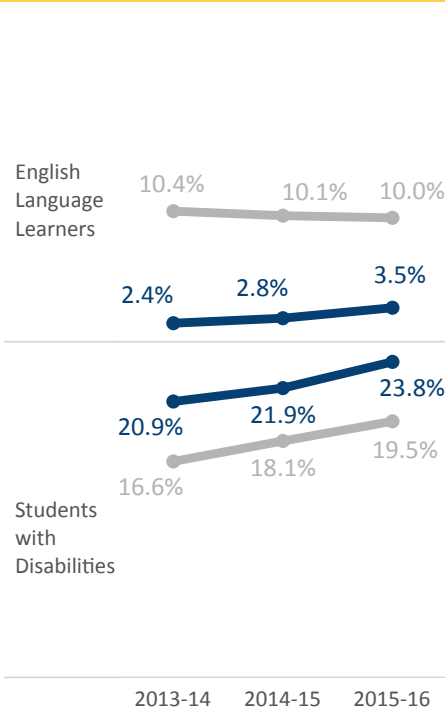


## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS: FREE/REDUCED LUNCH



The charts show the trends in enrollment in the **school** and the **district** for each subgroup. Economically disadvantaged includes those students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price lunch among other qualifying income assistance programs.

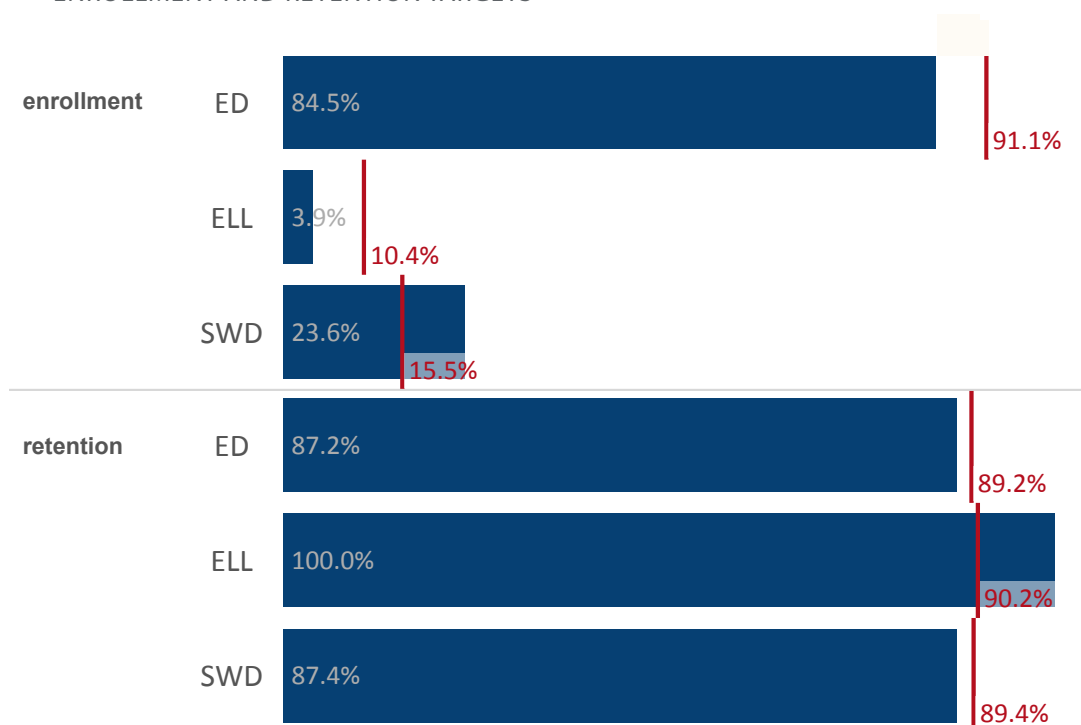
## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS: SPECIAL POPULATIONS



The charts show trends in enrollment in the **school** and the **district** for each subgroup.

# APPENDIX A: School Overview

## ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS



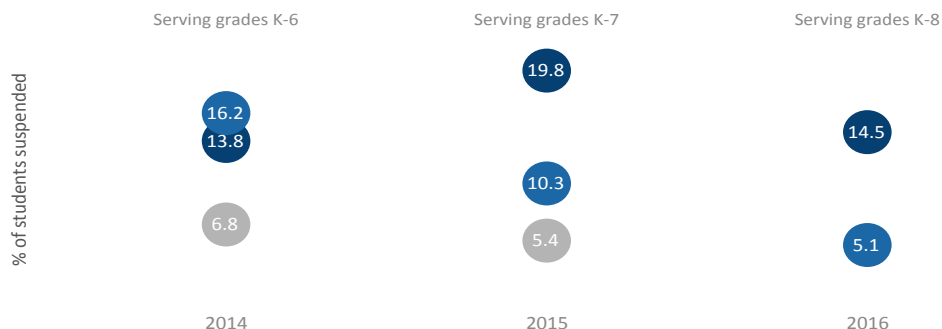
The chart illustrates the school's **current enrollment and retention percentages** against the **enrollment and retention targets**. As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it has, and will, put in place to meet or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

## PERSISTENCE IN ENROLLMENT



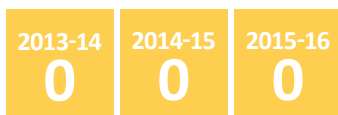
Persistence in enrollment illustrates the percentage of students not scheduled to age out of the school who re-enroll from the previous year. The Institute derived the statistical information on enrollment persistence from its database. No comparative data from NYCDOE or NYSED is available to the Institute to provide either district wide or by CSD context. As such, the information presented is for information purposes but does not allow for comparative analysis.

SUSPENSIONS: EXPLORE EMPOWER CHARTER SCHOOL'S 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 for three primary reasons. Available CSD data includes Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> 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: 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.

EXPULSIONS: THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS EXPELLED FROM THE SCHOOL EACH YEAR



PARENT SATISFACTION: SURVEY RESULTS



# APPENDIX A: School Overview

## TIMELINE OF CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL



## SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2015-16	Evaluation	May 9-10, 2016
2016-17	Initial Renewal	October 24-25, 2016

## CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL VISIT

DATE(S) OF VISIT	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
October 24-25, 2016	Natasha Howard, Ph.D.	Managing Director for Program
	Jeff Wasbes	Executive Deputy Director for Accountability

## KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

ELEMENT	EVIDENT?
Beginning Young;	+
Continuing Through 8th Grade;	+
Small Class Size;	+
Meeting the Needs of At-Risk Students;	+
Continuous Research to Drive Improvement;	+
Instructional Decision Making; and,	+
Governance and Organizational Design.	+



APPENDIX B: Performance Summaries

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts  
Explore Empower Charter School

	2013-14 Grades Served: K-6				2014-15 Grades Served: K-7				2015-16 Grades Served: K-8				MET
	All		2+ Years		All		2+ Years		All		2+ Years		
	Students		Students		Students		Students		Students		Students		
	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	Grades	% (N)	
<b><u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u></b>  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	16.7 (60)	20.8 (48)		3	23.7 (59)	24.5 (53)		3	35.2 (54)	40.5 (42)		
	4	12.1 (58)	13.2 (53)		4	10.3 (58)	11.3 (53)		4	28.1 (57)	28.3 (46)		
	5	14.5 (55)	17.5 (40)		5	5.2 (58)	4.3 (47)		5	18.5 (54)	17.8 (45)		
	6	15.5 (58)	17.8 (45)		6	26.7 (60)	32.7 (49)		6	17.6 (51)	23.1 (39)		
	7	(0)	(0)		7	15.1 (53)	14.0 (43)		7	35.7 (56)	34.5 (55)		
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	36.4 (44)	34.9 (43)		
	All	14.7 (231)	17.2 (186)	NA	All	16.3 (288)	17.6 (245)	NO	All	28.5 (316)	30.0 (270)	NO	
	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO		
	3-6	63	89	NO	3-7	67	97	NO	3-8	96	104	NO	
	Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		
	3-6	17.2	20.4	NO	3-7	17.6	21.4	NO	3-8	30.0	30.2	NO	
	% ED			Effect Size	% ED			Effect Size	% ED			Effect Size	
	87.3	14.7	18.9	-0.28	85.4	16.3	17.8	-0.09	83.9	28.5	25.8	0.17	
<b><u>GROWTH MEASURE</u></b>  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				4	41.8			4	35.4			
	5				5	39.3			5	46.8			
	6				6	56.1			6	59.9			
	7				7	56.6			7	62.5			
	8				8	0.0			8	62.3			
	All				All	48.2	50.0	NO	All	52.8	50.0	YES	
	Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				
	Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				
	Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				

# SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

## Explore Empower Charter School

	2013-14 Grades Served: K-6				2014-15 Grades Served: K-7				2015-16 Grades Served: K-8			
	All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)	
	Grades		Grades		Grades		Grades		Grades		Grades	
<b>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</b> 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	33.3 (60)	37.5 (48)		3	27.6 (58)	28.3 (53)		3	33.3 (54)	38.1 (42)	
	4	34.5 (58)	34.0 (53)		4	13.8 (58)	15.1 (53)		4	30.4 (56)	31.1 (45)	
	5	35.7 (56)	41.5 (41)		5	24.6 (57)	25.5 (47)		5	18.5 (54)	17.8 (45)	
	6	24.6 (57)	26.7 (45)		6	33.3 (60)	40.8 (49)		6	22.6 (53)	25.0 (40)	
	7	(0)	(0)		7	13.2 (53)	11.6 (43)		7	51.8 (56)	50.9 (55)	
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	25.0 (44)	25.6 (43)	
	All	32.0 (231)	34.8 (187)	NA	All	22.7 (286)	24.5 (245)	NO	All	30.6 (317)	32.2 (270)	NO
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO	
	3-6	97	86	YES	3-7	77	94	NO	3-8	92	101	NO
	Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17				Comparison: Brooklyn District 17			
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.	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District	
	3-6	34.8	24.6	YES	3-7	24.5	25.6	NO	3-8	32.2	27.0	YES
	% ED Actual Predicted				% ED Actual Predicted				% ED Actual Predicted			
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.	87.3	31.9	26.8	0.30	85.4	22.7	25.1	-0.11	83.8	30.6	25.3	0.29
	Effect Size				Effect Size				Effect Size			
	YES				NO				NO			
<b>GROWTH MEASURE</b> 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				4	27.2			4	32.1		
	5				5	35.0			5	48.0		
	6				6	41.3			6	55.3		
	7				7	41.4			7	73.9		
	8				8	0.0			8	66.5		
	All				All	36.1	50.0	NO	All	54.9	50.0	YES

# APPENDIX C: District Comments

NO COMMENTS RECEIVED





# APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

## Explore Empower Charter School

NOTE: For analysis purposes the school's data was combined into the "merged" education corporation, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn. Accordingly, see the education corporation report on Appendix F containing the "Balance Sheet" data for all schools merged into the education corporation.

### SCHOOL INFORMATION

#### BALANCE SHEET

Opened 2009-10

##### 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**

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-

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

-	-	-	-	-
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-	-	5,245,993	6,276,873	7,295,473
---	---	-----------	-----------	-----------

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

-	-	26,614	48,192	25,330
---	---	--------	--------	--------

-	-	312,709	294,579	338,342
---	---	---------	---------	---------

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

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

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

-	-	5,585,316	6,619,644	7,659,145
---	---	-----------	-----------	-----------

-	-	3,964,450	4,029,280	4,896,371
---	---	-----------	-----------	-----------

-	-	240,075	586,049	925,733
---	---	---------	---------	---------

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

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

-	-	4,204,525	4,615,329	5,822,104
---	---	-----------	-----------	-----------

-	-	866,291	877,671	1,026,514
---	---	---------	---------	-----------

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

-	-	5,070,816	5,493,000	6,848,618
---	---	-----------	-----------	-----------

-	-	514,500	1,126,644	810,527
---	---	---------	-----------	---------

-	-	5,000	-	-
---	---	-------	---	---

-	-	12,981	15,349	14,658
---	---	--------	--------	--------

-	-	1,924	159	183
---	---	-------	-----	-----

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

-	-	19,905	15,508	14,841
---	---	--------	--------	--------

-	-	5,605,221	6,635,152	7,673,986
---	---	-----------	-----------	-----------

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

-	-	5,605,221	6,635,152	7,673,986
---	---	-----------	-----------	-----------

-	-	534,405	1,142,152	825,368
---	---	---------	-----------	---------

-	-	1,001,730	1,536,135	2,678,287
---	---	-----------	-----------	-----------

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

-	-	1,536,135	2,678,287	3,503,655
---	---	-----------	-----------	-----------



## Explore Empower Charter School

NOTE: For analysis purposes the school's data was combined into the "merged" education corporation, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn. Accordingly, see the education corporation report on Appendix F containing the "Balance Sheet" data for all schools merged into the education corporation.

### SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

#### Functional Expense Breakdown

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Personnel Service	-	-	-	-	-
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	-	-	-	-
Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	-
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	2,997,501	3,130,879	3,841,931
<b>Total Salaries and Staff</b>	-	-	<b>2,997,501</b>	<b>3,130,879</b>	<b>3,841,931</b>
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	-	-	673,069	689,244	868,132
Retirement	-	-	-	-	-
Management Company Fees	-	-	550,351	666,994	767,913
Building and Land Rent / Lease	-	-	-	-	-
Staff Development	-	-	73,427	46,999	94,642
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	-	-	221,759	275,912	411,017
Marketing / Recruitment	-	-	31,673	43,359	46,850
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	-	-	169,328	208,411	293,925
Depreciation	-	-	132,703	135,815	141,735
Other	-	-	221,006	295,387	382,473
<b>Total Expenses</b>	-	-	<b>5,070,817</b>	<b>5,493,000</b>	<b>6,848,618</b>

### SCHOOL ANALYSIS

#### ENROLLMENT

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Chartered Enroll	-	-	360	420	480
Revised Enroll	-	-	-	-	-
Actual Enroll - <b>GRAPH 4</b>	-	-	354	411	464
Chartered Grades	-	-	K-6	K-7	K-8
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-

#### Primary School District: 0

#### Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)

Increase over prior year

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
	-	-	-	-	-
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

#### PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

##### Revenue

Operating	-	-	15,778	16,106	16,507
Other Revenue and Support	-	-	56	38	32
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	-	<b>15,834</b>	<b>16,144</b>	<b>16,539</b>

##### Expenses

Program Services	-	-	11,877	11,230	12,548
Management and General, Fundraising	-	-	2,447	2,135	2,212
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	-	<b>14,324</b>	<b>13,365</b>	<b>14,760</b>
% of Program Services	0.0%	0.0%	82.9%	84.0%	85.0%
% of Management and Other	0.0%	0.0%	17.1%	16.0%	15.0%
<b>% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5</b>	0.0%	0.0%	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>20.8%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>

#### 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

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

#### Working Capital - GRAPH 7

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

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

#### Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

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

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

#### Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

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

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

#### Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

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

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

# APPENDIX D: Fiscal Dashboard

## Explore Empower Charter School

NOTE: For analysis purposes the school's data was combined into the "merged" education corporation, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn. Accordingly, see the education corporation report on Appendix F containing the "Balance Sheet" data for all schools merged into the education corporation.

GRAPH 1

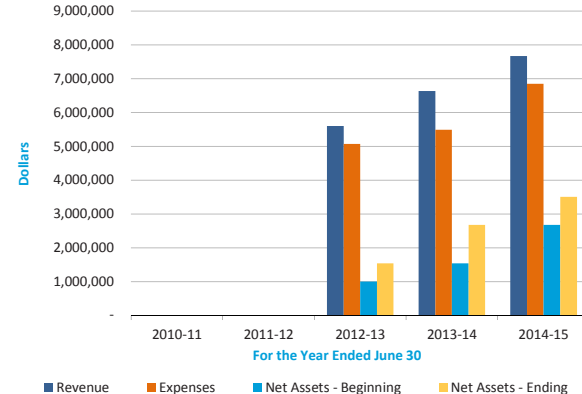
### Cash, Assets and Liabilities



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

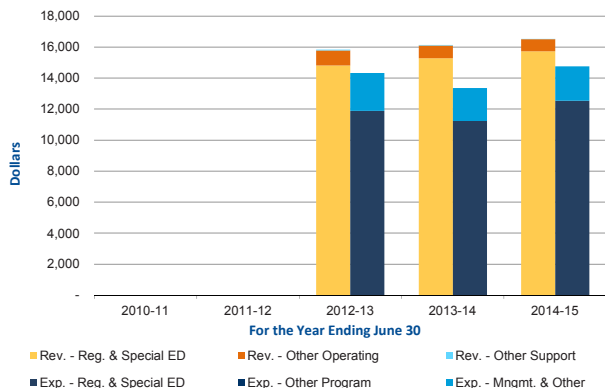
### Revenue, Expenses and Net Assets



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

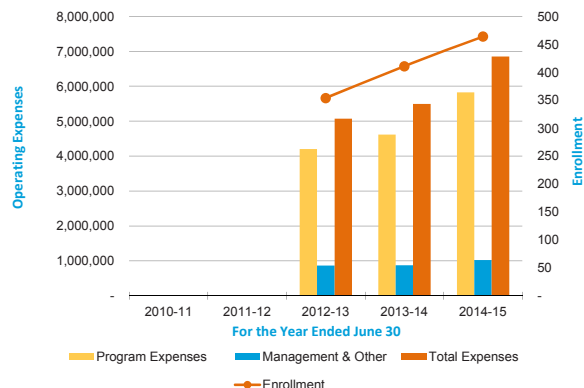
### Revenue & Expenses Per Pupil



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.

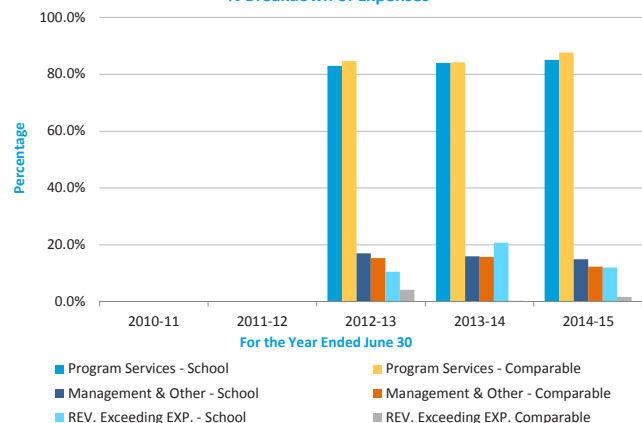
## Explore Empower Charter School

NOTE: For analysis purposes the school's data was combined into the "merged" education corporation, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn. Accordingly, see the education corporation report on Appendix F containing the "Balance Sheet" data for all schools merged into the education corporation.

### Comparable School, Region or Network: New York City & Long Island Schools (Excluding Closed Schools)

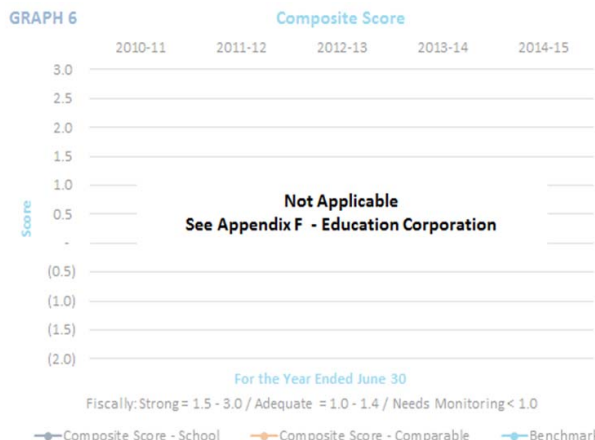
\* Average = Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term

**GRAPH 5** % Breakdown of Expenses



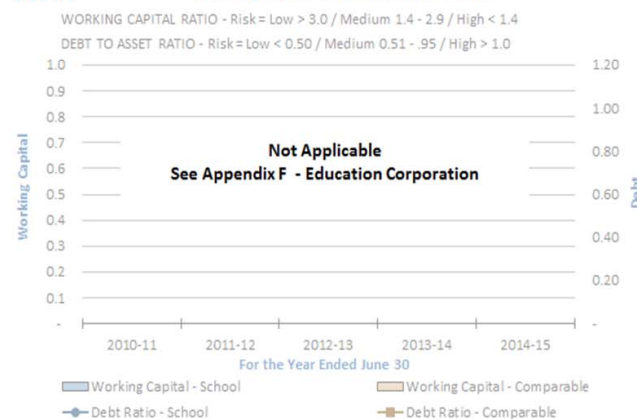
This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding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

**GRAPH 6**



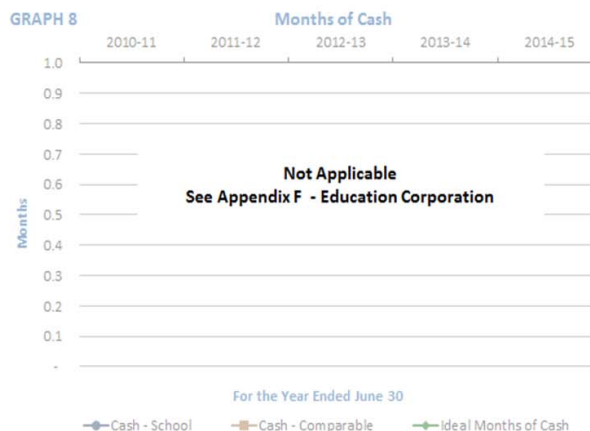
This chart illustrates a school's composite score based on the methodology developed by the United States Department of Education (USD OE) to determine whether private not-for-profit colleges and universities are financially strong enough to participate in federal loan programs. These scores can be valid 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**

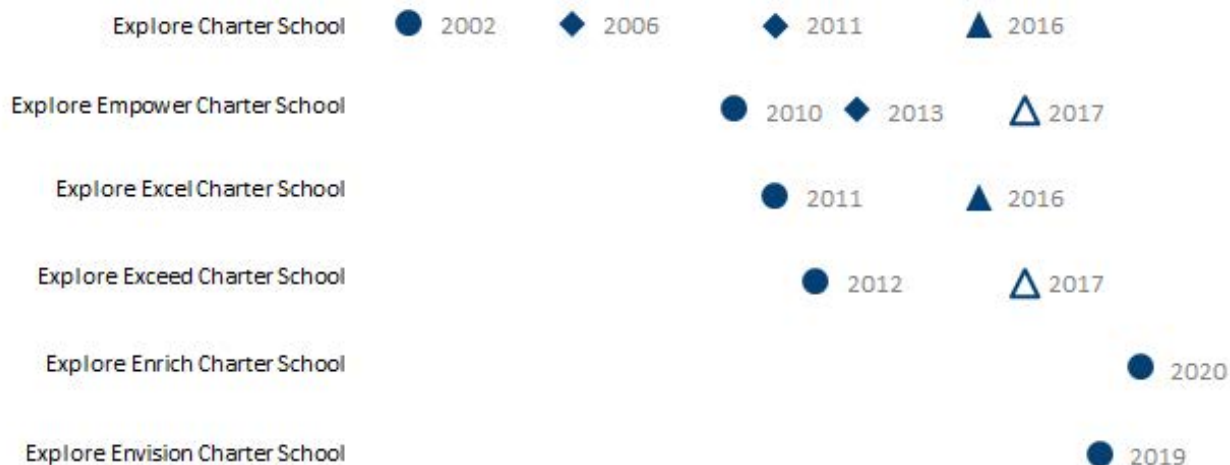


This chart illustrates how many months of cash the school has in reserves. This metric is to measure solvency – the school's ability to pay debts and claims as they come due. This gives some idea of how long a school could continue its ongoing operating costs without tapping into some other, non-cash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

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## EDUCATION CORPORATION TIMELINE OF CHARTER RENEWAL

● School Opening ▲ Initial Renewal - Short-Term ◆ Renewal by Original Authorizer △ Initial Renewal Recommendation - Short-Term



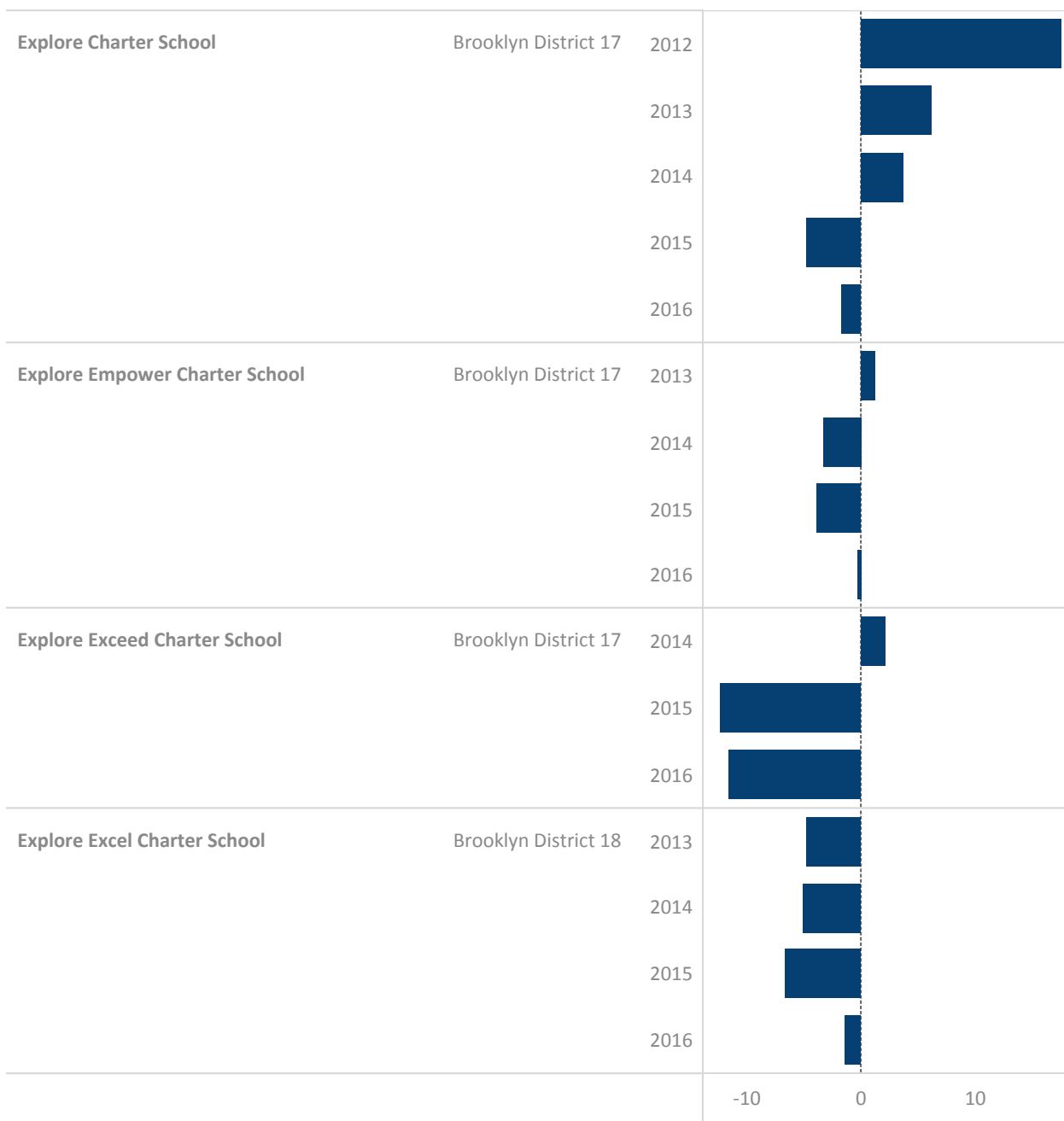
## EDUCATION CORPORATION SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

School	Local District	Co-located?	Chartered Enrollment	Grade Span
Explore Charter School	CSD 17	Yes	540	K-8
Explore Empower Charter School	CSD 17	Yes	540	K-8
Explore Enrich Charter School	CSD 17	Not open	Not open	Not open
Explore Envision Charter School	CSD 19	Not open	Not open	Not open
Explore Exceed Charter School	CSD 17	Yes	490	K-7
Explore Excel Charter School	CSD 18	Yes	552	K-8



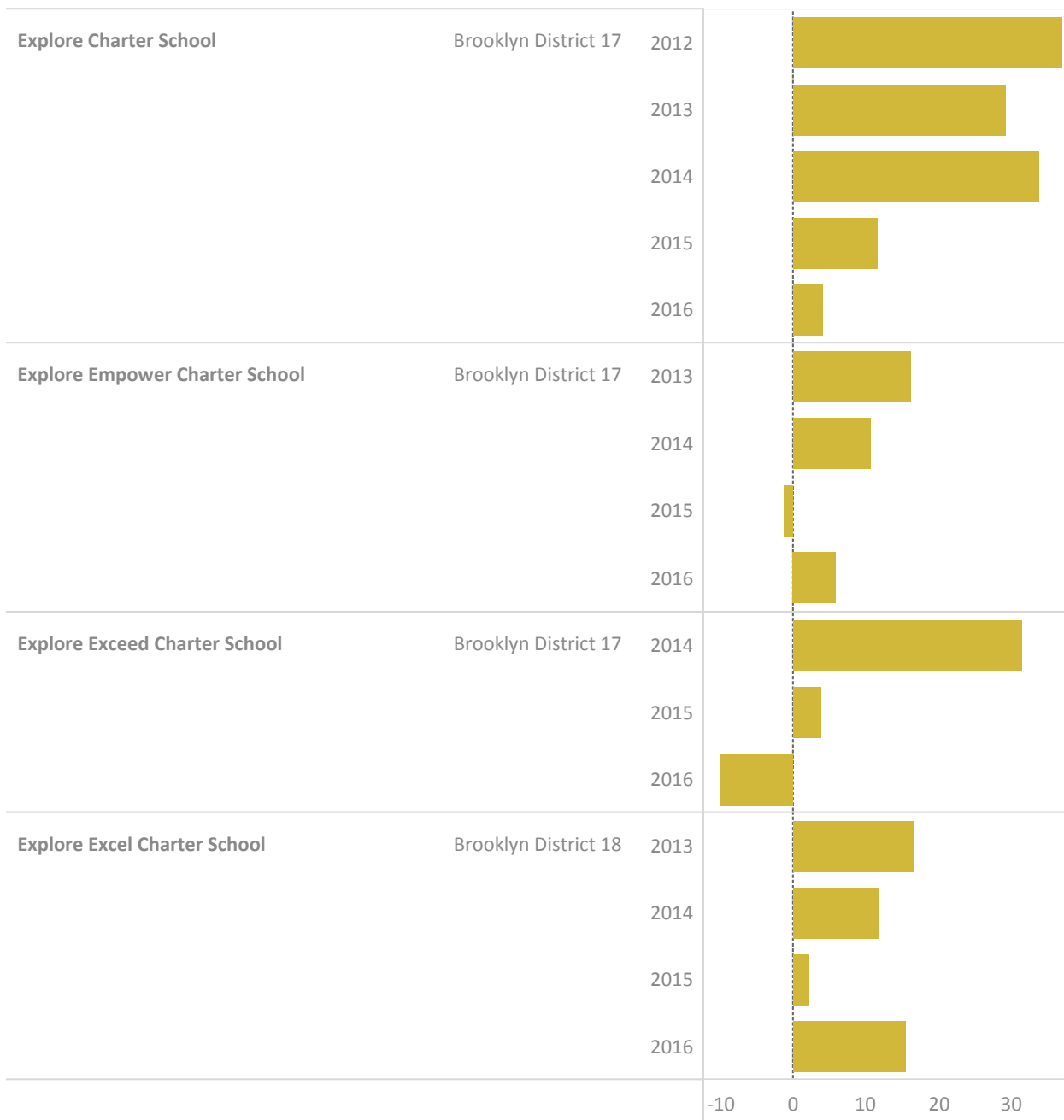
# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT SCORES: ELA



District Difference for each year broken down by school and district. 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.

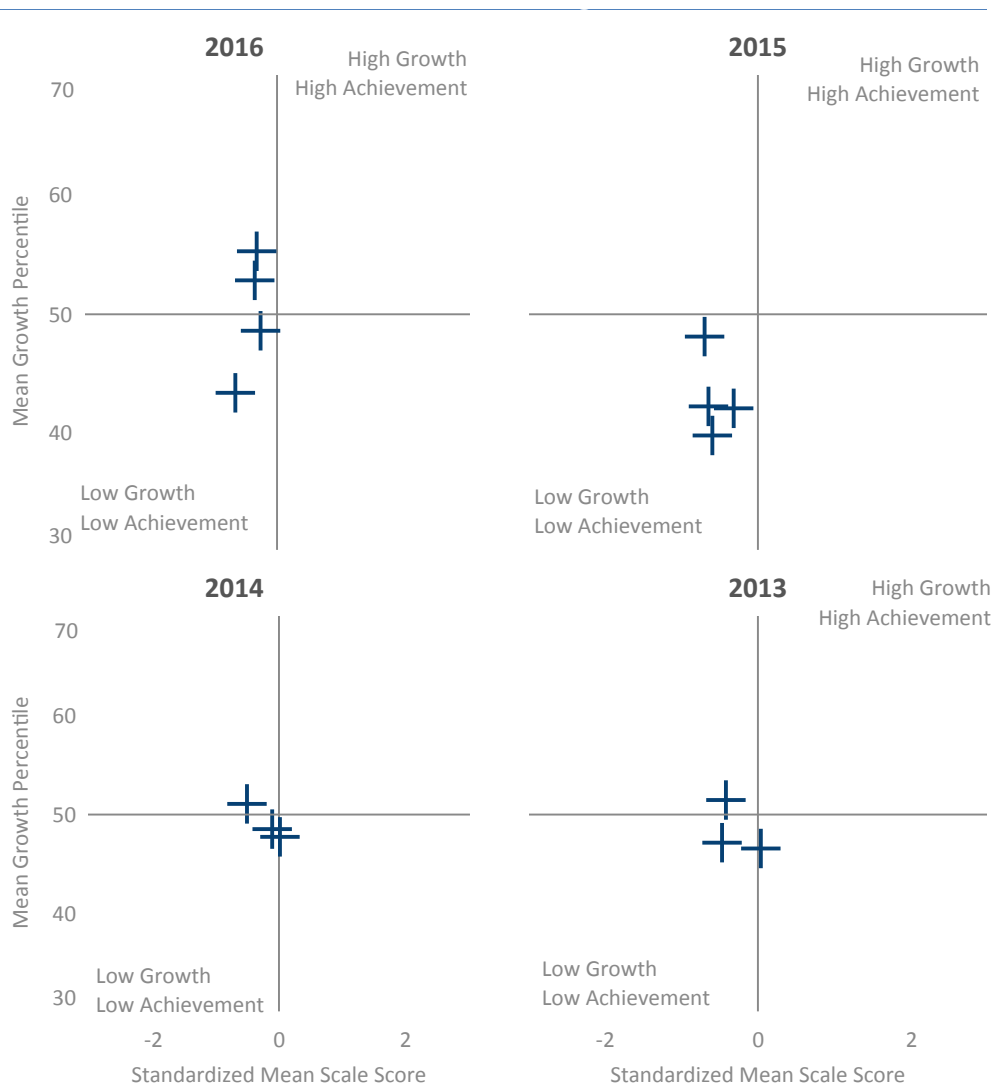
## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND DISTRICT SCORES: MATH



District Difference for each year broken down by school and district. 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

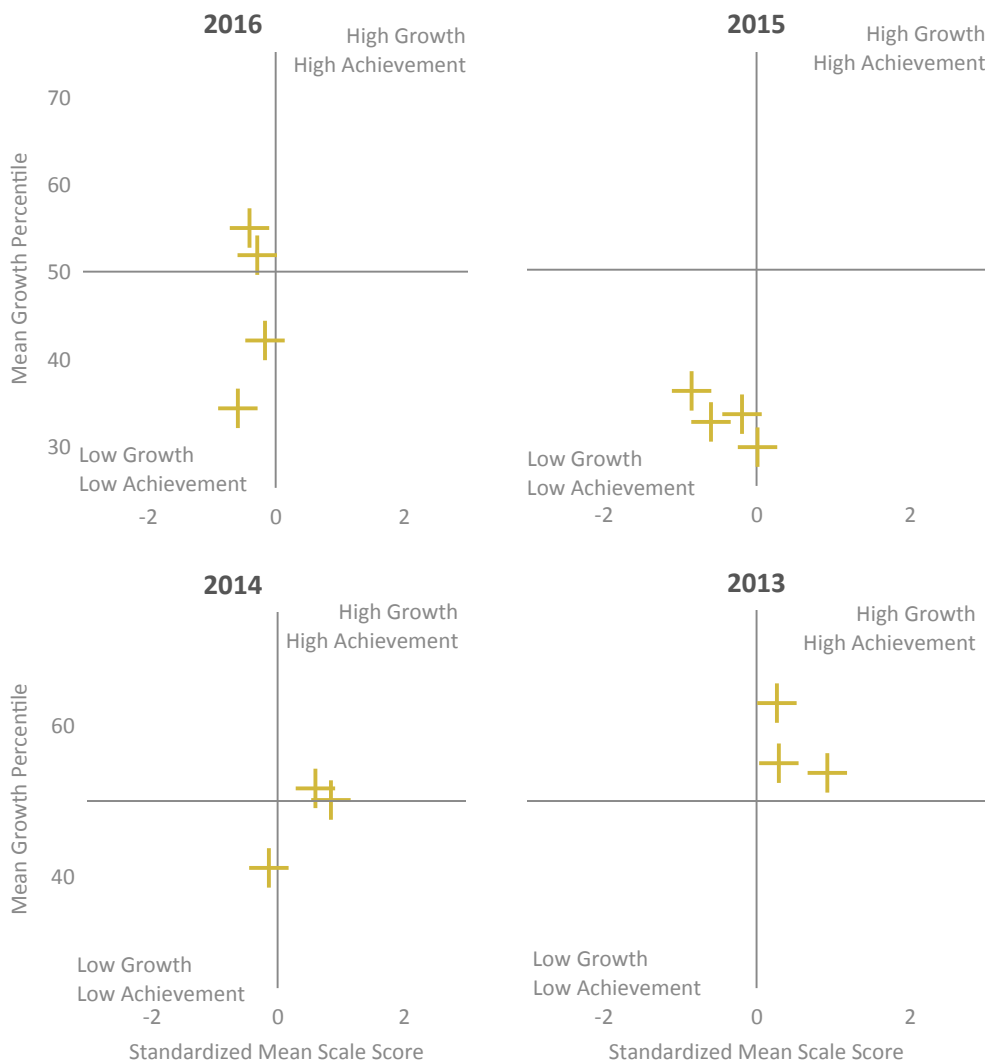
## ELA GROWTH AND ACHEIVEMENT: 2012-13 THROUGH 2015-16



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 base-line, 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.

## MATH GROWTH AND ACHEIVEMENT: 2012-13 THROUGH 2015-16



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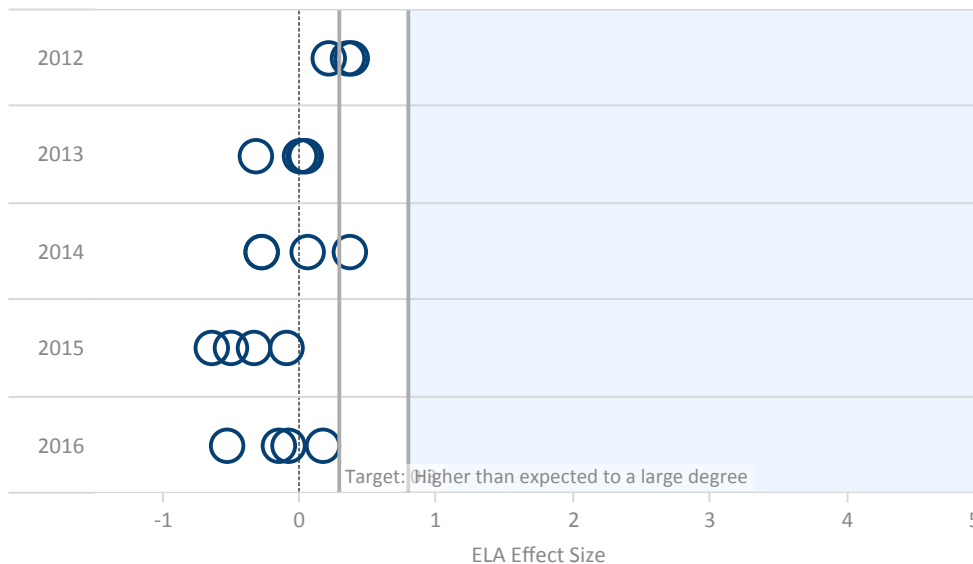




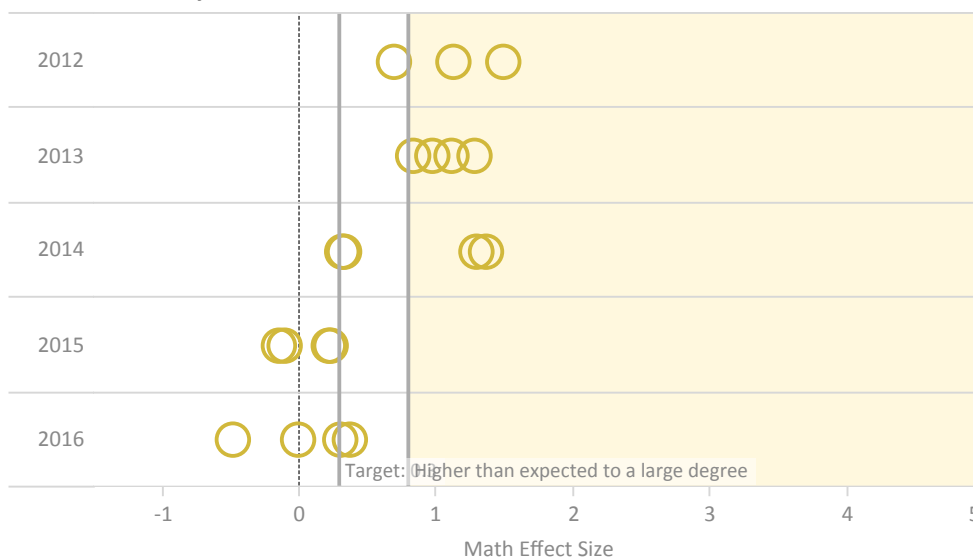


## ELA AND MATH EFFECT SIZE DOT PLOTS: 2011-12 THROUGH 2015-16

**ELA Effect Size by Year and School**



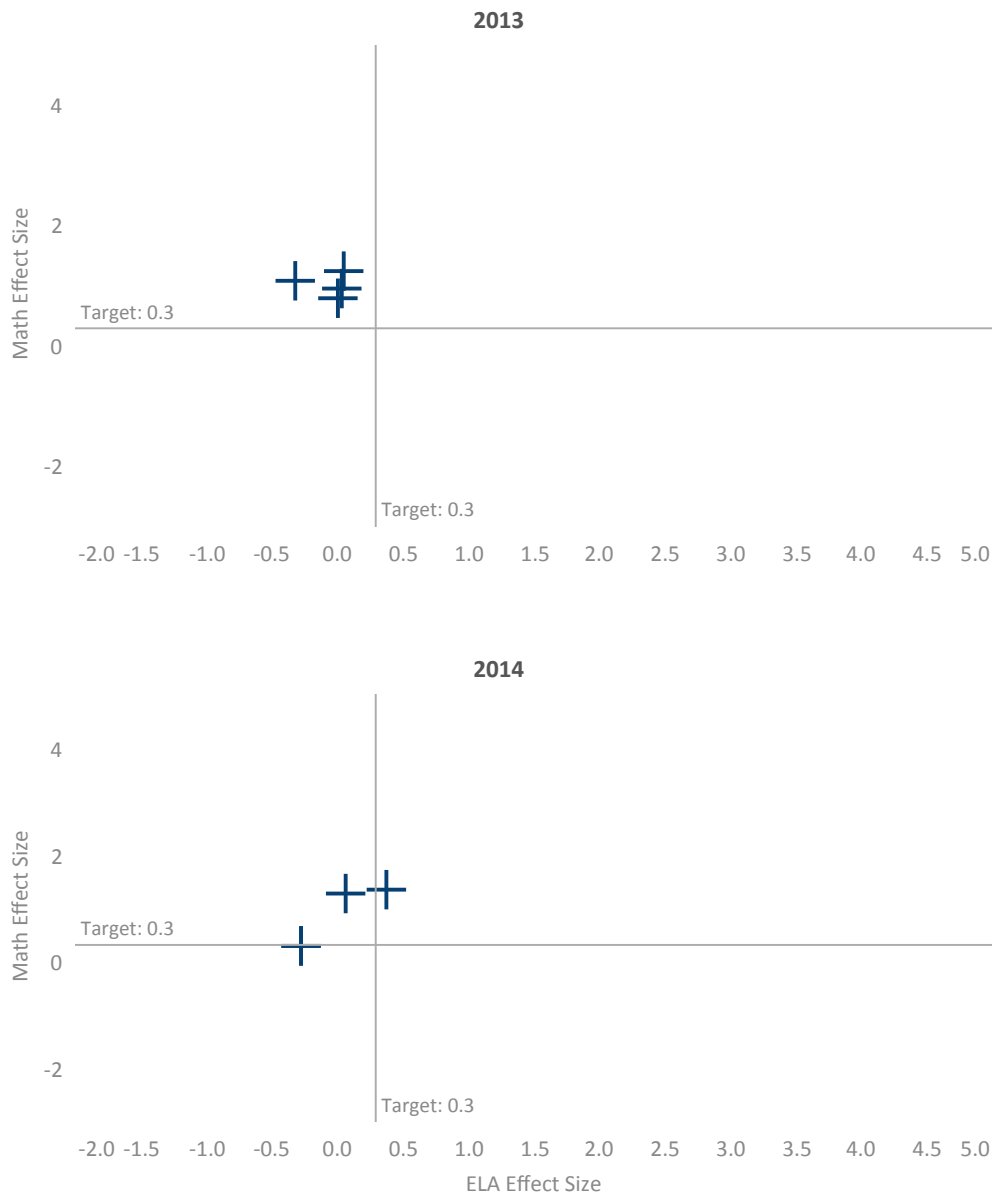
**Math Effect Size by Year and School**



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.

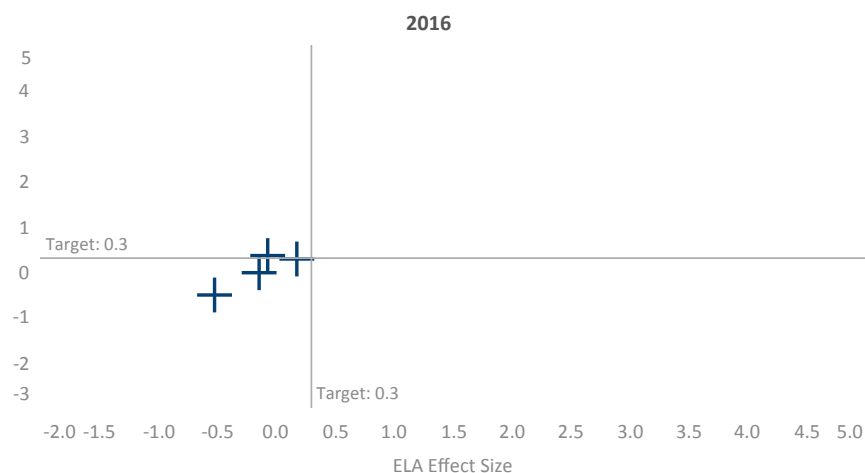
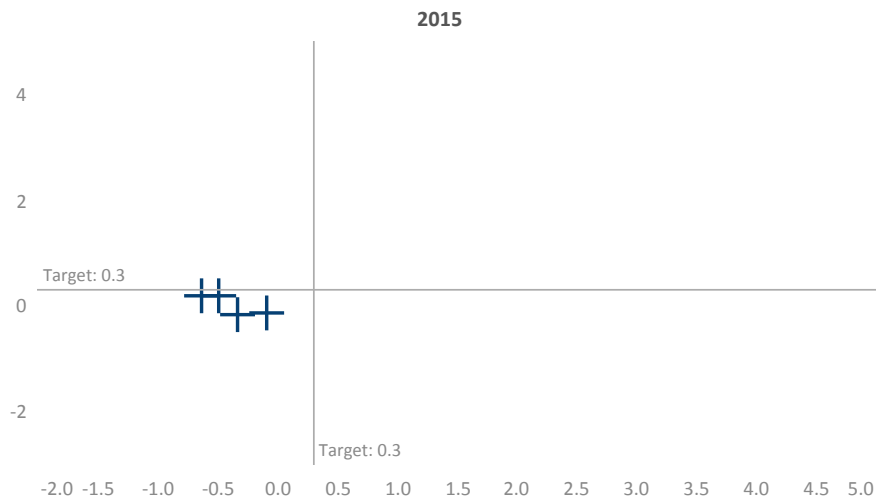
# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## ELA AND MATH EFFECT SIZE SCATTER PLOTS 2012-13 THROUGH 2013-14



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.

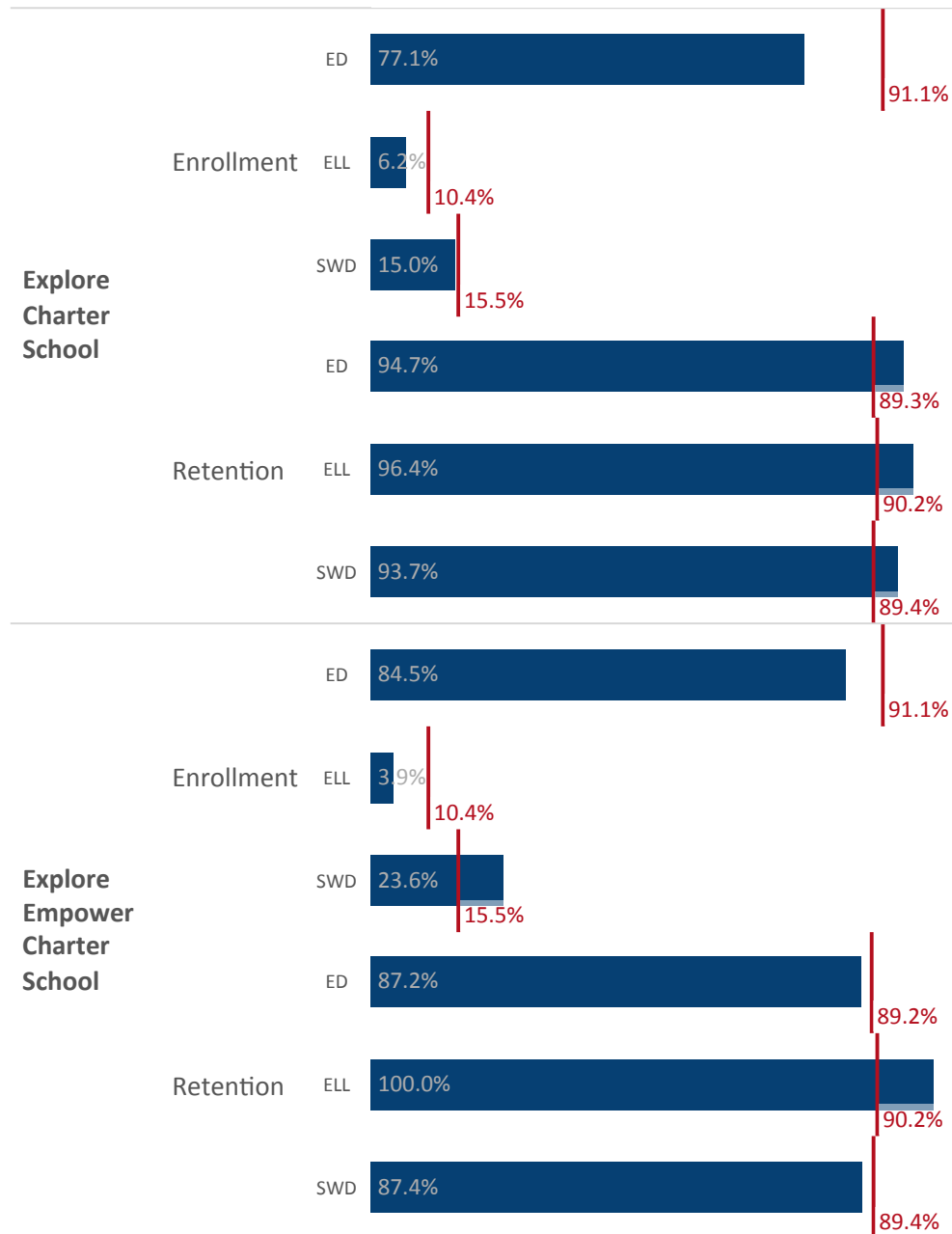
## ELA AND MATH EFFECT SIZE SCATTER PLOTS 2014-15 THROUGH 2015-16



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.

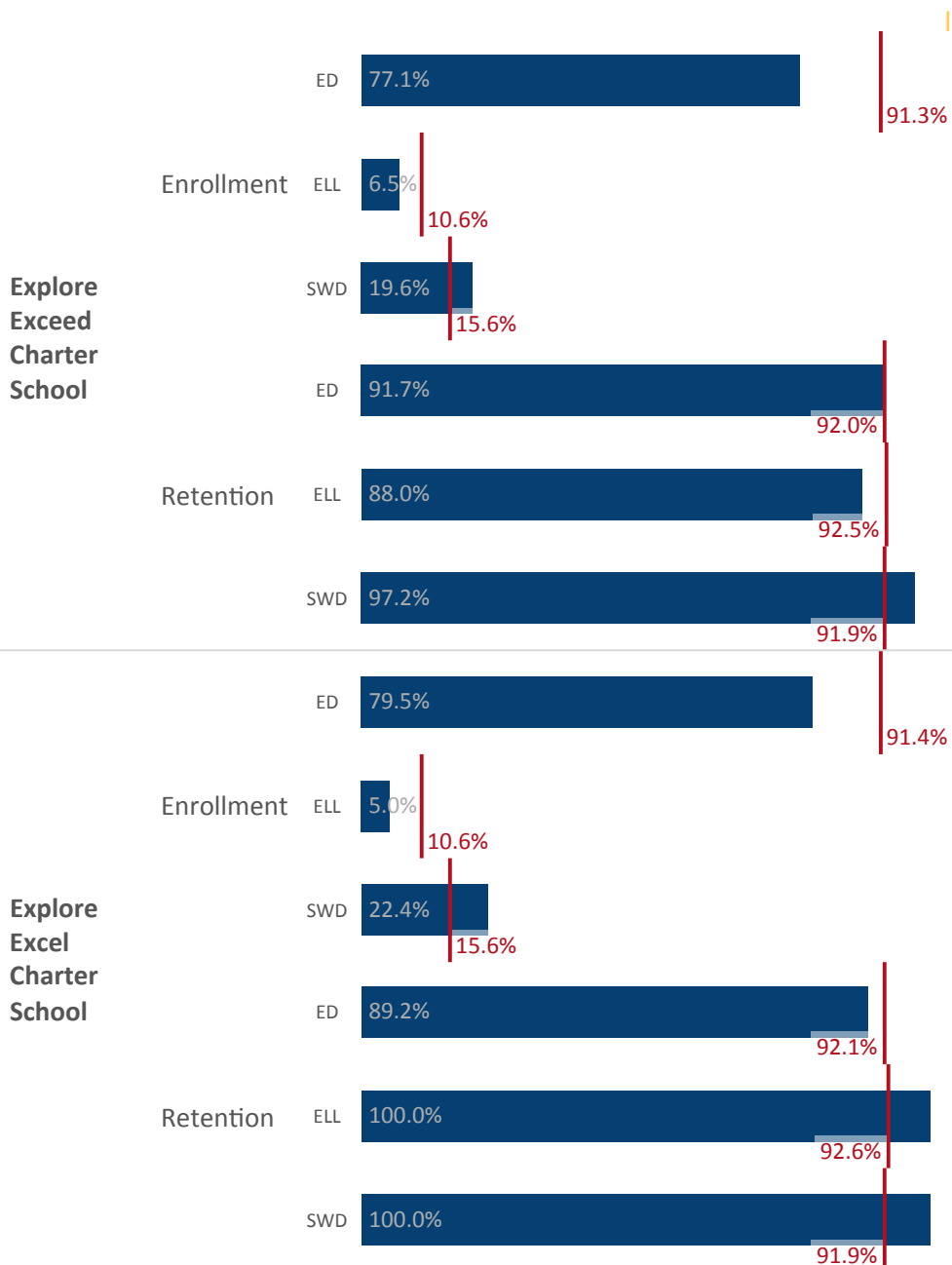
# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

## 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 ed corp. 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, ELL, and FRPL students. This analysis is based on the 2015-16 enrollment and retention data supplied to the Institute by the network.

## ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS

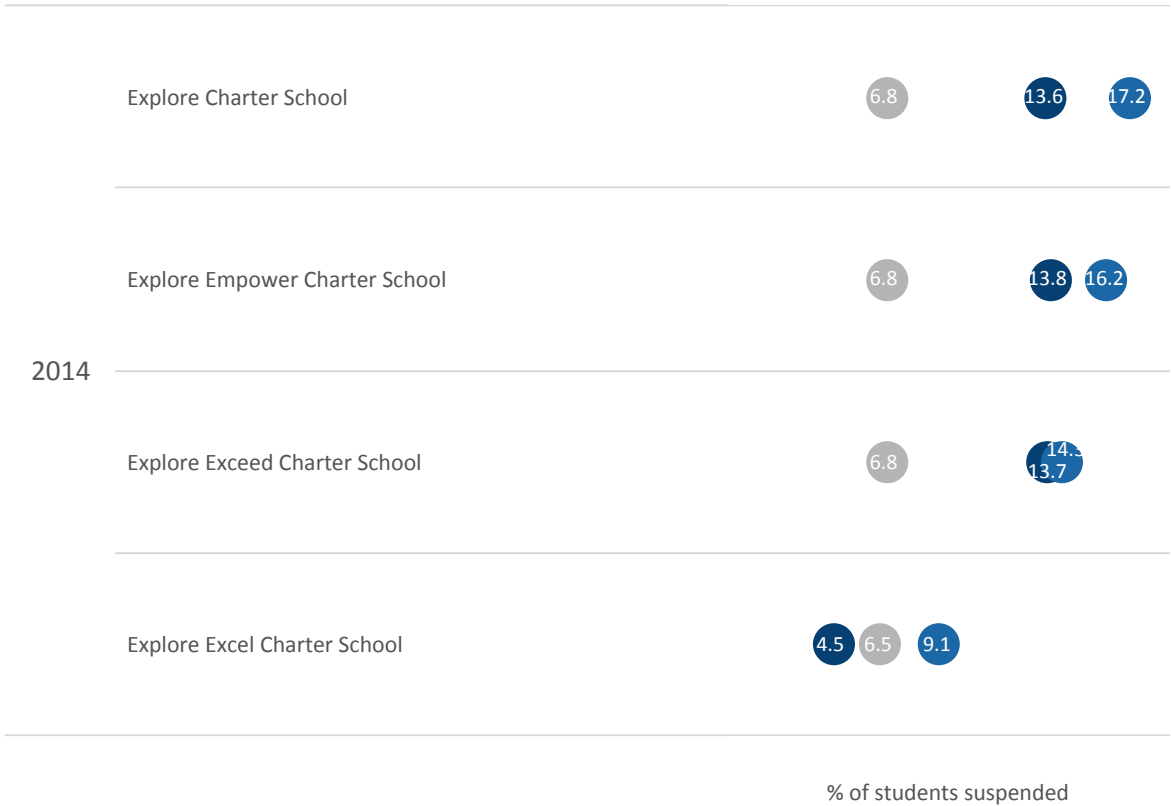


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# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

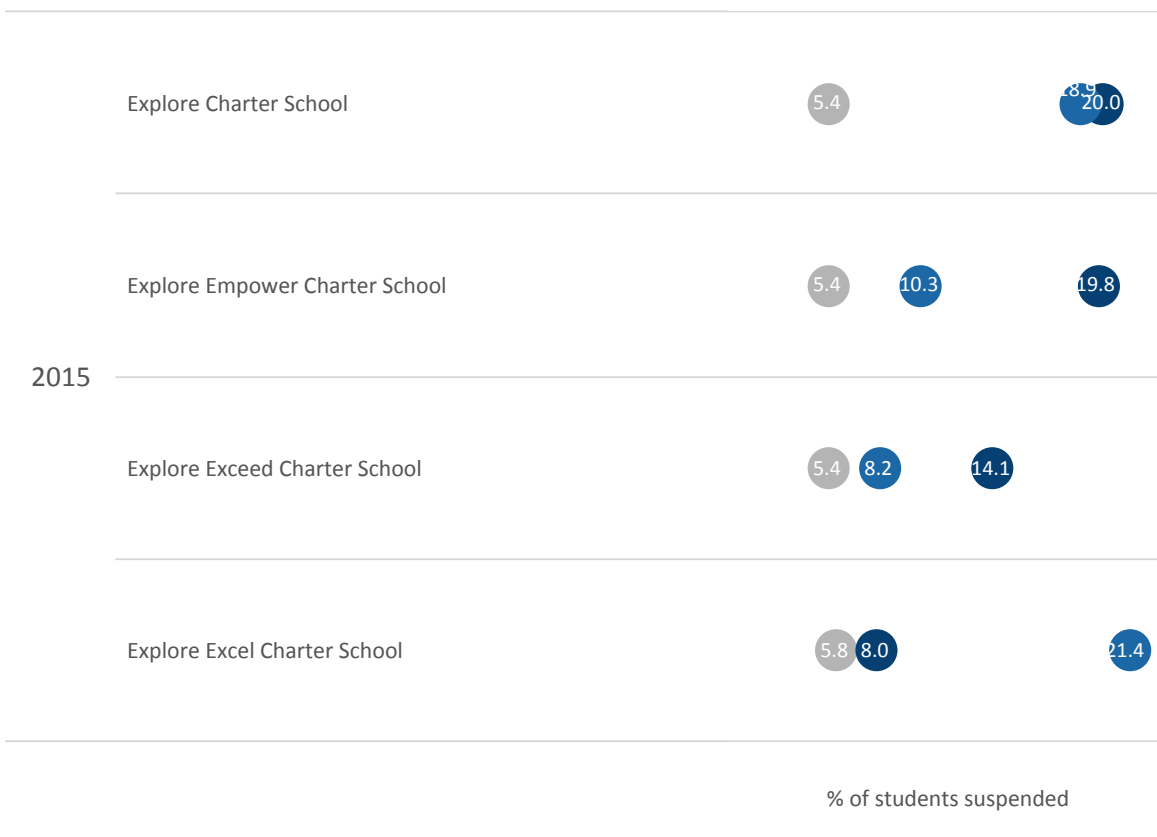
**Suspensions: Explore Charter Schools' out of school suspension rate, in school suspension rate, and the district overall suspension rate.**



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 12<sup>TH</sup> 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 year ending in 2014, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn schools expelled 0 students.

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

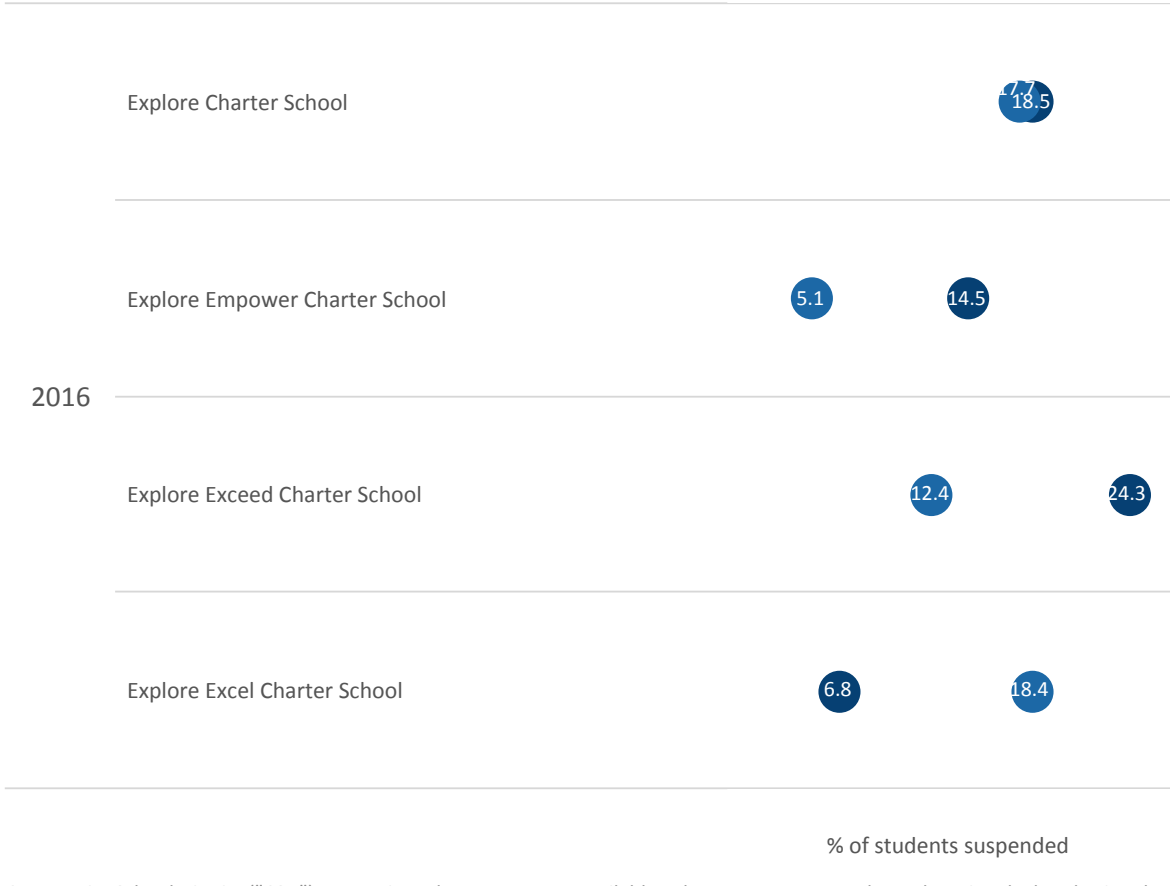


ALTHOUGH COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT ("CSD") AND SCHOOL SUSPENSION RATES ARE PRESENTED ON THE SAME GRAPH, A DIRECT COMPARISON BETWEEN THE RATES IS NOT POSSIBLE BECAUSE AVAILABLE CSD DATA INCLUDES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADES AND SCHOOL DATA INCLUDES ONLY THE GRADES SERVED BY THE SCHOOL. 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 year ending in 2015, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn schools expelled 0 students.

# APPENDIX E: Education Corporation Overview

**Suspensions: Explore Charter Schools' out of school suspension rate and in school suspension rate.**



COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT ("CSD") COMPARISON DATA ARE NOT YET AVAILABLE. THE PERCENT-AGE 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. COMPARISON DATA IS NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FOR 2016.

During the school year ending in 2016, Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn schools expelled 4 students.

## Explore Charter Schools Persistence in Enrollment

2015-16	90.6%
2014-15	89.3%
2013-14	90.4%

Persistence in enrollment illustrates the percentage of students not scheduled to age out of the schools who re-enroll from the previous year. The Institute derived the statistical information on enrollment persistence from its database. No comparative data from NYCDOE or NYSED is available to the Institute to provide either district wide or by CSD context. As such, the information presented is for information purposes but does not allow for comparative analysis.

# APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

## Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn (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**

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
-	-	4,756,959	7,584,033	10,773,783
-	-	771,361	538,304	476,839
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	117,141	193,627	48,215
-	-	-	-	13,721
-	-	5,645,461	8,315,964	11,312,558
-	-	1,137,891	1,062,660	966,337
-	-	250,300	290,527	290,775
-	-	7,033,652	9,669,151	12,569,670

-	-	396,280	619,063	689,187
-	-	1,777,474	1,955,818	2,151,966
-	-	7,373	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	21,112	26,297	95,302
-	-	2,202,239	2,601,178	2,936,455
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	2,202,239	2,601,178	2,936,455

-	-	2,629,413	3,857,973	6,223,215
-	-	2,202,000	3,210,000	3,410,000
-	-	4,831,413	7,067,973	9,633,215

-	-	7,033,652	9,669,151	12,569,670
---	---	-----------	-----------	------------

-	-	19,809,070	22,348,856	25,338,342
-	-	822,922	1,643,153	2,087,415
-	-	302,701	126,332	136,944
-	-	1,614,777	1,252,856	1,075,305
-	-	365,226	265,986	343,919
-	-	-	37,916	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	22,914,696	25,675,099	28,981,925

-	-	15,260,363	16,897,084	18,316,646
-	-	2,399,986	2,654,644	3,956,869
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	17,660,349	19,551,728	22,273,515
-	-	3,584,156	3,948,940	4,209,864
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	21,244,505	23,500,668	26,483,379
-	-	1,670,191	2,174,431	2,498,546

-	-	170,140	1,105	1,108
-	-	43,949	58,940	56,375
-	-	3,794	2,084	9,213
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	217,883	62,129	66,696

-	-	23,132,579	25,737,228	29,048,621
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	23,132,579	25,737,228	29,048,621

-	-	1,888,074	2,236,560	2,565,242
-	-	2,943,339	4,831,413	7,067,973
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	4,831,413	7,067,973	9,633,215



## Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn (Merged)

### SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

#### Functional Expense Breakdown

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Personnel Service	-	-	2,537,982	3,520,127	3,479,426
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	-	6,970,287	6,756,004	7,746,353
Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	2,997,501	3,130,879	3,841,931
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Salaries and Staff</b>	-	-	<b>12,505,770</b>	<b>13,407,010</b>	<b>15,067,710</b>
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	-	-	2,884,148	3,232,974	3,527,954
Retirement	-	-	-	-	-
Management Company Fees	-	-	2,183,766	2,559,910	2,933,057
Building and Land Rent / Lease	-	-	15,572	1	1
Staff Development	-	-	224,959	278,914	374,627
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	-	-	700,646	1,126,089	1,333,843
Marketing / Recruitment	-	-	154,790	147,739	134,083
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	-	-	940,487	881,800	1,083,511
Depreciation	-	-	416,251	519,273	536,683
Other	-	-	1,218,117	1,346,958	1,491,910
<b>Total Expenses</b>	-	-	<b>21,244,506</b>	<b>23,500,668</b>	<b>26,483,379</b>

### SCHOOL ANALYSIS

#### ENROLLMENT

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Chartered Enroll	-	-	1,297	1,478	1,651
Revised Enroll	-	-	1,353	1,531	1,711
Actual Enroll - <b>GRAPH 4</b>	-	-	1,401	1,601	1,771
Chartered Grades	-	-	-	-	-
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-

#### Primary School District:

##### Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Increase over prior year	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

#### PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

##### Revenue

Operating	-	-	16,357	16,037	16,361
Other Revenue and Support	-	-	156	39	38
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	-	<b>16,513</b>	<b>16,076</b>	<b>16,398</b>

##### Expenses

Program Services	-	-	12,606	12,212	12,574
Management and General, Fundraising	-	-	2,558	2,467	2,377
<b>TOTAL - GRAPH 3</b>	-	-	<b>15,165</b>	<b>14,679</b>	<b>14,950</b>
% of Program Services	0.0%	0.0%	83.1%	83.2%	84.1%
% of Management and Other	0.0%	0.0%	16.9%	16.8%	15.9%
<b>% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5</b>	0.0%	0.0%	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>9.7%</b>

#### Student to Faculty Ratio

#### Faculty to Admin Ratio

#### Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

Score	0.0	0.0	2.9	2.8	3.0
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	N/A	N/A	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong

#### Working Capital - GRAPH 7

Net Working Capital	0	0	3,443,222	5,714,786	8,376,103
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	0.0%	0.0%	14.9%	22.2%	28.8%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	0.0	0.0	2.6	3.2	3.9
Risk (Low ≥ 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	N/A	N/A	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	N/A	N/A	Good	Excellent	Excellent

#### Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score	0.0	0.0	2.5	3.1	3.8
Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

#### Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

Score	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3	0.2
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

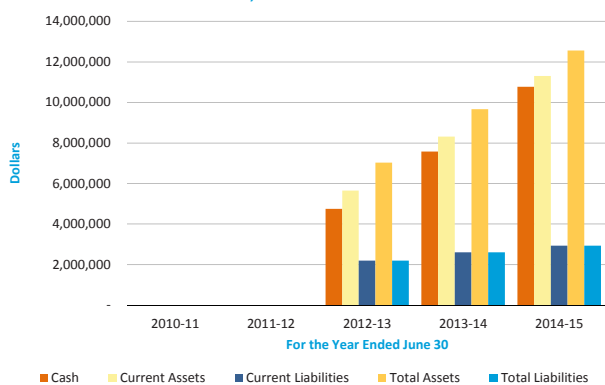
#### Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

Score	0.0	0.0	2.7	3.9	4.9
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	N/A	N/A	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	N/A	N/A	Good	Excellent	Excellent

# APPENDIX F: Ed Corp Fiscal Dashboard

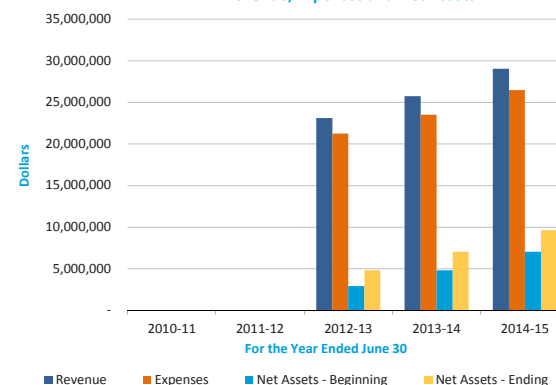
## Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn (Merged)

**GRAPH 1** Cash, Assets and Liabilities



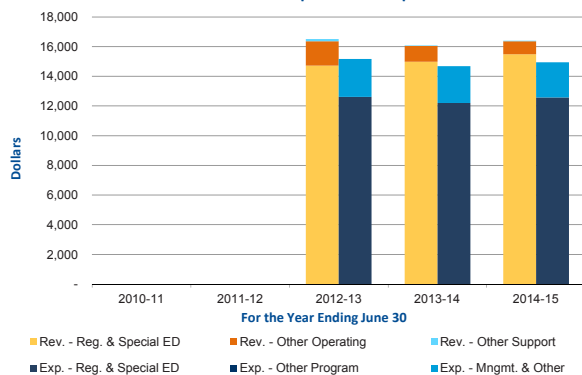
This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 thru 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right; and, generally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

**GRAPH 2** Revenue, Expenses and Net Assets



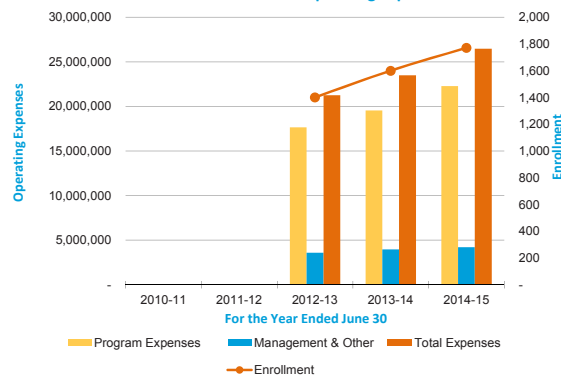
This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year-to-year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year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



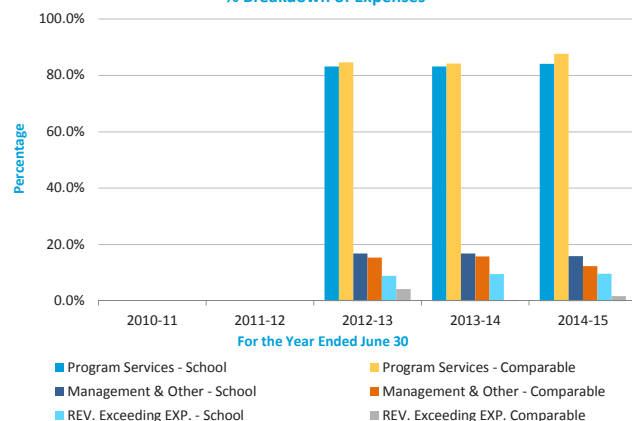
This chart illustrates to what extent the school's operating expenses have followed its student enrollment pattern. A baseline assumption that this data tests is that operating expenses increase with each additional student served. This chart also compares and contrasts growth trends of both, giving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

## Explore Charter Schools of Brooklyn (Merged)

### Comparable School, Region or Network: New York City & Long Island Schools (Excluding Closed Schools)

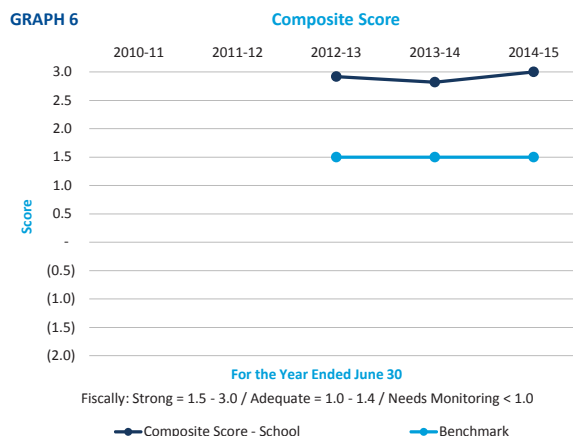
\* Average = Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term

**GRAPH 5** % Breakdown of Expenses



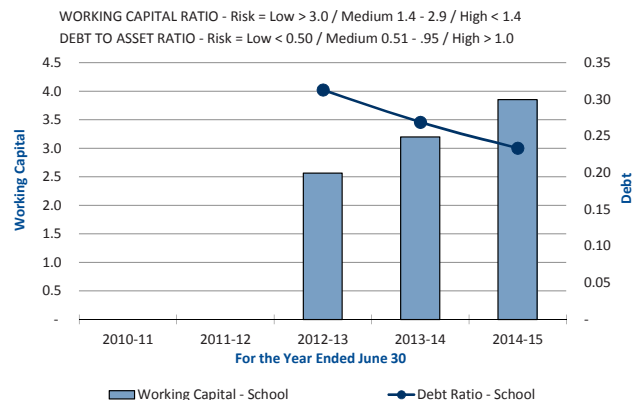
This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding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

**GRAPH 6**



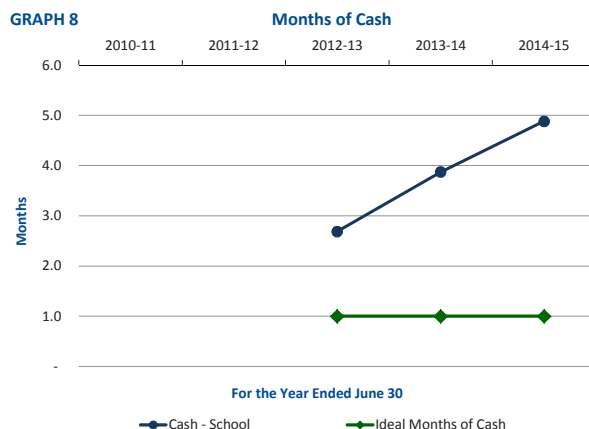
This chart illustrates a school's composite score based on the methodology developed by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) to determine whether private not-for-profit colleges and universities are financially strong enough to participate in federal loan programs. These scores can be valid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



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.

