



Renewal Recommendation Report Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem

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INTRODUCTION AND REPORT FORMAT

INTRODUCTION

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 an education corporation’s Application for Charter Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of an education corporation’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”) (revised September 4, 2013 and available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/SUNY-Renewal-Policies.pdf).

REPORT FORMAT

The Institute makes all renewal recommendations based on a school’s Application for Charter Renewal, evaluation visits conducted and information gathered during the charter term and a renewal evaluation visit conducted near the end of the current charter term. Additionally, the Institute has reviewed the strength and fiscal health of the not-for-profit education corporation with the authority to operate the school. 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. This renewal recommendation report compiles the evidence below using the *State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks* (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”),¹ 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.

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, the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard information for the school, and, if applicable, its education corporation, additional information about the education corporation and its schools, and additional evidence on student achievement of those schools.

¹ Version 5.0, May 2012, available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/wp-content/uploads/SUNY-Renewal-Benchmarks.pdf.

INTRODUCTION AND REPORT FORMAT

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/operate/existing-schools/renewal/.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION:

FULL-TERM RENEWAL

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Charter Renewal of Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten through 5th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 270 students.

To earn a Subsequent Full-Term Renewal, a school must demonstrate that it has met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.²

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:

- 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 five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.³

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, English language learners ("ELLs"), and students who are eligible applicants for the federal free and reduced price lunch ("FRPL") program. SUNY⁴ 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.

Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem ("Sisulu-Walker") implements sufficient outreach efforts to attract students with disabilities, ELLs and students who are eligible applicants for the FRPL

² SUNY Renewal Policies (p. 14).

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

⁴ SUNY Trustees' Charter Schools Committee resolution dated October 2, 2012.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

program. While the school is not yet accountable for its targets,⁵ Sisulu-Walker submitted the following strategies it currently uses and will use to meet its targets in the future.

During the 2014-2015 school year, Sisulu-Walker sent advertisement packets to daycare centers in Community School Districts (“CSDs”) 3, 4 and 5 that provide services to students with disabilities and that have a large population of ELLs. These districts have large FRPL populations. Sisulu-Walker also took part in several school fairs in local daycare centers, after school programs and charter schools that have a high population of students eligible for FRPL. The school also advertised on subway billboards in multiple highly visible locations and ran a print ad in *New York Parent Magazine’s School Edition*.

The packets sent to the day care centers included information regarding the school’s lottery and academic program as well as a date for an open house. At the annual open house, parents received information about Sisulu-Walker’s general education program as well as an overview of the support services provided to students with disabilities and ELLs. The school offers targeted services to ELLs as part of its Title I Program. The school’s special education program includes integrated co-teaching (“ICT”) classes for students with disabilities.

Sisulu-Walker will continue to increase its efforts to attract students with disabilities, ELLs and students who are eligible for FRPL by hosting additional open houses, hosting information sessions at daycare centers, after school programs and local schools and by advertising on subway billboards.

Please refer to Appendix A for more details about the school’s future targets including a comparison of how it would have performed if it was currently accountable for its targets.

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 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.

⁵ Enrollment and retention targets apply to all charter schools approved pursuant to any of the Institute’s Request for Proposal processes (August 2010 – present) and to charter schools that previously applied for renewal after January 1, 2011. This is the first time Sisulu-Walker has applied for renewal after January 2011.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem

BACKGROUND

New York's first charter school, Sisulu-Walker,⁶ opened its doors to 247 students in Kindergarten through 2nd grade in 1999. The SUNY Trustees granted Sisulu-Walker an initial short-term renewal of two years in 2004. The school earned full-term subsequent renewals in 2006 and 2011.

Sisulu-Walker's mission is:

To prepare K-5 students living in and around Central Harlem for matriculation to outstanding public, private and parochial middle and high schools by nurturing their intellectual, emotional, artistic and social development. The school will accomplish this by offering rigorous and challenging academic curricula taught by a highly prepared and committed cadre of professional educators. Beginning in Kindergarten, we will aim towards preparing our students for college and a lifetime of achievement, honor and service. Sisulu-Walker will achieve this in a small and supportive learning environment that sets high expectations for all of our students and encourages strong parental and community involvement.

Sisulu-Walker implements a balanced literacy approach to instruction organized in thematic units. The school embeds writing across the curriculum, and its celebration of art is evident immediately upon entering the building with student artwork dominating the walls. The educational program remains true to the school's three guiding principles of achievement, honor and service with high expectations for student performance, classrooms identified by Swahili translations of various virtues, and community service requirements. Since 2003, Sisulu-Walker has contracted with Victory Schools, Inc. (d/b/a Victory Education Partners) ("Victory") for instructional supports such as teacher professional development activities. Sisulu-Walker is an independent not-for-profit education corporation.

Sisulu-Walker provides instruction in a leased facility located at 125 West 115th Street, New York, NY in CSD 3; however, the Institute uses CSD 5 as the school's comparison district because it is the most represented district of residence for Sisulu-Walker's students. In the final year of its 4th charter term, Sisulu-Walker serves 242 students in Kindergarten through 5th grade.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sisulu-Walker has come close to meeting its key Accountability Plan goals over the charter term. The school's English language arts ("ELA") performance lagged behind its strong performance in mathematics, but Sisulu-Walker consistently outperformed the local district in both subjects. Early in the charter term, the education corporation board (the "board") determined the need for a change in school leadership and hired a new principal, who had been a member of the school's

⁶ Originally chartered by the SUNY Trustees as the Sisulu-Walker Children's Academy – Harlem Public Charter School in July 1999.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

founding instructional team. The board charged the new leader with creating and implementing a strategic plan to improve student outcomes in ELA. In the first year of new leadership, 2012-13, students demonstrated very strong growth, and the school made progress toward meeting its comparative effect size target.

Sisulu-Walker has made a number of changes to its educational program in response to its ELA performance and now has in place a comprehensive program that is likely to improve student outcomes in the future. Specific changes implemented in the current school year include a reorganization of the curriculum as well as a reorganization of the academic day to include literacy blocks for all grade levels. The school has also incorporated more opportunities for students in testing grades to produce on-demand writing products similar to state test requirements. At the lower grades, Sisulu-Walker places greater emphasis on the writing process to facilitate students' love of writing.

The school's small, deeply committed board oversees the school's academic, organizational and financial health with a focus on providing students with a high quality education that prepares them for success in middle school and beyond. The board works tirelessly to achieve the school's mission.

Based on the Institute's review of Sisulu-Walker'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 as well as a visit to the school, the Institute finds that the program as implemented is likely to improve student learning and achievement in the future. For these reasons, the Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees grant Sisulu-Walker a full-term renewal of five years.

NOTEWORTHY

Sisulu-Walker received the NYC Mission Society's 2014 Community Service Award in recognition of the school's history as an education pioneer and its record of achievement.

IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

Given Sisulu-Walker's record of meeting its mathematics goal throughout the charter term and the significant ELA program improvement in the current school year, the school is an academic success. Sisulu-Walker benefits from notably strong instructional leadership, implements curricula infused with cultural relevance and provides intervention services to meet the full spectrum of students' educational needs.

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,⁷ 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"⁸ and states the educational programs at a charter school must "meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the Board of Regents"⁹ 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 performance, i.e., how did the school do as compared to schools in the district and schools that serve similar populations of economically disadvantaged students?; and,
- 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. Sisulu-Walker did not propose or include any additional measures of success in the Accountability Plan it adopted.

The Institute analyzes every measure included in the school's Accountability Plan to determine its level of academic success including the extent to which the school has established and maintained a record of high performance throughout the 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

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. In the case of subsequent renewal, the Accountability Plan covers the last year of the previous charter term through the second to last year of the charter term under review.

⁸ Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

⁹ Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

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its Accountability Plan. The Institute identifies the required measures (absolute proficiency, absolute Annual Measurable Objective attainment,¹⁰ comparison to local district, comparison to demographically similar schools, and student growth) in the Performance Summaries appearing in Appendix B.

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, although in this case an adjoining CSD where most of the school’s students reside was used.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1A:

Has the school met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan Goals?

Sisulu-Walker has come close to meeting its key academic Accountability Plan goals.

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 Sisulu-Walker 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 Sisulu-Walker’s demonstrated student learning compared to other schools’ demonstrated student learning.

The Institute uses the state’s growth percentile analysis as a measure of Sisulu-Walker’s comparative year-to-year growth in student performance on the state’s ELA and mathematics exams. The measure compares a school’s growth in assessment scores to the growth in assessment scores of the subset of students throughout the state who performed identically on previous years’ assessments. According to this measure, median growth statewide is at the 50th percentile. 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 the peers of its students (in terms of students state-wide who scored previously at the same level), the school must post a percentile performance that exceeds 50. A percentile performance below 50 indicates that students are losing ground relative to their peers who scored similarly during prior years.

Sisulu-Walker did not meet its ELA goal over the charter term. The school outperformed its comparison district in absolute proficiency during 2010-11 and 2011-12 by as much as 15 percentage points. While Sisulu-Walker’s average proficiency declined in 2012-13 after the state transitioned to a new testing system, the school continued to outperform the district and posted an upward trend in absolute proficiency rates for the remainder of the Accountability Period. The following year, the mean growth percentile for the school fell just below the target and in 2014-15 the school’s growth scores continued to decline. Over the charter term, the school had mixed

¹⁰ The state did not calculate an AMO for 2012-13. As such, the Institute will only report on the 2013-14 and 2014-15 results.

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results on its comparative growth measure in ELA. After increases in each year of the Accountability Period, in 2012-13, the school exceeded the target of the state median. Sisulu-Walker did not meet the comparative effect size measure over the charter term but came close to meeting the measure in 2014-15 when the school performed higher than expected to a small degree compared to schools with similar proportions of economically disadvantaged students.

In contrast to ELA, Sisulu-Walker posted strong mathematics results over the charter term and met its Accountability Plan goal. At the outset of the Accountability Period, the school posted particularly strong scores, outperforming CSD 5 in 2010-11 and 2011-12. The following year, the school's absolute scores declined with the introduction of the state's new testing system. Despite the drop in scores, the school continued to outperform the district and demonstrated a positive upward trend in absolute proficiency through 2014-15. During that year, the school's proficiency rate was 26 percentage points higher than the comparison district. Sisulu-Walker also had strong performance on its comparative effect size measure. The school met the measure over the entire Accountability Period, performing higher than expected to a meaningful degree relative to similar schools statewide. During 2014-15, the school posted mean growth percentile scores slightly below the target. However, on balance, the school had strong growth scores over the charter term.

Sisulu-Walker met its science goal during the charter term. In 2014-15, the percentage of the school's 4th graders enrolled in at least their second year scoring at or above proficiency was 20 percentage points greater than the local district.

Although not tied to separate goals in the school's formal Accountability Plan, academic data about the school's students receiving special education services and ELLs are presented below for informational purposes.

		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Enrollment (N) Receiving Mandated Academic Services		(27)	(28)	(34)
Results	Tested on State Exams (N)	(16)	(11)	(15)
	School Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	12.5	9.1	0
	Percent Proficient Statewide	5.0	5.2	5.8

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			2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
ELL Enrollment (N)			(12)	(5)	(4)
Results		Tested on NYSESLAT ¹¹ Exam (N)	(12)	(5)	(4)
		School Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress ¹² on NYSESLAT	33.3	s ¹³	s

¹¹ New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, a standardized state exam.

¹² Defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. As of 2014-15, student scores can fall into five categories/proficiency levels: Entering (formerly Beginning); Emerging (formerly Low Intermediate); Transitioning (formerly Intermediate); Expanding (formerly Advanced); and, Commanding (formerly Proficient).

¹³ In order to comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations on reporting education outcome data, the Institute does not report assessment results for groups containing five or fewer students.

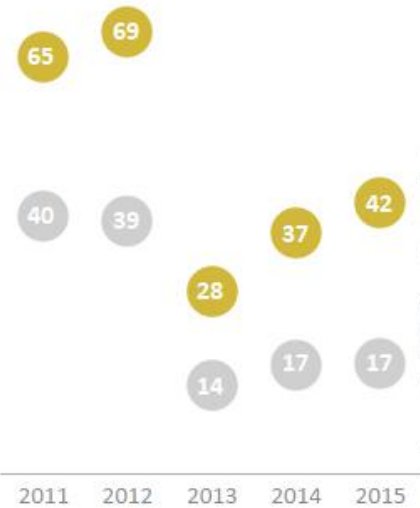
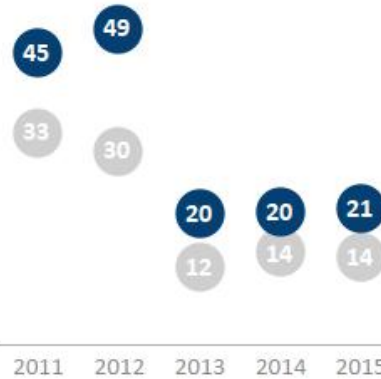
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

DESCRIPTION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

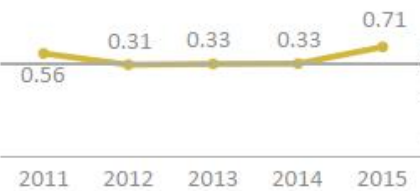
MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

Comparative Measure: District Comparison. Each year, the percentage of students at Sisulu 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 5.



Comparative Measure: Effect Size. Each year, Sisulu 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.

Target: 0.3



Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. Each year, Sisulu'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**.

Target: State Median



SCIENCE

Science: Comparative Measure. Each year, the percentage of students at Sisulu 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.



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The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, grounded in the body of research from the Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University,¹⁴ describe the elements in place at schools that are highly effective at providing students from low-income backgrounds the instruction, content, knowledge and skills necessary to produce strong academic performance. The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks describe the elements an effective school must have in place at the time of renewal.¹⁵

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1B:

Does the school have an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning?

Recognizing gaps in its previous assessment system, Sisulu-Walker has implemented changes designed to improve student learning and instructional effectiveness.

- Sisulu-Walker uses assessment data to inform instructional decisions. For example, after reviewing state test performance data, the principal made changes to the ELA scope and sequence to target students' weakest skill areas and decrease time spent on less challenging skill areas. She has used it to change the focus of social studies and science from content acquisition to literacy skill development.
- In addition to using assessment results to adjust instructional plans, Sisulu-Walker also has designed the daily schedule to include two re-teaching periods, one for mathematics and one for ELA. Teachers use assessment data to assign students to leveled reading groups and to create differentiated guided reading plans. Importantly, the school no longer relies solely on students' overall reading level to determine placement for small group instruction. This year, Sisulu-Walker organizes groups based on specific skill needs. Teachers also use assessment results to plan differentiated mathematics activities and provide targeted small group instruction during the math centers portion of lessons. Teachers still require supports in ensuring student work products are at the level necessary to meet the demands of state standards.
- The school regularly administers Fountas and Pinnell ("F&P"), TerraNova, interim and New York State assessments. In addition, teachers conduct a range of formative assessments, from daily exit tickets (short assignments that gauge mastery of lesson material) to extended written response essays. At the time of the renewal visit, the school was researching commercially available assessments closely aligned with Common Core standards to serve as predictive measures of students' readiness for state tests.
- Sisulu-Walker has a valid and reliable process for scoring and analyzing the interim assessments created by Victory. Grading of the multiple-choice sections is automated and the open-ended responses are collaboratively normed and graded by teachers on the same grade level. Teachers follow a regular protocol for analyzing the data and creating an action plan to use data results to adjust instruction. However, teachers do not use this robust approach to grade and analyze less formal daily and unit assessment results.

¹⁴ An extensive body of research identifying and confirming the correlates of effective schools exists dating back four decades. Selected sources include: www.mes.org/correlates.html;

scholar.harvard.edu/files/fryer/files/dobbie_fryer_revision_final.pdf; and, gao.gov/assets/80/77488.pdf.

¹⁵ Additional details regarding the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, including greater specificity as to what the Institute looks for at each school that may demonstrate attainment of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, is available at: www.newyorkcharters.org/suny-renewal-benchmarks/.

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- The school makes assessment results available to teachers, leaders, and board members.
- The school leader does not formally use assessment data to evaluate teacher effectiveness; however, she does use data to improve instructional effectiveness. Although she created a calendar of development activities prior to the start of the school year, the principal uses ongoing assessment data to make changes to monthly focus areas within the school-wide professional development plan. The principal also uses assessment data with classroom observations to determine teachers' individual pedagogical skill-building needs.
- Sisulu-Walker regularly communicates to families about their students' progress by distributing four progress reports and four report cards each year.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1C:

Does the school's curriculum support teachers in their instructional planning?

Sisulu-Walker's curriculum supports teachers in their instructional planning, but the school continues to make revisions designed to further student achievement.

- The school has a scope and sequence for each subject and grade, and school leaders have developed more substantive unit plans as well. School leaders continue to map the revised curriculum to state standards in order to ensure that instruction prepares students to demonstrate mastery on state tests.
- Teachers divide up lesson planning responsibility for each subject with oversight from the principal and Victory coaches. The consistent use of a structured lesson planning protocol assists in teachers' review of and ability to internalize each other's lesson plans.
- Sisulu-Walker has a regular process for reviewing curriculum. The principal meets with teachers during common grade level planning meetings to conduct ongoing review. Furthermore, the principal and the teachers conduct a thorough review of all of the units between April and August of each year.
- The school does not yet have a regularly structured process for teachers to meet vertically (across a grade span, i.e. grades 3, 4 and 5) to ensure alignment of the taught curriculum but plans to introduce this in the next charter term.
- The school has yet to maximize the effectiveness of its English language arts program through ensuring students produce significant and strong amounts of student written work.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1D:

Is high quality instruction evident throughout the school?

Sisulu-Walker made significant pedagogical shifts in the last year. Thoroughly planned instruction now includes checks for understanding at multiple levels and opportunities for students to make connections between classroom material and their own lives. Teachers communicate urgency for learning, and students excitedly take on new challenges. As shown in the chart below, during the renewal visit, Institute team members conducted 26 classroom observations following a defined protocol used in all renewal visits.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

		GRADE						
		K	1	2	3	4	5	Total
CONTENT AREA	ELA	1	1	2	1	3	3	11
	Math		1	2	3	2	3	11
	Science			1				1
	Soc Stu					1	1	2
	Specials	1						1
	Total	2	2	5	4	6	7	26

- Teachers deliver lessons with clear objectives that build on students' previous skill and knowledge and align to the school's curriculum (24 of 26 classrooms observed). Most teachers present concepts with accuracy in clear terms using age appropriate materials that support sophisticated thinking skills. Teachers regularly reference written lesson plans to ensure fidelity of implementation. In the strongest classrooms, co-teachers work in concert to support students in achieving lesson objectives. In other classrooms, multiple paraprofessionals and instructional aides flow in and out of classrooms without clear purpose.
- Effective checks for understanding throughout lessons provide teachers with real-time data to inform instruction (19 of 26 classrooms observed). As practiced in school-wide professional development sessions, teachers strategically use a variety of techniques from cold calling for recall and comprehension to monitoring think-pair-share conversations for synthesis to conduct formative assessments.
- Consistent with a school-wide focus on making inferences, co-teachers in early grades require students to narrate stories from cartoons while teachers in later grades challenge students to look for clues and supporting evidence in text. However, teachers do not consistently provide opportunities for students to develop more advanced higher order thinking skills (12 of 26 classrooms observed) despite opportunities being included in lesson plans. Poor timing is a key obstacle to maximizing written higher order opportunities. Teachers are not yet adept at providing sufficient wait time for students to tackle tough questions or at gauging the time necessary for substantive peer-to-peer discussions. Observation feedback forms reviewed at the time of the renewal visit show that instructional leaders have started to address this challenge with teachers. Future professional development and coaching activities should continue to focus on equipping teachers with tools to build students' higher order thinking skills.
- Across the school, students demonstrate great enthusiasm for learning, and most classrooms maintain consistent focus on academic achievement (18 of 26 classrooms observed).

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SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1E:

Does the school have strong instructional leadership?

Sisulu-Walker's principal provides focused, coherent instructional leadership that builds teachers' ability to serve students.

- Sisulu-Walker's principal communicates high expectations for teacher performance with measurable achievement goals in ELA, mathematics and school culture. In the current school year, the principal expects teachers to support students in making 1.5 years of growth in reading. Each grade level also has a target number of books for students to read throughout the year. To foster an environment in which teachers believe in all students' achievement potential, the school has conducted pre-service training on the power of teacher expectations on student outcomes.
- The principal is the primary instructional leader and receives assistance from a number of Victory consultants who visit the school one to two times per week on average. The principal coordinates with the ELA, mathematics and special education coaches via one-on-one meetings and with group emails to communicate goals, progress and teachers' professional development needs. Teachers report that the feedback they receive from coaches is consistent with feedback from the principal.
- Sisulu-Walker provides teachers with sustained, systemic and effective coaching. Although the external coaches observe classrooms and provide feedback, the principal maintains primary responsibility for developing teachers' pedagogical skills with frequent informal classroom observations typically followed by written, actionable feedback. For example, one feedback form reviewed during the renewal visit focused on classroom culture and routines and read, "Ratio of positive to corrective feedback is 1:1. The ratio should be 5:1. Do not include judgment words.... Example – 'This citizen is showing ready because he/she is facing forward' vs. 'I love the way – is showing ready.'"
- Teachers have opportunities to plan curriculum and instruction with guidance from leaders during the two-week Summer Curriculum Institute and in weekly grade team meetings. The school's instructional planning, guided by a structured lesson planning protocol, is extensive but not results driven. Rather than beginning with the end in mind (i.e., what students should master during the lesson and how to assess), lesson planning focuses on creating engaging activities related to the topics to be covered and does not utilize a great deal of previous student performance data. To strengthen student abilities to produce high quality work products, the school must focus on targeting quality outcomes and increasing the number and quality of original student writing in a future charter term.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1F:

Does the school meet the educational needs of at-risk students?

Sisulu-Walker addresses the educational needs of at-risk students through a plethora of programmatic supports.

- Sisulu-Walker uses state assessments and F&P results to identify students struggling academically. The school requires parents and guardians to complete the Home Language

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Identification Survey during the school's registration process and administers the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners ("NYSITELL") to identify ELLs.

- The school's special education services team includes the special education coordinator, a special education teacher support services ("SETSS") provider, a Title I reading recovery teacher, and two special education teachers in the school's ICT classrooms. These provide appropriate supports to Sisulu-Walker's 22 students with disabilities receiving academic services, six ELLs, and general education students at risk of academic failure.
- Sisulu-Walker implements guided reading groups based on student performance data in classrooms. If students do not show academic growth, the school provides them with daily, 45-minute small group pull-out ELA supports. At-risk program staff members also push-in to mathematics blocks to support struggling students. Through the Title I program, the reading recovery teacher provides specific pull-out supports for the 1st and 5th grades, as the 5th grade posted particularly low performance on state assessments in the 2014-15 school year. The reading recovery teacher, through the specific reading recovery program, provides one-on-one reading supports to the school's lowest performing 1st grade students. The reading recovery program is designed specifically to fill learning gaps at the early elementary level. As the school's English as a Second Language teacher resigned before the start of the 2015-16 school year, the school's special education coordinator, who has a background in bilingual education services, provides the school's ELLs daily pull-out supports. The interventions are sufficient to meet the needs of at-risk students.
- In addition to the school's benchmark assessments, classroom assessments, and student work, the at-risk program staff administers assessments designed to track students' progress toward meeting Individualized Education Program ("IEP") goals and English language proficiency. The at-risk program staff conducts monthly child-study team meetings to review at-risk students' progress. Except for the reading recovery teacher, who meets with classroom teachers every six weeks to review the progress of 1st grade students receiving one-on-one reading recovery services, the at-risk program staff does not formally meet with classroom teachers to discuss students.
- The school provides professional development regarding at-risk students during pre-service training, and primarily external professional development for supporting at-risk students during the year, which teachers report as effective. An external special education coach also comes to the school regularly to provide support to staff members.
- The school provides limited opportunities for coordination between classroom teachers and at-risk program staff, although the SETSS teacher may sit in on grade level meetings. Teachers rely on frequent informal meetings to discuss student progress, interventions, and instructional planning.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

Sisulu-Walker is an effective and viable organization that has in place the key design elements identified in its charter. The board remains deeply committed to achieving the school's mission and propelling improved student outcomes. During the current charter term, the board has generally abided by its by-laws and been in general and substantial compliance with the terms of its charter, code of ethics, applicable state and federal law, rules and regulations.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2A:

Is the school faithful to its mission and does it implement the key design elements included in its charter?

Sisulu-Walker is faithful to its mission and key design elements. These are found in the School Background section at the beginning of this report and identified in Appendix A, respectively. Sisulu-Walker implements the school design outlined in its charter.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2B:

Are parents/guardians and students satisfied with the school?

To report on parent satisfaction with the school's program, the Institute used survey data as well as data gathered from a focus group of parents representing a cross section of students.

Parent Survey Data. Sisulu-Walker recorded a parent response rate of 51% for NYCDOE's 2014-15 NYC School Survey. The New York City Department of Education ("NYCDOE") distributes the survey to families each year to compile data about school culture, instruction, and systems for improvement. Results from the most recent survey indicate parents/guardians are very satisfied with the school. Although the response rate is higher than the citywide average, it might not be sufficient for framing the results as representative of the entire 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 new to the school, parents of students receiving general education services, parents of students with special needs and parents of ELLs. The four parents in attendance at the focus group expressed a great deal of satisfaction with the school and noted particular pleasure with the school's commitment to family involvement and deep exposure to the arts. Parents also indicated that the school is responsive to their needs and holds high expectations for students.

Persistence in Enrollment. An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2014-15, 90.4% of Sisulu-Walker's students returned from the previous year, which was the lowest percentage of the charter term. 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 NYCDOE or the New York State Education Department ("NYSED") is available to the Institute to provide either district wide or CSD context. As such, the information presented is for information purposes but does not allow for comparative analysis.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2C:

Does the school's organization work effectively to deliver the educational program?

Sisulu-Walker's organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program.

- The school operates with an effective administrative structure with staff, systems, policies, and procedures that allow it to carry out its academic program. The principal, as senior instructional leader, supervises the teaching staff. To allow the principal more time to support teachers, the school employs a director of operations who is responsible for supervising operational staff members. The director of operations is also responsible for all non-instructional tasks at the school such as building maintenance and payroll.
- Despite having the capacity to support the small instructional staff, the school struggles to retain teachers. Specifically, the school lost nine teachers prior to the 2015-16 school year including three teachers that the school decided not to rehire. Leaders report that some teachers leave for teaching jobs with higher pay or less demanding schedules.
- The school operates with a clear discipline system. Teachers have color charts to track student behaviors throughout the day and assign rewards or consequences that correspond to each color. Despite these charts, teachers do not always consistently use them across classrooms to redirect student misbehaviors, although leaders require teachers who struggle with behavior management implementation to observe teachers who are stronger in this area.
- Sisulu-Walker's overall culture is a strength of the school's program. In particular, the school focuses on student character and the development of the whole child. Classrooms are named after African terms for particular virtues, such as courage and discipline, and the school offers character development blocks that teach students about good citizenship. Sisulu-Walker gives awards to students who model particular virtues on a monthly basis.
- Sisulu-Walker focuses on developing the whole-child by providing students with experiences they might not otherwise have. For example, the school uses an annual dinner as an opportunity to teach students about the etiquette and behavior expected in fine restaurants. The event includes a daily etiquette challenge enabling classes to win spoons for good manners during breakfast and lunch. Classes that accumulate a certain number of spoons receive rewards throughout the year.
- Sisulu-Walker also provides students with culturally relevant experiences. For example, during the school's "breakfast with a civil rights legend" day, 5th grade students meet the Rev. Dr. Herbert Daughtry, an activist during the civil rights movement. The school also has a partnership with the YMCA to provide students with weekly multi-genre music instruction and opportunities to attend concerts throughout the year.
- While Sisulu-Walker allocates sufficient resources to support the achievement of goals, leaders are thoughtful about the allocation of resources in relation to the school's needs. For example, during the charter term, leaders reduced the number of printers in classrooms in order to spend funds used to maintain those printers on other instructional priorities.
- Serving 242 students, Sisulu-Walker maintains enrollment below its chartered maximum despite a reported waitlist of 436 prospective students at the time of the renewal visit.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

School leaders identify space constraints as the barrier to full enrollment and are seeking a solution for the next charter term.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2D:

Does the school board work effectively to achieve the school's Accountability Plan goals?

The board is reflective about the school's academic performance and the progress it must make towards achieving all Accountability Plan goals.

- Board members possess a range of complementary skills that enable sufficient oversight of the total educational program. The board experiences little turnover; a member of the school's original planning team continues to serve as a trustee.
- The board is attentive to all aspects of the educational program and speaks knowledgeably about recent changes, particularly in ELA, designed to improve student outcomes. The board recognizes the need for ongoing development in order to provide rigorous oversight of the school. It participates in planning retreats and board development sessions and has recently engaged consultants to perform a 360° assessment of the school program and steps the board can and should take to ensure the school achieves its Accountability Plan goals in the future.
- Sisulu-Walker's board holds the school leader accountable for results with annual evaluations and provides the principal with sufficient resources to function effectively. Though quite pleased with the principal's performance to date, the board expressed concern about relying too heavily on one individual's personal strength. The board has engaged an executive coach for the principal with one intended focus being building the principal's ability to grow broader capacity in other staff members.
- The board does not conduct a formal evaluation of Victory's services but does actively seek feedback from the school leader and teachers. Trustees indicate high satisfaction with Victory's services and the flexibility in its contract terms.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2E:

Does the board implement, maintain and abide by appropriate policies, systems and processes?

In material respects, the education corporation board has implemented, and abides by, adequate and appropriate policies, systems and procedures to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. The board demonstrates an understanding of its role in holding the school leadership accountable for academic results and fiscal soundness.

- The education corporation board has a functioning committee structure with academic, finance and real estate committees although the committees do not report out at every board meeting.
- The board has materially complied with the terms of its by-laws and policies, and updates its by-laws and policies from time to time. For example, the board amended the by-laws to make its academic committee a formal standing committee of the board.
- The board receives specific and extensive reports on each program including fiscal and academic performance, and a report from Victory.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

- The board has been actively pursuing real estate options for the school but is constrained by budget.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2F:

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. The Institute noted no exceptions during the charter term.

- **Complaints.** The school generated only two informal complaints, both during the 2012-13 school year. One complaint concerned a student application for middle school. The school helps place its students in middle schools and an application was lost or not processed properly. The school took quick steps to resolve the matter, which did not require Institute intervention. The second complaint was from an applicant to the school and concerned alleged anti-union organizing activity by the education corporation or its agents. The Institute informed the complainant and the education corporation about the collective bargaining provisions in the Act, and the Act's complaint process. The Institute was satisfied that no labor law violations had occurred and no formal complaints resulted.
- **Litigation.** The Institute noted no litigation against the education corporation.

IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Based on a review of the fiscal evidence collected through the renewal review, Sisulu-Walker is fiscally sound. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard for Sisulu-Walker is included in Appendix D and presents color coded tables and charts indicating that the education corporation has demonstrated fiscal soundness over the course of the charter term.¹⁶

Since 2003, Sisulu-Walker has contracted with Victory to manage the school's educational and operational functions. The plans for the next charter term include a change to the agreement with Victory to reduce services and seek an educational services provider.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3A:

Does the school operate pursuant to a fiscal plan in which it creates realistic budgets that it monitors and adjusts when appropriate?

Sisulu-Walker has maintained fiscal soundness through conservative budgeting practices and routine monitoring of revenues and expenses, and has adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations.

- The annual budget process is led by the principal with input from leadership staff and Victory.
- The budget is presented to the board finance committee for review. Once the committee is satisfied, the budget is presented to the full board for approval. The principal is responsible for implementing the budget.
- On a monthly basis, school leadership and Victory analyze actual to budget comparisons for variances.
- Sisulu-Walker has experienced low enrollment since 2012, enrolling approximately 85% - 90% of their chartered enrollment. The renewal application indicates that the space limitations of the current leased facility are restricting the number of students that can be enrolled. Sisulu-Walker has projected enrollment conservatively for the next charter term and plans to explore other facility options.
- Ongoing negotiations for unionization have not resulted in a collective bargaining agreement. If an agreement is reached, it will be necessary for the school to modify its financial projections to reflect the details of the agreement.
- The renewal application included description that Sisulu-Walker intends to contract with Victory for only the operational functions going into the next charter term. The projected budget reflects an allocation to outsource the services to another provider, which is yet to be determined. The draft Victory agreement, as well as any other agreement, will be reviewed by the Institute before it is finalized.

¹⁶ 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.

FISCAL PERFORMANCE

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3B:

Does the school maintain appropriate internal controls and procedures?

The education corporation has generally established and maintained appropriate fiscal policies, procedures and internal controls.

- Written policies address key issues including financial reporting, cash disbursements and receipts, petty cash, payroll, bank reconciliations, credit card usage, fixed assets, grants/contributions, capitalization and accounting, procurement and investments.
- The education corporation has accurately recorded and appropriately documented transactions in accordance with established policies.
- The external financial service provider works with the principal, key staff, and the board to help ensure that the school follows established policies and procedures.
- The education corporation's most recent audit report of internal control over financial reporting related to financial reporting and on compliance and other matters disclosed no material weaknesses, or instances of non-compliance, that were required to be reported.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3C:

Does the school comply with financial reporting requirements?

Sisulu-Walker has complied with reporting requirements.

- The education corporation's annual financial statements are presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles ("GAAP") and the independent audits of those statements have received unqualified opinions.
- The education corporation's independent auditor meets with the board to discuss the annual financial statements and answer any questions about the process and results.

SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3D:

Does the school maintain adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations?

The education corporation maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations.

- Sisulu-Walker posts a fiscally strong composite score rating on the Institute's financial dashboard.
- Sisulu-Walker has relied primarily on recurring operating revenues and accumulated surpluses to cover any operating deficits over the charter term and has not been dependent upon variable income for its financial needs. However, for the age of the school, the education corporation should have built up stronger surpluses. Low enrollment, if it persists, will adversely affect the financial condition of the school.
- Sisulu-Walker prepares and monitors cash flow projections and maintains sufficient cash on hand to pay current bills and those that are due shortly and retains approximately 1.7 months of cash on hand.
- As a new requirement of charter agreements, Sisulu-Walker will establish a separate bank account for the dissolution fund reserve of a total of \$75,000, which can be funded by \$25,000 each year for the first three years of a new charter term.

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?

Sisulu-Walker has come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals and maintains a vibrant educational program rich in history and steeped in the local community. The school operates as an effective and viable organization, and the education corporation is fiscally sound. Thus, the plans to implement the educational program as proposed during the next charter term 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. The education corporation plans to continue to implement the same core elements that have led the school to meet its mathematics Accountability Plan goal during the current charter term; these core elements are likely to enable the school to meet its goals in the future. In ELA, Sisulu-Walker plans to build upon the changes that catalyzed improved state test scores late in the charter term.

	Current Charter Term	End of Next Charter Term
Enrollment	270	270
Grade Span	K-5	K-5
Teaching Staff	20	19
Days of Instruction	183	183

Plans for Board Oversight & Governance. Board members express an interest in continuing to serve Sisulu-Walker in the next charter term and the board may add additional members in the future.

Fiscal & Facility Plans. Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, including a review of the 5-year financial plan, Sisulu-Walker presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term including budgets that are feasible and achievable. Sisulu-Walker intends to maintain a contractual relationship involving a limited scope of services with Victory. The Institute will review the proposed terms of such contract and approve the final contract, and any other educational management contracts, when executed.

Initially, the school intends to continue to provide instruction for Kindergarten through 5th grade students in its current location, a leased facility in Manhattan. During the next charter term, Sisulu-Walker will explore its options for acquiring a new facility.

FUTURE PLANS

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 or will amend other key aspects of the renewal application — including by-laws and code of ethics— to comply with various provisions of the New York Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, Public Officers Law and the General Municipal Law, as appropriate.

Appendix A

Sisulu-Walker School Overview

APPENDIX A: SISULU-WALKER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Board of Trustees¹⁷

Board Member Name	Position	Board Member Name	Position
Martez Moore	Chair	Erika Ewing	Trustee
Minnie Goka	Vice Chair	Joe Drayton	Trustee
Jeremy Harris	Secretary	Rita Hanes	Trustee
Steven Meekins	Parent Representative (non voting)	William Anthony Allen	Trustee

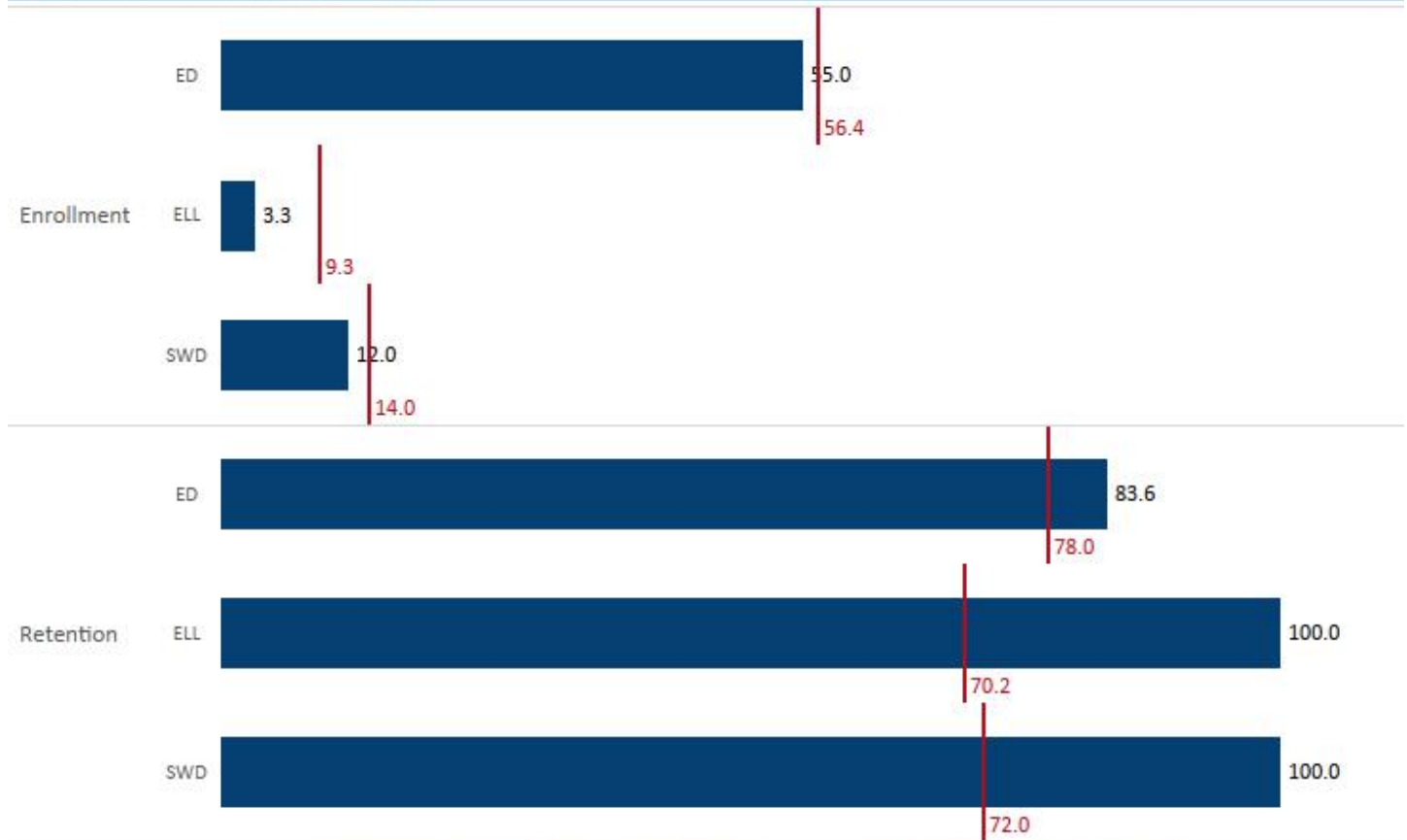
Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



¹⁷ Source: The Institute’s board records at the time of the renewal review.

APPENDIX A: SISULU-WALKER 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, ELL, and FRPL students. This analysis is based on the most recently available data from NYSED.

Timeline of Charter School Renewal

● School Opening ▲ Initial Renewal - Short Term ◆ Subsequent Renewal



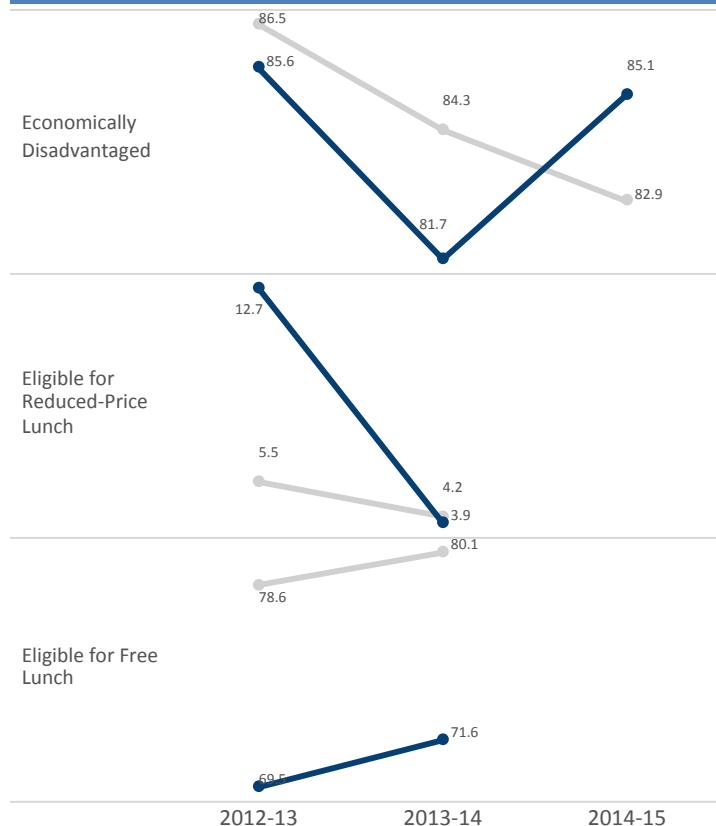
Persistence in Enrollment



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.

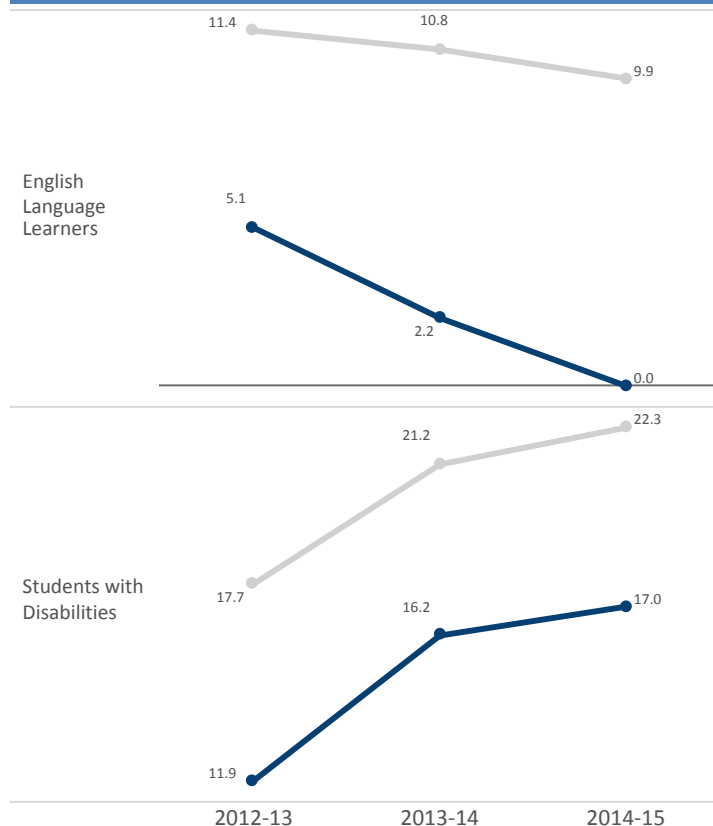
APPENDIX A: SISULU-WALKER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



The charts show the trends in enrollment in the **school** and the **district** for each subgroup over the charter term. Reduced-Price and Free Lunch data are not available for 2014-15. Economically disadvantaged includes those students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price lunch among other qualifying income assistance programs.

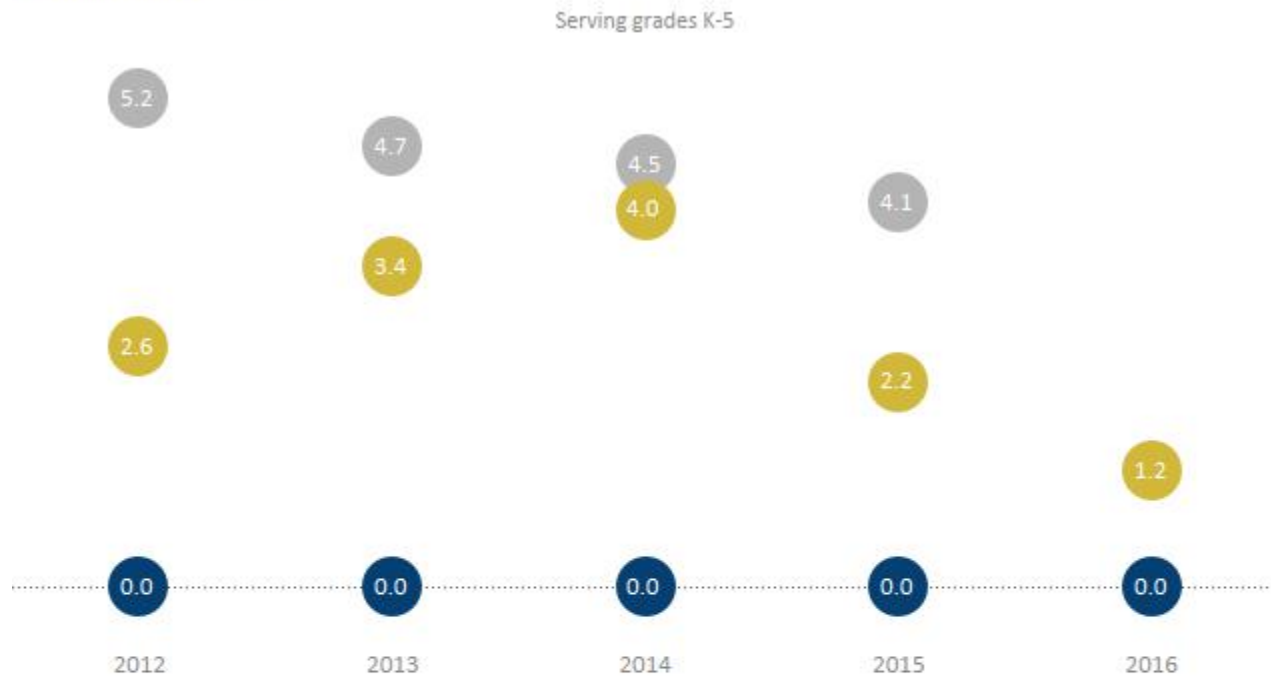
Student Demographics: Special Populations



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

APPENDIX A: SISULU-WALKER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Suspensions: Sisulu Walker Charter School's **in school suspension rate** and **out of 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 12th 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 durations 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.

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX A: SISULU-WALKER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

School Characteristics

School Year	Chartered Enrollment	Actual Enrollment ¹⁸	Actual as a Percentage of Chartered Enrollment	Proposed Grades	Actual Grades
1999-2000	247	245	99%	K-2	K-2
2000-01	347	340	98%	K-3	K-3
2001-02	322	299	93%	K-4	1-4
2002-03	327	290	89%	K-5	K, 2-5
2003-04	300	300	100%	K-6	K, 3-5
2004-05	225	225	100%	1, 4-5	1, 4-5
2005-06	225	230	102%	K-2, 5	K-2, 5
2006-07	262	241	92%	K-3	K-3
2007-08	262	267	102%	1-4	K-4
2008-09	262	260	99%	2-5	K-5
2009-10	262	270	103%	K, 2-5	K-5
2010-11	262	266	102%	K-5	K-5
2011-12	270	270	100%	K-5	K-5
2012-13	270	238	88%	K-5	K-5
2013-14	270	230	85%	K-5	K-5
2014-15	270	238	88%	K-5	K-5
2015-16	270	242	90%	K-5	K-5

Key Design Elements

Element	Evident?
Extended blocks of instruction in ELA and mathematics using the workshop model;	+
Curriculum that includes research-proven, standards based curriculum programs in ELA, mathematics, science and social studies;	+
Comprehensive and on-going staff development (including building relationships with Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project) in ELA and mathematics curricula implementation and general classroom strategies;	+
Civics education, life skills, and service learning projects to instill the principles of public service, character education, financial literacy and a commitment to the community; and,	+
Developing students' knowledge of the arts through excellent staff in music, visual arts and after school.	+

¹⁸ Source: Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

APPENDIX A: SISULU-WALKER SCHOOL OVERVIEW

School Leaders

School Year(s)	Name(s) and Title(s)
1999-2000	Berthe Faustin, Principal
2000-01 to 2002-03	Frederick A. Burkett, Principal
2003-04 to 2004-05	Norma Figueroa-Hurwitz, Principal
2005-06 to 2008-09	Karen Jones, Principal
2009-10 to 2011-12	Dr. Dawn Cejas, Principal
2012-13 to Present	Michelle Haynes, Principal

Parent Satisfaction: Survey Results

Response Rate: 51%

Rigorous Instruction: 90%

Effective School Leadership: 88%

Supportive Environment: 92%

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Date
1999-2000	First-Year Visit	June 1, 2000
2000-01	Evaluation Visit	May 9, 2001
2001-02	Evaluation Visit (External)	May 28-29, 2002
2003-04	Initial Renewal Visit	September 30 – October 2, 2003
2005-06	Subsequent Renewal Visit	November 30, 2005
2008-09	Evaluation Visit	May 5, 2009
2010-11	Subsequent Renewal Visit	November 4, 2010
2015-16	Subsequent Renewal Visit	November 4-5, 2015

Conduct of the Renewal Visit

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
November 4-5, 2015	Natasha Howard, PhD	Managing Director of Program
	Aaron Campbell	Senior Analyst
	Jennifer David-Lang	External Consultant

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Appendix B

School Performance Summaries

APPENDIX B: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARIES

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts

Sisulu-Walker Charter School



ABSOLUTE MEASURES

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.

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.

COMPARATIVE MEASURES

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.

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.

GROWTH MEASURE

5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.

2012-13 Grades Served: K-5				MET	2013-14 Grades Served: K-5				MET	2014-15 Grades Served: K-5				MET
Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)			Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)			Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		
3	11.4 (35)	12.9 (31)		NA	3	28.6 (42)	28.6 (35)		NA	3	28.8 (52)	28.6 (42)		NO
4	20.8 (24)	23.8 (21)			4	24.1 (29)	22.2 (27)			4	25.6 (43)	18.8 (32)		
5	24.0 (25)	27.3 (22)			5	4.8 (21)	4.8 (21)			5	9.1 (22)	9.5 (21)		
6	(0)	(0)			6	(0)	(0)			6	(0)	(0)		
7	(0)	(0)			7	(0)	(0)			7	(0)	(0)		
8	(0)	(0)			8	(0)	(0)			8	(0)	(0)		
All	17.9 (84)	20.3 (74)			All	21.7 (92)	20.5 (83)			All	23.9 (117)	21.1 (95)		
Grades	PI	AMO			Grades	PLI	AMO		NO	Grades	PLI	AMO		NO
3-5	74				3-5	87	89			3-5	88	97		
Comparison: Manhattan District 5				YES	Comparison: Manhattan District 5				YES	Comparison: Manhattan District 5				YES
Grades	School	District			Grades	School	District			Grades	School	District		
3-5	20.3	12.0			3-5	20.5	14.4			3-5	21.1	13.5		
% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	NO
87.2	17.9	18.8	-0.07		76.3	21.7	24.1	-0.23		82.4	23.9	20.6	0.24	
Grades	School	State		YES	Grades	School	State		NO	Grades	School	State		NO
4	67.2				4	53.4				4	38.2			
5	51.6				5	39.0				5	37.4			
6	0.0				6	0.0				6	0.0			
7	0.00				7	0.0				7	0.0			
8	0.0				8	0.0				8	0.0			
All	59.2	50.0			All	47.2	50.0			All	37.9	50.0		

APPENDIX B: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARIES

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Sisulu-Walker Charter School



	2012-13 Grades Served: K-5			MET	2013-14 Grades Served: K-5			MET	2014-15 Grades Served: K-5			MET
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)	
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u> 1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	3	28.6 (35)	25.8 (31)	NA	3	42.9 (42)	42.9 (35)	NA	3	40.0 (50)	40.0 (40)	NO
	4	33.3 (24)	38.1 (21)		4	41.4 (29)	37.0 (27)		4	53.5 (43)	50.0 (32)	
	5	20.0 (25)	22.7 (22)		5	28.6 (21)	28.6 (21)		5	31.8 (22)	33.3 (21)	
	6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)		6	(0)	(0)	
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)	
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)	
	All	27.4 (84)	28.4 (74)		All	39.1 (92)	37.3 (83)		All	43.5 (115)	41.9 (93)	
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	PI	AMO		Grades	PLI	AMO	YES	Grades	PLI	AMO	YES
	3-5	100			3-5	127	86		3-5	123	94	
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Manhattan District 5			YES	Comparison: Manhattan District 5			YES	Comparison: Manhattan District 5			YES
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District	
	3-5	28.4	13.6		3-5	37.3	16.8		3-5	41.9	17.1	
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.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	YES	% ED	Actual	Predicted	YES	% ED	Actual	Predicted	YES
	87.2	27.4	22.0		76.3	39.1	33.1		82.4	43.5	29.9	
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	Grades	School	State	YES	Grades	School	State	YES	Grades	School	State	NO
	4	61.9			4	62.6			4	48.4		
	5	56.9			5	54.2			5	39.4		
	6	0.0			6	0.0			6	0.0		
	7	0.0			7	0.0			7	0.0		
	8	0.0			8	0.0			8	0.0		
	All	59.3	50.0		All	59.1	50.0		All	45.3	50.0	

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Appendix C

District Comments

APPENDIX C: DISTRICT COMMENTS

The Institute has received no district or public comments.

Appendix D

School Fiscal Dashboard

APPENDIX D: SCHOOL FISCAL DASHBOARD



Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem

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**

Opened 1999-00

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 1	251,202	45,008	219,467	230,025	490,249
Grants and Contracts Receivable	72,177	128,806	50,282	69,829	11,336
Accounts Receivable	23,512	1,115	2,799	-	-
Prepaid Expenses	67,078	40,536	58,440	41,613	39,784
Contributions and Other Receivables	3,060	-	-	-	-
Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1	417,029	215,465	330,988	341,467	541,369
Property, Building and Equipment, net	101,881	83,701	88,366	68,531	62,613
Other Assets	37,500	37,500	37,500	37,500	37,500
Total Assets - GRAPH 1	556,410	336,666	456,854	447,498	641,482

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	65,850	125,760	131,280	52,252	34,733
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	196,113	205,288	198,019	177,909	206,648
Deferred Revenue	36,768	-	27,054	-	-
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	9,872	-	-	-
Other	20,902	-	56,611	1,394	-
Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1	319,633	340,920	412,964	231,555	241,381
L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1	319,633	340,920	412,964	231,555	241,381

Unrestricted	236,777	(4,254)	43,890	215,943	400,101
Temporarily restricted	-	-	-	-	-
Total Net Assets	236,777	(4,254)	43,890	215,943	400,101
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	556,410	336,666	456,854	447,498	641,482

Resident Student Enrollment	3,581,113	3,683,945	3,189,755	3,249,175	3,273,317
Students with Disabilities	-	38,098	143,591	-	251,561

State and local	19,948	21,450	22,095	18,831	19,437
Federal - Title and IDEA	194,203	141,093	154,009	140,871	110,300
Federal - Other	-	-	-	-	-
Other	7,611	-	-	-	-
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	111,406	87,950	93,244	95,452	-
Total Operating Revenue	3,914,281	3,972,536	3,602,694	3,504,329	3,654,615

Regular Education	3,185,941	3,272,300	2,531,875	2,303,932	2,358,717
SPED	191,616	284,062	276,787	248,572	357,127
Regular Education & SPED (combined)	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Program Services	3,377,558	3,556,362	2,808,662	2,552,504	2,715,844
Management and General	645,560	685,008	771,976	807,553	812,455
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 & 4	4,023,118	4,241,370	3,580,638	3,360,057	3,528,299

Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations	(108,837)	(268,834)	22,056	144,272	126,316
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Contributions	-	27,429	25,877	27,595	57,483
Fundraising	500	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	505	375	211	188	359
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-
Total Support and Other Revenue	1,005	27,804	26,088	27,783	57,842

Total Unrestricted Revenue	3,915,286	4,000,340	3,359,434	3,276,958	3,712,457
Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue	-	-	269,348	255,154	-
Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 & 3	3,915,286	4,000,340	3,628,782	3,532,112	3,712,457

Change in Net Assets	(107,832)	(241,030)	48,144	172,055	184,158
Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2	344,608	236,776	(4,256)	43,888	215,943
Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	-
Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2	236,776	(4,254)	43,888	215,943	400,101

APPENDIX D: SCHOOL FISCAL DASHBOARD



Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem

SCHOOL INFORMATION - (Continued)

Functional Expense Breakdown

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Personnel Service					
Administrative Staff Personnel	436,946	504,256	389,071	350,299	417,749
Instructional Personnel	1,364,830	1,358,121	1,098,849	997,734	1,205,639
Non-Instructional Personnel	112,042	132,904	135,427	131,265	201,540
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-
Total Salaries and Staff	1,913,818	1,995,281	1,623,347	1,479,298	1,824,928
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	520,263	494,845	387,881	338,829	384,587
Retirement	-	44,769	44,205	33,352	39,926
Management Company Fees	391,095	398,882	348,443	338,808	357,895
Building and Land Rent / Lease	477,405	478,261	481,181	479,544	480,284
Staff Development	41,295	92,045	20,554	22,335	21,509
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	131,955	165,285	88,008	105,569	50,765
Marketing / Recruitment	2,496	2,640	7,833	12,544	5,867
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	210,685	244,594	184,432	160,654	103,935
Depreciation	29,835	39,540	34,234	25,906	22,381
Other	304,274	285,227	360,520	363,218	236,222
Total Expenses	4,023,120	4,241,369	3,580,638	3,360,057	3,528,299

SCHOOL ANALYSIS

ENROLLMENT

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Chartered Enroll	262	270	270	270	270
Revised Enroll	-	-	-	-	-
Actual Enroll - GRAPH 4	266	270	238	230	238
Chartered Grades	K-5	K-5	K-5	K-5	K-5
Revised Grades	-	-	-	-	-

Primary School District: New York City

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Increase over prior year	8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	1.7%

PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

Revenue

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Operating	14,715	14,729	15,165	15,250	15,356
Other Revenue and Support	4	103	110	121	243
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	14,719	14,832	15,275	15,371	15,599

Expenses

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Program Services	12,698	13,186	11,823	11,108	11,411
Management and General, Fundraising	2,427	2,540	3,250	3,514	3,414
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	15,125	15,725	15,072	14,622	14,825
% of Program Services	84.0%	83.8%	78.4%	76.0%	77.0%
% of Management and Other	16.0%	16.2%	21.6%	24.0%	23.0%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5	-2.7%	-5.7%	1.3%	5.1%	5.2%

Student to Faculty Ratio

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ratio	9.2	9.3	10.3	11.5	11.9

Faculty to Admin Ratio

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Ratio	4.1	4.1	3.8	4.0	4.0

Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Score	1.2	(0.2)	0.5	2.0	2.2
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	Fiscally Adequate	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Needs Monitoring	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong

Working Capital - GRAPH 7

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Net Working Capital	97,396	(125,455)	(81,976)	109,912	299,988
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	2.5%	-3.1%	-2.4%	3.4%	8.1%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	1.3	0.6	0.8	1.5	2.2
Risk (Low > 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Good

Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Score	1.1	0.5	0.7	1.3	2.1
Risk (Low > 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	Good	Poor	Poor	Good	Good

Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Score	0.6	1.0	0.9	0.5	0.4
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	MEDIUM	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	LOW
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Excellent

Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Score	0.7	0.1	0.7	0.8	1.7
Risk (High > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good

Average -
5 Yrs.
OR Charter
Term

15,043
116
15,159

12,045
3,029
15,074
79.8%
20.2%
0.6%

1.2
Fiscally Adequate

59,973
1.7%
1.3
HIGH
Poor

1.1
Good

0.7
MEDIUM
Good

0.8
HIGH
Poor

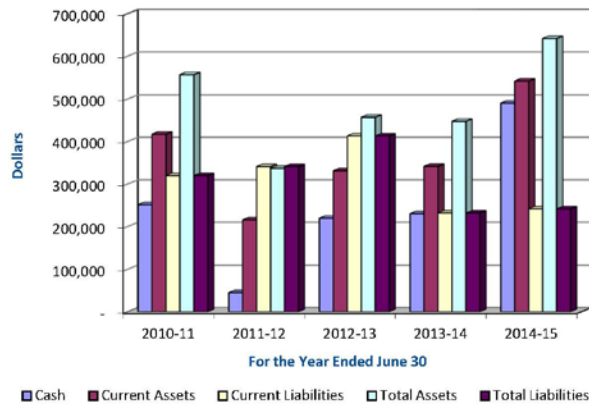
APPENDIX D: SCHOOL FISCAL DASHBOARD



Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem

GRAPH 1

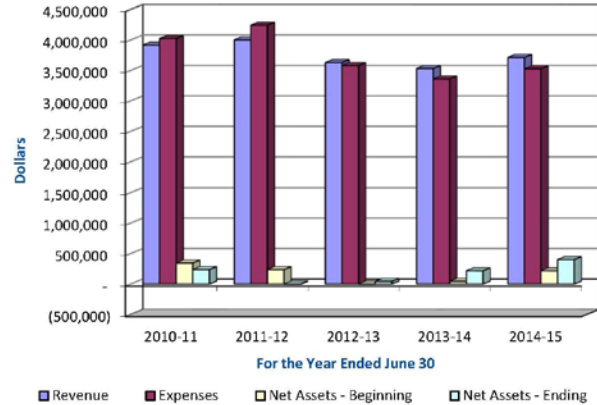
Cash, Assets and Liabilities



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

GRAPH 2

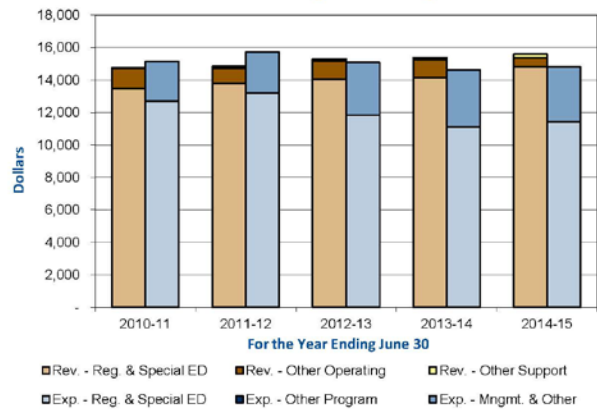
Revenue, Expenses and Net Assets



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

GRAPH 3

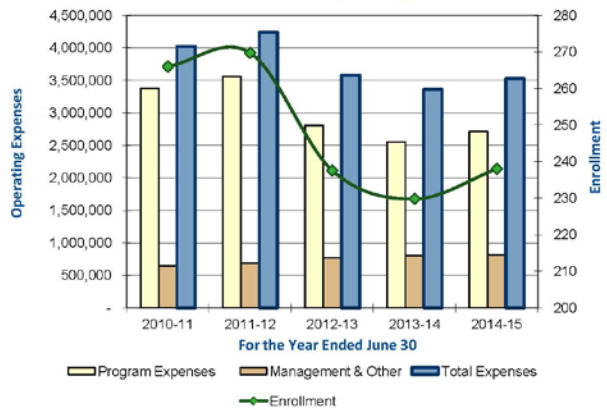
Revenue & Expenses Per Pupil



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

GRAPH 4

Enrollment vs. Operating Expenses



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

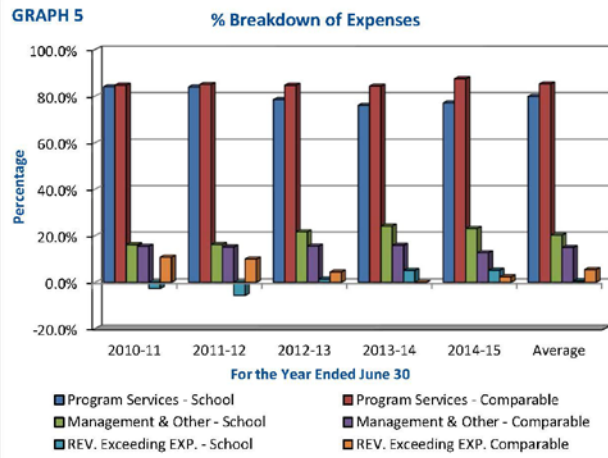
APPENDIX D: SCHOOL FISCAL DASHBOARD



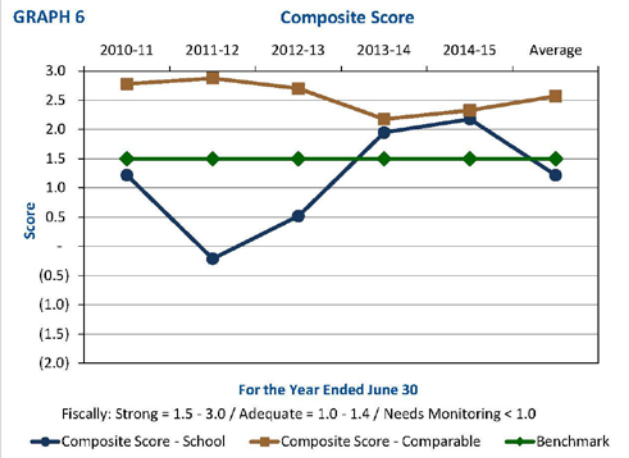
Sisulu-Walker Charter School of Harlem

Comparable School, Region or Network: New York City & Long Island Schools

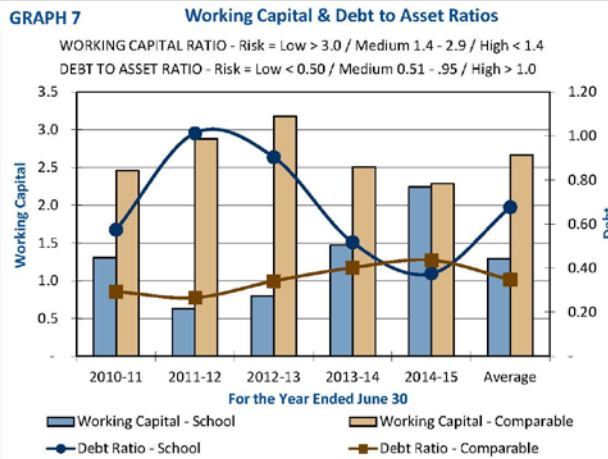
* Average = Average - 5 Yrs. OR Charter Term



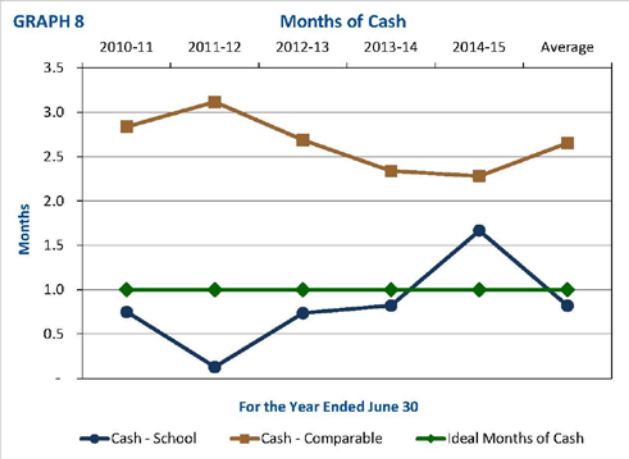
This chart illustrates the percentage expense breakdown between program services and management & others as well as the percentage of revenues exceeding expenses. Ideally the percentage expense for program services will far exceed that of the management & other expense. The percentage of revenues exceeding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



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.



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.



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.