



New Hope Academy Charter School

School Evaluation Report 2012-13

Visit Date: March 19-20, 2013

Final Report Issued: May 17, 2013

Charter Schools Institute
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INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report includes four components. The first section, titled School Overview, provides descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. The second section provides background information on the conduct of the evaluation visit, including the date of the visit and information about the evaluation team and puts the visit in the context of the school's current charter cycle. The third section provides the school's 2011-12 Performance Review and Summaries, which gives an analysis of the attainment of the key academic goals in the school's Accountability Plan. Finally, a fourth section entitled School Evaluation Visit presents an analysis of evidence collected during the school visit. Following these sections, an appendix provides the State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks (the "Renewal Benchmarks").

While the Institute conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all Renewal Benchmarks near the end of a charter term, most mid-cycle evaluation visits focus on a subset of these benchmarks. These Qualitative Education Benchmarks address the academic success of the school and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization. They provide a framework for examining the quality of the educational program, focusing on teaching and learning (i.e., curriculum, instruction, and assessment), as well as organizational capacity, board oversight and governance. The SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the "Institute") uses the established criteria on a regular and ongoing basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

The report below provides benchmark conclusions and evidence to support these conclusions in order to highlight areas of concern and provide additional feedback. The Institute intends this selection of information to be an exception report, which deliberately emphasizes areas of concern. As such, limited detail and evidence about positive elements of the educational program are not an indication that the Institute does not fully recognize evidence of program effectiveness.

Because of the inherent complexity of a school organization, this School Evaluation Report does not contain a single rating or comprehensive indicator that would specify at a glance the school's prospects for renewal. It does, however, summarize the various strengths of the school and note areas in need of improvement based on the Qualitative Education Benchmarks.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	September 15, 2009
Date Initial Charter Approved by Operation of Law	February 16, 2010
School Opening Date	September 2010

Location

School Year(s)	Location(s)	Grades	District
2010 - Present	475 East 57th Street, 3 rd floor Brooklyn, NY 11203	K - 4	NYC CSD 18

Partner Organizations

	Partner Name	Partner Type	Dates of Service
Partner	Victory Schools, Inc.	EMO	2010- Present

Mission Statement

The mission of New Hope Academy Charter School ("NHACS") is to provide a safe, structured and quality learning community where our students' creativity and potential will flourish. The school enhances the learning experience of its students by integrating Science & Technology into core subject areas, the arts and various enrichment programs. The school's culture treats every child as "gifted."

Key Design Elements

- Interdisciplinary projects or reports (individual or classroom based) that highlight the concepts learned in science or technology will be required;
- Annual year-end science and technology fairs to showcase student work;
- Victory Schools, SUNY Downstate Medical Center and Medgar Evars College support teachers on a continuous basis to ensure that the curriculum appropriately infuses technology in lesson plans; and
- Enrichment activities infused into coursework at all levels through teacher created activities, inquiry-based learning, and web-based activities. Specific programs will include: character and leadership development, a mentoring program which will allow older students to mentor younger students in the school, and a debate program that will underscore the importance of reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

School Characteristics

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Revised Charter Enrollment	Actual Enrollment ¹	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades	Days of Instruction ²
2010-11	168	N/A	170	K-2	K-2	185
2011-12	240	N/A	242	K-3	K-2	180
2012-13	288	N/A	311 ³	K-4	K-4	180

Demographics

	2010-11 ⁴	
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 18 Enrollment
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0
Black or African American	99	91
Hispanic	1	7
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	0	1
White	0	1
Multiracial	0	0
Special Populations		
Students with Disabilities ⁵	N/A	N/A
English Language Learners	3	6
Free/Reduced Lunch		
Eligible for Free Lunch	68	72
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	8	8

Current Board of Trustees⁶

Board Member Name	Term Expires	Position/Committees
Bishop Orlando Findlayter	2015	Chair
Judith Rapley	2015	Vice Chair
Xiomara Flowers	2015	Secretary
Pastor Hugh Hall	2015	Grievance Chair
Raymond L. Thomas	2015	Finance Chair

¹ Source: SUNY Charter Schools Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

² Annual Visit Data Collection Form, March 2013

³ Ibid.

⁴ 2010-11 New York State Report Card. Please note that SED releases data up to a full year after the conclusion of any one school year. As such, the data presented in this table may differ from current information reported by the school and included in this report.

⁵ Source: District-level Students with Disabilities enrollment data are not available for 2010-11. SED released these district data for the first time in spring 2012. Based on the state's Empirical Analysis of Enrollment Targets, the CSD's 2011-12 Students with Disabilities enrollment was 13 percent compared to 8 percent for the school.

⁶ Source: Institute board information.

School Leader(s)

School Year	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2010-11	Kellie McLauren, Principal
2011-12 to Present	Keishea Allen, Principal

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2010-11	First Year	Institute	March 24, 2011
2012-13	Annual	Institute	March 19-20, 2013

CONDUCT OF THE SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT**Specifications**

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
March 19-20, 2013	Ron Miller, Ph.D	Executive Deputy Director for Accountability
	Adam Aberman	External Consultant

Context of the Visit

Charter Cycle	
Charter Period	3 rd Year of First Charter Term
Accountability Period ⁷	3 rd Year of First Accountability Period
Anticipated Renewal Visit	Fall 2014

⁷ Because the Institute makes a renewal decision in the last year of a Charter Period, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of the Charter Period. For initial renewals, the Accountability Period is the first four years of the Charter Period. For subsequent renewals, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous Charter Period through the next to last year of the current Charter Period.

2011-12 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Performance Summary

In 2011-12, the second year of New Hope Academy Charter School's ("New Hope's") four-year Accountability Period and the first year that it administered the state testing program, the school met its key Accountability Plan goals in English language Arts ("ELA") and mathematics. As the school only administered the state tests to the third grade, the results are based on limited data. The school's science goal is not yet applicable, because the school has not yet administered the 4th grade science exam. The State Education Department has not yet determined if the school is in good standing with respect to meeting the requirements of the NCLB accountability system.

English Language Arts

Based on four of the five measures in its ELA goal, New Hope met the goal by meeting three measures and coming close to meeting the fourth. The school met the Annual Measurable Objective ("AMO") set by the state. In comparison to demographically similar schools statewide, it performed better than predicted and outperformed the local community school district. With 71 percent of the third graders performing at proficiency, the school came close to meeting the absolute target of 75 percent proficiency.⁸ Because New Hope administered the test for the first time, a year-to-year growth measure was not yet available.

Mathematics

Based on four of the five measures in its math goal, New Hope met the goal by meeting all four measures. The school exceeded the absolute target with 95 percent of students performing at proficiency.⁹ The school met the AMO set by the state. In comparison to demographically similar schools statewide, it performed better than predicted to a large extent and outperformed the local community school district. Again, results on the year-to-year growth target were not available.

⁸ For evaluating the goals' absolute measure, the Institute has again adapted SED's "time-adjusted" math cut score for 2011-12 as it had in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

⁹ For evaluating the goals' absolute measure, the Institute has again adapted SED's "time-adjusted" math cut score for 2011-12 as it had in 2009-10 and 2010-11.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts
New Hope Academy Charter School



	2009-10			MET	2010-11			MET	2011-12			MET			
	Grades Served:				Grades Served:				Grades Served: K-3						
	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 or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.	3	(0)	(0)	3	(0)	(0)	3	68.9 (45)	71.4 (42)	NO					
	4	(0)	(0)	4	(0)	(0)	4	(0)	(0)						
	5	(0)	(0)	5	(0)	(0)	5	(0)	(0)						
	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	(0)	(0)	All	(0)	(0)	All	68.9 (45)	71.4 (42)						
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO	Grades	PI	AMO	Grades	PI	AMO	YES					
							3	140	135						
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison:			Comparison:			Comparison: Brooklyn District 18			YES					
	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District	Grades	School	District						
							3	54.8	45.7						
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at or above Level 3 on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES		
									75.5	51.1	41.4	0.60			
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. The year-to-year school-wide cohort of students will meet the target of reducing by one-sixth the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates grade-level cohort met target.	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result
	3					3					3				
	4					4					4				
	5					5					5				
	6					6					6				
	7					7					7				
	8					8					8				
	All					All					All				

TACSThe Institute uses SED's "time adjusted cut scores", or "TACS", for evaluating the designated measures in the respective years. Although a lower standard than that used before 2009-10, TACS provide continuity with the standard used in previous years. Data Sources: SED data; school data workbooks; the Institute's student test database.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

New Hope Academy Charter School



	2009-10 Grades Served:			MET	2010-11 Grades Served:			MET	2011-12 Grades Served: K-3			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 or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.	3	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)		3	95.5 (44)	95.2 (42)						
	4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)						
	5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)		5	(0)	(0)						
	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	(0)	(0)		All	(0)	(0)		All	95.5 (44)	95.2 (42)	YES					
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.	Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO	YES					
									3	161	148						
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u> 3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison:				Comparison:				Comparison: Brooklyn District 18								
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District						
										3	66.7	49.1	YES				
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted level of students at or above Level 3 on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size		% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size		% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	YES		
											75.5	68.1	48.8	1.02			
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u> 5. The year-to-year school-wide cohort of students will meet the target of reducing by one-sixth the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates grade-level cohort met target.	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result		Gr	N	Base	Target	Result		Gr	N	Base	Target	Result
	3						3						3				
	4						4						4				
	5						5						5				
	6						6						6				
	7						7						7				
	8						8						8				
	All						All						All				

TACSThe Institute uses SED's "time adjusted cut scores", or "TACS", for evaluating the designated measures in the respective years. Although a lower standard than that used before 2009-10, TACS provide continuity with the standard used in previous years. Data Sources: SED data; school data workbooks; the Institute's student test database.

SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT

Benchmark Conclusions and Evidence

1. B Use of Assessment Data

New Hope has an assessment system that improves student learning.

- New Hope regularly administers computer-adapted Scantron tests in ELA and math, the Fountas & Pinnell reading fluency assessment and on-demand writing assessments. It administers these school-wide assessments three times per year. School leaders claim that they have determined the alignment of the Scantron assessment with the Common Core State Standards.
- School leaders monitor the reliability of the Fountas & Pinnell running record evaluations. However, because school leaders do not monitor the scoring of writing assessments, their reliability in assessing grade level performance is unclear.
- The school regularly distributes Scantron assessment results to teachers, school leaders and board members. The chair of the board's academic committee actively reviews school assessment results.
- School leaders set aside a half day at the end of each assessment cycle to review assessment results within and across grade levels. Teachers use assessment results to meet students' needs by grouping students, identifying students for special intervention and re-teaching as needed.
- The school regularly communicates to parents/guardians about their students' progress and growth through report cards and progress reports issued six times per year.

1. C Curriculum

New Hope's leaders and grade-level teams support teachers in their instructional planning; however, the full range of relevant curriculum documents are not yet in place.

- The school is introducing a new ELA curriculum that it has determined is aligned to Common Core state standards. As such, the ELA curriculum is in transition, with one Kindergarten classroom fully piloting the implementation of the new curriculum. The school continues to use the same math curriculum. The school is deliberate in attempting to align the curricula to state standards.
- The school's supporting curriculum documents are unit plans in ELA and math that the staff developer generates with grade-level teams based on the school's current commercial material, state standards and assessment results. The school does not have a scope and sequence or pacing guides in place for ELA and math.
- The school does not yet have a systematic process for selecting, developing and reviewing its curriculum documents.
- Teachers plan lessons collaboratively. They also use an online lesson planning platform through which the entire school community can access lesson plans and school leaders provide regular feedback. In addition, through the lesson planning tool, teachers can continually self-monitor their implementation of the full range of state standards.

1. D Pedagogy

Adequate instruction is evident throughout the school.

- Teachers deliver purposeful lessons. The learning objectives generally build on students' previous skills and knowledge. Teachers implement planned lessons with fidelity generally following the school's gradual release instructional format.
- Teachers regularly check for student understanding through questioning techniques and circulating around the room during independent work. Some teachers evaluate learning at the end of a lesson.
- While teachers provide some opportunities for students to elaborate on answers, teachers do not regularly challenge students to defend and elaborate on their responses. Students actively interact with peers when engaging in learning centers. However, most activities do not demand higher order thinking or problem solving skills.
- Teachers generally make efficient use of learning time with appropriate pacing and on-task student behavior.
- Teachers have effective classroom management techniques and routines that create a consistent focus on academic achievement. Students behave according to rules and expectations.
- While there is a school-wide emphasis on writing, reviewed writing samples in most grades do not contain age-appropriate structure and coherence. The school has not implemented a fully developed writing program with clear grade-level expectations and a robust writing process that includes drafting and editing.

1. E. Instructional Leadership

New Hope is establishing strong instructional leadership.

- New Hope's leadership communicates expectations for quality instruction through frequent informal observations, modeling best practices and with an ongoing focus on school-wide assessment results. Leaders have recently established a school-wide expectation of a 90-percent proficiency rate in ELA and Math.
- With the principal's oversight, this year the school has expanded the instructional leadership to include a full-time staff developer, in addition to the assistant principal. The current incumbents, with clearly defined roles, provide adequate support in the development of teaching staff.
- The principal and assistant principal provide sustained supervision through their frequent informal teacher observations and systematic feedback. The assistant principal and staff developer provide sustained coaching to enable teachers to implement the school's instructional delivery model. Their effectiveness in improving student achievement has yet to be established.
- Through common preparation periods, instructional leaders provide opportunities for teachers to develop grade-level lesson plans. School leaders regularly provide support to the grade-level teams, mainly in curriculum development and assessment data analysis.
- Professional development activities are interrelated with classroom practice: school leaders and teachers identify professional development topics based on observations, self-reports and

assessment data; in addition, school leaders follow up on some professional development topics by examining their implementation in the classroom.

- Instructional leaders regularly conduct teacher evaluations with clear criteria. School leaders are mindful of the results and monitor areas for professional growth.
- Instructional leaders hold teachers accountable for quality instruction and student achievement by putting teachers, when needed, on professional improvement plans and declining to renew their contract for the following year.

1. F. At-Risk Students

New Hope meets the educational needs of the small number of identified at-risk students.

- The school uses procedures for identifying at-risk students including students with disabilities and those struggling academically based on teacher recommendations and an analysis of the Fountas & Pinnell and Scantron results.
- The school has pull-out intervention programs for 60 academically struggling students (less than 20 percent of the total student population); it provides SETSS to four students with disabilities and related services to another 24 students. The school has enrolled English Language Learners (“ELLs”) in past years but reports having no ELL students in the current year. While intervention services may be adequate for the existing identified at-risk populations, the number of students with disabilities and ELLs is below that of the local district and the school does not have a targeted outreach plan for enrolling more students from these sub-groups.
- The school does not adequately monitor the progress and success of at-risk students using school-wide assessment data.
- Teachers are aware of their students’ progress toward meeting IEP goals.
- The school does not yet provide adequate training and professional development to meet the needs of students who do not readily respond to general classroom interventions.
- The school provides limited opportunity for coordination between classroom teachers and at-risk program staff.

2. C. Organizational Capacity

New Hope’s organization supports the delivery of the educational program.

- In the third year of the charter period and with over half of the teaching staff new to the school, New Hope has established a stable administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.
- The organizational structure establishes distinct lines of accountability with clearly defined responsibilities. Teachers understand the respective roles of the principal, assistant principal and staff developer. The entire teaching staff is clear about the roles of teaching assistants who are also responsible for providing instruction.
- Using the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports behavioral protocol and the Six Pillars of Character, the school has a clear student discipline system in place that is consistently applied.

- The school is adequately staffed with a teaching assistant in all kindergarten through second grade classrooms, ample curricular materials, a well-equipped science lab and a notable amount of technology to support instructional.
- The school is faithful to its key design element of delivering a school-wide science and technology program.
- The school maintains adequate student enrollment with a waiting list of 247 students from last spring's lottery.
- The school does not have procedures in place to monitor its progress toward meeting enrollment and retention targets for special education students, ELLs and students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, and does not have a plan in place to adjust its recruitment efforts.
- The principal is reflective in monitoring the delivery of the instructional program and makes changes if necessary.



State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks

Version 5.0, May 2012

Introduction

The State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks¹⁰ (the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”) serve two primary functions at renewal:

- They provide a framework for the Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) to gather and evaluate evidence to determine whether a school has made an adequate case for renewal. In turn, this evidence assists the Institute in deciding if it can make the required legal and other findings in order to reach a positive recommendation for renewal. For example, the various benchmarks that the Institute uses to determine whether the school has had fiscally responsible practices in place during the last charter period allow the Institute to determine with greater precision whether the school will operate in a fiscally sound manner during the next charter period, a finding that the New York Charter Schools Act requires the SUNY Trustees to make.
- At the same time that the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks provide a framework for the Institute to collect and review evidence, they also provide the school with a guide to understanding the Institute’s evaluative criteria. As the Institute uses the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks (or some sub-set of them) as the framework for conducting its ongoing school evaluation visits, school leaders should be fully aware of the content of the Benchmarks at the time of renewal.

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks are organized into four inter-connected renewal questions that

¹⁰ Research on public school reform, known as the effective schools movement, has embraced the premise that, given certain organizing and cultural characteristics, schools can teach all children the intended curriculum and hold them to high academic standards. Over the decades, the accumulated research into effective schools has yielded a set of common characteristics that all effective schools share. These characteristics are so consistently prevalent among successful schools that they have come to be known as the *Correlates of Effective Schools*. The Renewal Benchmarks adapt and elaborate on these correlates.

each school must answer when submitting a renewal application. The benchmarks further reflect the interwoven nature of schools from an academic, organizational, fiscal and/or legal perspective. For example, the Institute could reasonably place many of the academic benchmarks under the heading of organizational effectiveness. More generally, some redundancy exists because the Institute looks at the same issue from different perspectives.

Precisely how the Institute uses the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, during both the renewal process and throughout the charter period, is explained in greater detail in the *Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University of New York* (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”), available on the Institute’s website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm. Responses to frequently asked questions about the Institute’s use of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks appear below:

- The Institute does not have a point system for recommending renewal. A school cannot simply tally up the number of positive benchmark statements in order to determine the Institute’s recommendation.
 - Some benchmarks are weighed more heavily than others. In particular, the Institute gives the greatest weight to how well the school has met its academic Accountability Plan goals.
 - Despite the fact that the Accountability Plan comprises only a single benchmark, a school’s performance on that benchmark is critical. In fact, it is so important that while the Institute may recommend non-renewal for fiscal and organizational failures (if sufficiently serious), excellence in these areas will not excuse poor academic performance.
- The Institute does not use every benchmark during every kind of renewal review, and how the benchmarks are used differs depending on a school’s circumstances. For example, the Qualitative Education Benchmarks (Benchmarks 1B-1F, 2C and 2D) are given far less weight in making a renewal decision on schools that the Institute has previously renewed. Similarly, less weight is accorded to these benchmarks during an initial renewal review where a school has consistently met its academic Accountability Plan goals.
 - The Institute also may not consider every indicator subsumed under a benchmark when determining if a school has met that benchmark, given the school’s stage of development or its previous track record.
- Aside from Benchmark 1A on academic Accountability Plan goals (which is singular in its importance), no school should fear that a failure to meet every element of every benchmark means that it is not in a position to make a case for renewal. To the contrary, the Institute has yet to see a school that performs perfectly in every respect. The Institute appreciates that the benchmarks set a very high standard collectively. While the Institute certainly hopes and expects that schools aim high, it is understood that a school’s reach will necessarily exceed its grasp in at least some aspects.

In this fifth edition of the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, the Institute has made some revisions to the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, namely those benchmarks used for ongoing school evaluation

visits, to streamline the collection of evidence. For example, the Institute has incorporated Student Order and Discipline into Pedagogy, and Professional Development into Instructional Leadership. The Institute has rewritten some of the overarching benchmark statements to capture the most salient aspects of school effectiveness, organizational viability, legal compliance, and fiscal soundness. Some of the bulleted indicators within benchmarks have been recast or eliminated. Finally, the Institute has added some indicators to align the benchmarks with changes in the Charter Schools Act (e.g., provisions in meeting enrollment and retention targets when assigned and abiding by the General Municipal Law).

It is important that the entire school community understand the renewal process. All members of a school's leadership team and board should carefully review both the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks and the SUNY Renewal Policies. Note that a renewal overview document for parents, teachers and community members is also available on the Institute's website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm. Please do not hesitate to contact the Institute with any questions.

State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks

	Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1A Academic Accountability Plan Goals	<p>Over the Accountability Period, the school has met or come close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.</p> <p>The Institute determines the extent to which the school has met the Accountability Plan goals in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English language arts; • mathematics; • science; • social studies (high school only); • NCLB; • high school graduation and college preparation (if applicable); and • optional academic goals included by the school.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1B Use of Assessment Data	<p>The school has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school regularly administers valid and reliable assessments aligned to the school’s curriculum and state performance standards; • the school has a valid and reliable process for scoring and analyzing assessments; • the school makes assessment data accessible to teachers, school leaders and board members; • teachers use assessment results to meet students’ needs by adjusting classroom instruction, grouping students and/or identifying students for special intervention; • school leaders use assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness and to develop professional development and coaching strategies; and • the school regularly communicates to parents/guardians about their students’ progress and growth.

<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1C</p> <p>Curriculum</p>	<p>The school’s curriculum supports teachers in their instructional planning.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has a curriculum framework with student performance expectations that provides a fixed, underlying structure, aligned to state standards and across grades; • in addition to the framework, the school has supporting tools (i.e., curriculum maps or scope and sequence documents) that provide a bridge between the curriculum framework and lesson plans; • teachers know what to teach and when to teach it based on these documents; • the school has a process for selecting, developing and reviewing its curriculum documents and its resources for delivering the curriculum; and • teachers plan purposeful and focused lessons.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1D</p> <p>Pedagogy</p>	<p>High quality instruction is evident throughout the school.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives aligned to the school’s curriculum; • teachers regularly and effectively use techniques to check for student understanding; • teachers include opportunities in their lessons to challenge students with questions and activities that develop depth of understanding and higher-order thinking and problem solving skills; • teachers maximize learning time (e.g., appropriate pacing, on-task student behavior, clear lesson focus and clear directions to students); transitions are efficient; and • teachers have effective classroom management techniques and routines that create a consistent focus on academic achievement.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1E</p> <p>Instructional Leadership</p>	<p>The school has strong instructional leadership.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school’s leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge and pedagogical skills) and in which teachers believe that all students can succeed; • the instructional leadership is adequate to support the development of the teaching staff; • instructional leaders provide sustained, systemic and effective coaching and supervision that improves teachers’ instructional

	<p>effectiveness;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructional leaders provide opportunities and guidance for teachers to plan curriculum and instruction within and across grade levels; • instructional leaders implement a comprehensive professional development program that develops the competencies and skills of all teachers; • professional development activities are interrelated with classroom practice; • instructional leaders regularly conduct teacher evaluations with clear criteria that accurately identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses; and • instructional leaders hold teachers accountable for quality instruction and student achievement.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 1F</p> <p>At-Risk Students</p>	<p>The school meets the educational needs of at-risk students.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school uses clear procedures for identifying at-risk students including students with disabilities, English language learners and those struggling academically; • the school has adequate intervention programs to meet the needs of at-risk students; • general education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the general education program; • the school adequately monitors the progress and success of at-risk students; • teachers are aware of their students' progress toward meeting IEP goals, achieving English proficiency or school-based goals for struggling students; • the school provides adequate training and professional development to identify at-risk students and to help teachers meet students' needs; and • the school provides opportunities for coordination between classroom teachers and at-risk program staff including the school nurse, if applicable.

	Renewal Question 2 Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2A Mission & Key Design Elements	<p>The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school faithfully follows its mission; and • the school has implemented its key design elements.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2B Parents & Students	<p>Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school regularly communicates each child's academic performance results to families; • families are satisfied with the school; and • parents keep their children enrolled year-to-year.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2C Organizational Capacity	<p>The school organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has established an administrative structure with staff, operational systems, policies and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program; • the organizational structure establishes distinct lines of accountability with clearly defined roles and responsibilities; • the school has a clear student discipline system in place at the administrative level that is consistently applied; • the school retains quality staff; • the school has allocated sufficient resources to support the achievement of goals; • the school maintains adequate student enrollment; • the school has procedures in place to monitor its progress toward meeting enrollment and retention targets for special education students, ELLs and students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch, and adjusts its recruitment efforts accordingly; and • the school regularly monitors and evaluates the school's programs and makes changes if necessary.

<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2D</p> <p>Board Oversight</p>	<p>The school board works effectively to achieve the school’s Accountability Plan goals.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • board members possess adequate skills and have put in place structures and procedures with which to govern the school and oversee management of day-to-day operations in order to ensure the school’s future as an academically successful, financially healthy and legally compliant organization; • the board requests and receives sufficient information to provide rigorous oversight of the school’s program and finances; • it establishes clear priorities, objectives and long-range goals, (including Accountability Plan, fiscal, facilities and fundraising), and has in place benchmarks for tracking progress as well as a process for their regular review and revision; • the board successfully recruits, hires and retains key personnel, and provides them with sufficient resources to function effectively; • the board regularly evaluates its own performance and that of the school leaders and the management company (if applicable), holding them accountable for student achievement; and • the board effectively communicates with the school community including school leadership, staff, parents/guardians and students.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2E</p> <p>Governance</p>	<p>The board implements, maintains and abides by appropriate policies, systems and processes.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the board effectively communicates with its partner or management organizations as well as key contractors such as back-office service providers and ensures that it receives value in exchange for contracts and relationships it enters into and effectively monitors such relationships; • the board takes effective action when there are organizational, leadership, management, facilities or fiscal deficiencies; or where the management or partner organization fails to meet expectations; to correct those deficiencies and puts in place benchmarks for determining if the partner organization corrects them in a timely fashion; • the board regularly reviews and updates board and school policies as needed and has in place an orientation process for new members; • the board effectively recruits and selects new members in order to

	<p>maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the board implements a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with that set forth in the charter and with the General Municipal Law—and consistently abides by them throughout the term of the charter; the board generally avoids conflicts of interest; where not possible, the board manages those conflicts in a clear and transparent manner; the board implements a process for dealing with complaints consistent with that set forth in the charter, makes the complaint policy clear to all stakeholders, and follows the policy including acting on complaints in a timely fashion; the board abides by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee election and the removal and filling of vacancies; and the board holds all meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law and records minutes for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 2F</p> <p>Legal Requirements</p>	<p>The school substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school compiles a record of substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations including, but not limited to, submitting items to the Institute in a timely manner, and meeting teacher certification (including NCLB highly qualified status) and background check requirements, FOIL and Open Meetings Law; the school substantially complies with the terms of its charter and applicable laws, rules and regulations; the school abides by the terms of its monitoring plan; the school implements effective systems and controls to ensure that it meets legal and charter requirements; the school has an active and ongoing relationship with in-house or independent legal counsel who reviews and makes recommendations on relevant policies, documents, transactions and incidents and who also handles other legal matters as needed; and the school manages any litigation appropriately and provides litigation papers to insurers and the Institute in a timely manner.

	Renewal Question 3 Is the School Fiscally Sound?
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3A Budgeting and Long Range Planning	<p>The school operates pursuant to a long-range financial plan in which it creates realistic budgets that it monitors and adjusts when appropriate.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures; • board members, school management and staff contribute to the budget process, as appropriate; • the school frequently compares its long-range fiscal plan to actual progress and adjusts it to meet changing conditions; • the school routinely analyzes budget variances; the board addresses material variances and makes necessary revisions; and • actual expenses are equal to, or less than, actual revenue with no material exceptions.
SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3B Internal Controls	<p>The school maintains appropriate internal controls and procedures.</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school follows a set of comprehensive written fiscal policies and procedures; • the school accurately records and appropriately documents transactions in accordance with management's direction, laws, regulations, grants and contracts; • the school safeguards its assets; • the school identifies/analyzes risks and takes mitigating actions; • the school has controls in place to ensure that management decisions are properly carried out and monitors and assesses controls to ensure their adequacy; • the school's trustees and employees adhere to a code of ethics; • the school ensures duties are appropriately segregated, or institutes compensating controls; • the school ensures that employees performing financial functions are appropriately qualified and adequately trained; • the school has systems in place to provide the appropriate information needed by staff and the board to make sound financial decisions and to fulfill compliance requirements; • a staff member of the school reviews grant agreements and restrictive gifts and monitors compliance with all stated

	<p>conditions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school prepares payroll according to appropriate state and federal regulations and school policy; the school ensures that employees, trustees and volunteers who handle cash and investments are bonded to help assure the safeguarding of assets; and the school takes corrective action in a timely manner to address any internal control or compliance deficiencies identified by its external auditor, the Institute, and/or the State Education Department or the Comptroller, if needed.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3C</p> <p>Financial Reporting</p>	<p>The school has complied with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and the State Education Department with required financial reports that are on time, complete and follow generally accepted accounting principles.</p> <p>The following reports have generally been filed in a timely, accurate and complete manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> annual financial statement audit reports including federal Single Audit report, if applicable; annual budgets and cash flow statements; un-audited quarterly reports of income, expenses, and enrollment; bi-monthly enrollment reports to the district and, if applicable, to the State Education Department including proper documentation regarding the level of special education services provided to students; and grant expenditure reports.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 3D</p> <p>Financial Condition</p>	<p>The school maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. Critical financial needs of the school are not dependent on variable income (grants, donations and fundraising).</p> <p>The following elements are generally present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school maintains sufficient cash on hand to pay current bills and those that are due shortly; the school maintains adequate liquid reserves to fund expenses in the event of income loss (generally three months); the school prepares and monitors cash flow projections; If the school includes philanthropy in its budget, it monitors progress toward its development goals on a periodic basis; If necessary, the school pursues district state aid intercepts with the state education department to ensure adequate per pupil

	<p>funding; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.
	<p style="text-align: center;">Renewal Question 4 If the School's Charter is Renewed, What are its Plans for the Term of the Next Charter Period, and are they Reasonable, Feasible and Achievable?</p>
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>SUNY Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4A</p> <p>Plans for the School's Structure</p>	<p>Key structural elements of the school, as defined in the exhibits of the Application for Charter Renewal, are reasonable, feasible and achievable.</p> <p>Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school is likely to fulfill its mission in the next charter period; the school has an enrollment plan that can support the school program; the school calendar and daily schedules clearly provide sufficient instructional time to meet all legal requirements, allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals and abide by its proposed budget; key design elements are consistent with the mission statement and are feasible given the school's budget and staffing; a curriculum framework for added grades aligns with the state's performance standards; and plans in the other required Exhibits indicate that the school's structure is likely to support the educational program.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4B</p> <p>Plans for the Educational Program</p>	<p>The school's plans for implementing the educational program allow it to meet its Accountability Plan goals.</p> <p>Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for those grades served during the last charter period, the school has plans for sustaining and (where possible) improving upon the student outcomes it has compiled during the last charter period including any adjustments or additions to the school's educational program; for a school that is seeking to add grades, the school is likely to meet its Accountability Plan goals and the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks at the new grade levels; and where the school will provide secondary school instruction, it has

	<p>presented a set of requirements for graduation that students are likely to meet and that are consistent with the graduation standards set by the Board of Regents.</p>
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4C</p> <p>Plans for Board Oversight and Governance</p>	<p>The school provides a reasonable, feasible and achievable plan for board oversight and governance.</p> <p>Based on elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school trustees are likely to possess a range of experience, skills, and abilities sufficient to oversee the academic, organizational and fiscal performance of the school; • plans by the school board to orient new trustees to their roles and responsibilities, and, if appropriate, to participate in ongoing board training are likely to sustain the board's ability to carry out its responsibilities; • if the school plans to change an association with a partner or management organization in the term of a future charter, it has provided a clear rationale for the disassociation and an outline indicating how it will manage the functions previously associated with that partnering organization; and • if the school is either moving from self-management to a management structure or vice-versa, or is changing its charter management organization/educational service provider, its plans indicate that it will be managed in an effective, sound and viable manner including appropriate oversight of the academic and fiscal performance of the school or the management organization.
<p>SUNY Renewal Benchmark 4D</p> <p>Fiscal & Facility Plans</p>	<p>The school provides a reasonable, feasible and achievable fiscal plan including plans for an adequate facility.</p> <p>Based on the elements present in the Application for Charter Renewal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school's budgets adequately support staffing, enrollment and facility projections; • fiscal plans are based on the sound use of financial resources to support academic program needs; • fiscal plans are clear, accurate, complete and based on reasonable assumptions; • information on enrollment demand provides clear evidence for the reasonableness of projected enrollment; and • facility plans are likely to meet educational program needs.