



## Charter Schools Institute

*The State University of New York*

Please note:

The SUNY Board of Trustees approved a request from Leadership Village Academy Charter School to change the school's name to 'Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School' and to co-locate its high school grade with Harlem Village Academy Charter School on March 24, 2009; that change is reflected in the Institute's renewal report. However, because the name change is still being processed pursuant to the Charter Schools Act, the school's current legal name is still being referenced in certain documents.



Charter Schools Institute  
*The State University of New York*

## **Initial Renewal Report**

# **Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School**

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**January 4, 2010**

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The final version of Institute renewal reports should be broadly shared by the school with the entire school community. This report will be posted on the Institute's website at: [www.newyorkcharters.org/pubsReportsRenewals.htm](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/pubsReportsRenewals.htm).

## **REPORT INTRODUCTION**

This report is the primary means by which the Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) transmits to the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the “SUNY Trustees”) its findings and recommendations regarding a school’s Application for Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of a school’s case for renewal. This report has been created and issued pursuant to the *Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University Board of Trustees* (the “SUNY Renewal Practices”).<sup>1</sup>

Information about the SUNY renewal process, including the Institute’s comprehensive Charter Renewal Handbook 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/schoolsRenewOverview.htm](http://www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm).

## **RECOMMENDATION AND SUMMARY DISCUSSION**

### **Recommendation**

#### **Full-Term Renewal**

The Charter Schools Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Renewal of the Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School and renew its charter for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Renewal, with a maximum projected enrollment of 433 students.

### **Background and Required Findings**

In initial renewal reviews, the SUNY Trustees evaluate the strength and effectiveness of a school’s academic program by the degree to which the school has succeeded in meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals during the Accountability Period<sup>2</sup> and by the quality of the instructional program in place at the school during the charter period, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks (a subset of the Renewal Benchmarks). In giving weight to both student achievement and the emergent program, this approach provides a balance between an outcomes-based system of accountability, in which a school is held accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results, and a determination of the likelihood that the educational program will improve student learning and achievement going forward.

The Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School (“HVA Leadership”) has applied for an initial, full-term renewal of five years. The SUNY Renewal Practices provide three possible renewal outcomes for Leadership Village: Full-Term Renewal; Short-Term Renewal; or Non-Renewal. In order to earn a Full-Term renewal, HVA Leadership must demonstrate that it has met the criteria for such a renewal as described in the SUNY Renewal Practices. Specifically, the school must either: (a) have compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or coming close to meeting its academic

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<sup>1</sup> The *Practices, Policies and Procedures for the Renewal of Charter Schools Authorized by the State University Board of Trustees* (revised September 15, 2009) are available at <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/renewalPractices.doc>.

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of reporting student achievement results, the Accountability Period is defined in the SUNY Renewal Practices as the time the Accountability Plan was in effect. In the case of an Initial Renewal, the plan covers the first four years that the school was in operation during the charter period.

Accountability Plan goals, *and* have in place at the time of the renewal review an educational program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, is generally effective; or (b) have made progress towards meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals *and* have in place at the time of the renewal review an educational program that, as assessed using the Qualitative Education Benchmarks, is particularly strong and effective.

Based on the Institute's review of the evidence it gathered and HVA Leadership provided, including, but not limited to, the school's Application for Renewal, evaluation visits conducted during the charter period, a renewal evaluation visit conducted by the Institute in the last year of the charter period, and the school's record of academic performance as determined by the extent to which it has met the academic goals in its Accountability Plan, the Institute finds that the school has compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals and has in place an educational program that is generally effective.

Based on all the evidence, the Institute makes the following findings required by the Act. The Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School as described in the Application for Renewal meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations. The school has demonstrated the ability to operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter period. Finally, 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 set out in Education Law subdivision 2850(2).

Therefore, in accordance with the standard for Initial Renewal found in the SUNY Renewal Practices, the Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve HVA Leadership's Application for Charter Renewal and renew the charter for a full term of five years.

### **Consideration of School District Comments**

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the school district in which the charter school is located regarding the school's application for renewal. As of the date of this report, no comments were received in response.

### **Summary Discussion**

#### *Academic Success*

HVA Leadership has met all the academic goals in its Accountability Plan. Since the first year of its charter, the school has met its mathematics goal each year with virtually all students scoring at the proficient level on the state exam during the last three years. After the second year of the charter, when HVA Leadership came close to meeting its English language arts goal, the school met the English language arts goal each year thereafter. Based on limited data, the school has also met its science and social studies goals during the Accountability Period. According to the state's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system, the school is deemed to be in good standing.

Throughout its Accountability Period, HVA Leadership has improved its performance on the state's English language arts exam. In the second year of its charter, the school outperformed its local community school district and achieved its growth target; however, the school fell just short of meeting its absolute performance target and performed about the same as expected in comparison to demographically similar schools. Since then, the school has exceeded its absolute proficiency

targets<sup>3</sup>, far-outperformed its local community school district and demographically similar schools state-wide, and grade level cohorts of students have shown meaningful growth.

During its initial charter term, HVA Leadership has posted extraordinarily strong results on the state mathematics test with nearly 100 percent of students scoring at or above proficiency during each of the three previous years. In addition, the school far-outperformed its local community school district and demographically similar schools state-wide each year. In terms of growth, since 2006-07, when two years of state test data became available, each grade-level cohort of students has either achieved its growth target or maintained a 100 percent proficiency rate. The school surpassed the performance target set by the state for all public schools under its NCLB accountability system in all years as well.

The school partners with Harlem Village Academies Inc., a non-profit entity which provides such services as teacher recruitment; curriculum and assessment development; principal and teacher training; fundraising; marketing; and operational support.

HVA Leadership has demonstrated strong instructional leadership over the course of the charter period. The school's leadership, currently consisting of an executive director (employed by Harlem Village Academies), principal, and academic director have established an environment of high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance, evidenced in part by their focus on analyzing student performance on the various formal and informal measures within the school's assessment system and on making instructional decisions accordingly. The school's leaders adequately evaluate the academic program and set clear educational priorities. By visiting classrooms frequently to provide direct support, they strengthen teaching and learning at the school. The academic director position was added late in the charter period and has allowed the school to increase the amount and quality of instructional support, including instructional modeling, critical feedback, and assistance in developing lesson plans. In keeping with the school's focus on enhancing the teachers' professional status, the teachers are provided structured opportunities, resources, and guidance to plan the delivery of the instructional program. At grade-level team meetings they are given opportunities to reflect on student assessment results and to establish weekly instructional benchmarks. Rather than conducting formal written teacher evaluations, the leadership team provides ongoing informal feedback and relies on student assessment results to hold teachers accountable.

Over the course of the charter period, HVA Leadership has developed and successfully implemented a system to gather assessment and evaluation data and uses these data to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning. The school regularly administers diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments that are aligned to the school's curriculum framework and state performance indicators. For formative purposes, the school's teachers utilize a variety of informal tools on a daily basis including exit tickets, homework, and questioning techniques. The results of daily formative assessments are regularly used to identify students in need of assistance, provided during structured pull-out small-group instruction. Teachers consistently determine the extent of student learning in weekly quizzes and in summative assessments administered at regular intervals. The results of summative assessments are analyzed using the school's Data-Driven Instructional Spreadsheets (DIPS) in order to modify the pace of lesson planning, re-teach, identify students in need of academic

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<sup>3</sup> In interpreting a school's year-to-year changes in the absolute measure, the Institute puts the results in the context of overall state-wide changes. In general, the state-wide proficiency rate on the English language arts exam increased by five percent from 2006-07 to 2007-08 and by nine percent from 2007-08 to 2008-09. From a related perspective, the median school had a proficiency rate of 68.7 percent, 72.8 percent, and 80.9 percent during the three years respectively. These year-to year changes suggest the importance of the comparative measures included in the goal.

support, and evaluate the teachers' delivery of curriculum and instruction. Leadership Village also uses these assessment data to predict whether the school's Accountability Plan goals are being met. Finally, the school regularly uses student performance reports to communicate each student's progress and growth to his or her parents/guardians.

HVA Leadership has a clearly defined curriculum framework aligned to state learning standards and performance indicators and uses it to prepare students to meet state performance standards. Teachers have access to guiding curricular documents as well as regular assessment data to develop short- and long-term instructional plans. Teachers have had significant responsibility for the ongoing review and revision of the curriculum throughout the charter period. The curriculum, particularly in the area of mathematics, is tightly organized, cohesive, and seamless from grade to grade.

Throughout the charter period, high quality instruction has been evident in most classrooms. The school's teachers have consistently demonstrated subject-matter and grade-level competency. They regularly check for understanding during lessons and frequently assess comprehension. Instruction is highly structured and consistently focused on posted learning objectives that specify clear expectations for what students must know and be able to do in each lesson. Inspectors have observed overwhelming consistency in the fashion in which classroom instruction is delivered over the course of the charter period.

The school has established a safe and orderly learning environment and has promoted a culture of scholarship where learning is valued and clearly evident. Low-level misbehavior is not tolerated and is virtually non-existent at HVA Leadership. Classroom rituals and procedures are consistent from classroom to classroom. As a result, students are consistently on-task and engaged in lessons and instructional time is maximized. The school has structured an environment where the discipline policy not only appears on the wall and in written documents, but is communicated to parents, taught, enacted, and reinforced in a way that promotes learning.

Using the assessment system described above, HVA Leadership has clearly defined screening procedures for identifying at-risk students and provides these students with the appropriate interventions. The school has also allocated sufficient personnel and resources to meet student needs including assistance through Small Group Instruction and a pull-out based program that is available to students during the regular school day, after school, and/or on Saturdays. Content teachers provide remediation and interventions in which there is strong alignment with regular classroom instruction. The school has demonstrated strong communication between classroom and special education teachers assuring that classroom teachers are familiar with their student's Individualized Education Programs.

The school provides adequate resources to support a comprehensive and sustained professional development program, the content of which is consistent with the school's mission, curriculum, and instructional programs. Teachers are provided detailed training on the school's academic standards, classrooms practices and assessment system prior to the start of each school year. Since early in the charter period, members of the school's leadership team have implemented a structured calendar of professional development. Lesson study, a translation of the Japanese term *kounaikenshuu*, is routinely used to improve teaching and learning, in which teachers and instructional leaders collectively observe, critique, modify, and revise a lesson, and then debrief the experience with their peers.

### *Organizational Effectiveness and Viability*

Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has been faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter. School stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and school leaders are well aware of the school's mission, particularly the focus on college preparation. Key design elements have been implemented in pursuit of the school's mission, including the following: a focus on college readiness; students as academic athletes; high expectations for student conduct; a focus on learning; investing in teachers; and, a "small village" environment.

Parents and guardians are satisfied with the school. The school has a regular process in place for evaluating parent satisfaction. As evidence of the school's focus on every child, parents cite the seriousness by which the school is operated, home visits, teacher accessibility, and regular communication.

The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program. Day-to-day operations are effectively managed with the support of a school-specific operations staff that allows the instructional leaders to focus on teaching and learning. An integrated system is in place to collect and manage a variety of student data, including attendance, the school lunch program and discipline. The Village Academies Network has developed a database that provides student-level information to the principal for planning purposes and to meet compliance requirements.

The school has hired and retained quality personnel. Leadership Village utilizes a shared-services team with Village Academies Network to allow for staff and student recruitment and retention. While the school has experienced significant student mobility throughout the charter term, it has maintained adequate enrollment.

The board of trustees of HVA Leadership has worked effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total education program. The school board has also practiced effective oversight with respect to the Harlem Village Academies, Inc. The school board has maintained adequate skills and expertise—including finance, business, education, real estate, community outreach and fundraising—to carry out its oversight responsibilities, but is currently seeking a person with more extensive fiscal experience for the board. The board understands the core business of the school, student achievement, in sufficient depth to permit it to provide effective oversight. The school board receives regular written reports on academic, fiscal and operations performance from the school's executive director and other staff as appropriate. The school board has been focused on its goal of obtaining a facility and the associated fundraising for the co-located high school with Harlem Village Academy Charter School. The board thoroughly understands its role and does not involve itself in the school's day-to-day matters. The board's effective use of committees has allowed it to function well with only quarterly and as-needed meetings. The board is keenly aware of the school's mission and progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals.

The school's board overlaps with that of its sister school, Harlem Village Academy Charter School (also authorized by the State University Trustees), and its partner organization Harlem Village Academies, Inc. The school benefits from the experience of the sister school and the economy of scale created by the partnership. Examples of this collaboration include using the same curricular and assessment programs, merging professional development opportunities, and sharing support staff.



Over the course of the charter period the school board has not conducted regular evaluations of the school's executive director. Instead, the board has consistently reported that the executive director is informally evaluated based on the school's student achievement results, teacher turnover, how well she represents the school, and other key measures of success.

With certain, largely minor, exceptions the school has been, and at the time of the renewal visit appeared to be, in general and substantial compliance with the terms of its charter, and state and federal laws and regulations. Deficiencies were noted in policies and practices in the following areas: Freedom of Information Law (FOIL); Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); and, SAVE Plan (Safe Schools Against Violence in Education). Some of these issues stem from the fact that school staff treats the co-located high school as a separate school rather than as a continuation of the school's middle school with a separate charter school, Harlem Village Academy, at the same site; which is the legal reality. The board and staff should honor the legal distinctions where required. Where appropriate the board has consulted *pro bono* counsel and hired outside counsel to deal with certain building issues. The school board has properly guarded against conflicts of interest concerning the executive director.

### *Fiscal Soundness*

HVA Leadership has created realistic budgets over the course of the charter period that are monitored and adjusted when appropriate. Annual budgets are developed by the Harlem Village Academies, Inc. controller with appropriate input from the school's principal, business/operations manager, and members of the school board. Budget variances are routinely analyzed by the controller and material variances are discussed with key administrative staff and the board. The school has developed an adequate budget for the next charter period, including the planned growth of the school by one grade in each of the next three years. The school is using conservative assumptions when budgeting revenue and projecting a minor net surplus every year over the next five years. Actual expenses have been equal to, or less than, actual revenue over the course of the charter period with no material exceptions. The school has projected a minor net surplus every year over the next five years, increasing cash reserves by thirty three percent from 2009-10 to 2014-15.

The school has maintained appropriate written fiscal policies and procedures related to external and internal compliance for cash disbursements, cash receipts, bank reconciliations, payroll, fixed assets, grants/contributions, and the preparation of financial statements. Transactions have been accurately recorded and appropriately documented in accordance with management's direction. The school's fiscal year ("FY") 2008-09 audit report on internal controls over financial reporting and compliance with laws, regulations and grants disclosed no material weaknesses or instances of non-compliance. The lack of other deficiencies in the reports provides some, but not absolute, assurance that the school has maintained adequate internal controls and procedures.

The school has complied with financial reporting requirements during the charter period. Budget, quarterly and annual financial statement audit reports were filed in a timely, accurate and complete manner. Each of the school's annual financial statement audit reports followed generally accepted accounting principles and received an unqualified opinion, indicating that, in the auditor's opinion, the school's financial statements and notes fairly represent, in all material respects, the school's financial position, changes in net assets, and cash flows. The reports indicate the audits were conducted in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards as required. The school board reviews and approves the annual financial statement audit report.

The school has maintained adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations and has monitored and successfully managed cash flow. The school completed the FY 2009 school year in stable financial condition, increasing in total net assets by almost thirty percent. The school has no short- or long-term debt. The school has a positive working capital ratio which indicates the school has enough short term assets to cover immediate liabilities/short-term debt. The school has no major investments and all cash is left in savings and money market accounts to ensure the school has sufficient cash available to pay current bills and other payables that are shortly due. The school has a positive working capital ratio which indicates the school has enough short-term assets to cover immediate liabilities/short-term debt. It should also be noted that from FY 2006-08 the school's expenses per student did not exceed the school's allocated per pupil funding. In FY 2009, expenses only exceeded the per pupil amount by slightly over \$300. This suggests that the school has a strong operational model in place.

### *Plans for the Next Charter Period*

The school has provided all of the key structural elements for a new school charter and they are deemed to be reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The school would maintain its current mission statement, with the addition of a reference to "fine character" as stated in the following:

*The mission of the Harlem Village Academy Leadership is to develop students of fine character who graduate from college and make a positive contribution to society.*

The school would continue adding one grade each year until 2012-13, the third year of the recommended subsequent charter period, when it would provide instruction to students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The school plans to continue its practice of limiting enrollment to its 5<sup>th</sup> grade only, which is reflected in its projections to account for student attrition. Total enrollment would be 324 students in the first year of the proposed charter period, comprised of 5<sup>th</sup> through 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and would reach 433 students in the final year of the proposed charter period with 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The school year would consist of 205 instructional days, including some Saturday sessions.

The most significant change proposed by the school is its planned expansion to include a full high school program. While the high school program is intended to be very similar to the existing middle school program in its emphasis on developing core academic and leadership skills, one important difference noted in the school's Application for Renewal would be the expectation that students enter the high school program on grade level. Consequently, the focus in the high school program would be on providing students with the advanced skills and higher order thinking skills necessary to compete in college and the world beyond.

The high school program would be cooperatively operated with Harlem Village Academy Charter School. Collectively, the schools would share resources and staff in order to provide a comprehensive high school program, yet would remain accountable for the individual students they enroll. The school has provided a proposed curriculum for the expanded high school program within its Application for Renewal. The curriculum is aligned to New York state learning standards in the core academic subject areas and generally meets the Institute's requirements for the submission of curriculum. Minor adjustments will occur through the Request for Amendments process, and the school will continue refining the high school curriculum as part of its collaborative efforts with the Harlem Village Academy Charter School and Harlem Village Academies, Inc.

The school would continue implementing the key design elements presented in its original charter in both its middle and high school programs, which include a rigorous liberal arts curriculum; longer school day and year; frequent student assessments; tutoring and after-school programs for struggling students; small, safe, and nurturing environment; a school culture that emphasizes traditional values; a personal advisor for each student and family; school uniforms; and teachers who are masters of – and passionate about – their subject areas. The school’s instructional strategy would continue to be based on the Japanese practice of collaborative instructional planning.

Members of the HVA Leadership board of trustees expressed the intent to continue their service to the school and have proposed no significant changes to the school’s governance structure. The school would continue to partner with Harlem Village Academies, Inc.. The school board would continue to meet quarterly to discuss issues related specifically to their school, and would work cooperatively with the board of trustees of Harlem Village Academy Charter School to ensure that the co-located high school program is implemented successfully. The board has the requisite skill sets and understanding of its roles and responsibilities in order to adequately govern the school during the term of the next charter.

The middle school grades would remain at the present location, which the New York City Department of Education has identified as a permanent location for these grades. The high school grades will remain in their temporary location until construction of the school’s permanent location is completed, which is projected to occur midway through the proposed next charter period.

The school has presented a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan that is likely achievable. The plan projects a small operating and cash flow surplus in each year. The plan provides ample support to the school’s programs and grade expansion. Long-range fiscal projections are more susceptible to error than those for a single year. Such projections are subject to revision due to changes in local conditions, objectives, laws and state funding. The school will be required to develop and adopt annual budgets based on known per pupil amounts. The school intends to have a new high school facility by 2011-12, funded primarily through philanthropic resources. This facility will allow for grade expansion in the high school and continued co-location with Harlem Village Academy Charter School’s high school program. The school’s fiscal proposal appropriately accounts for the net cost of the integrated high school with the prorated share of costs based on actual student enrollment.

To the extent that Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has achieved its key academic goals, continues to implement an educational program that supports achieving those goals, operates an effective and viable organization, and is fiscally sound, its plans to continue to implement the educational program as proposed during the next charter period are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

## **SCHOOL OVERVIEW**

### **School Name**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chartered Name	East New York Village Academy Charter School	June, 2002
Revised Name	Leadership Village Academy Charter School	May, 2005
Revised Name	Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School	March, 2009

### **Opening Information**

Date Initial Charter Approved by the SUNY Trustees	June 25, 2002
Date Initial Charter Approved by the Board of Regents	September 13, 2002
School Opening Date	August, 2005

### **Location**

<b>School Year(s)</b>	<b>Location(s)</b>	<b>Grades</b>	<b>District</b>
2005-06 through 2007-08	315 E 113 <sup>th</sup> St New York, NY	All	New York City Community School District 4
2008-09 through present	2351 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave New York, NY	5-8	New York City Community School District 4
2009-10 through present	413 East 120th Street, NY	9	New York City Community School District 4

### **Partner Organizations**

	<b>Partner Name</b>	<b>Partner Type</b>	<b>Dates of Service</b>
Current Partner	Harlem Village Academies, Inc.	Non-profit partner	2002 through present

### **Renewal**

<b>Type of Renewal</b>	<b>Date</b>
3-year Short-Term Planning Renewal	3/20/07

### **Current Mission Statement**

The mission of Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School is to develop students of fine character who graduate from college and make a positive contribution to society.

## Current Key Design Elements

• a rich liberal arts curriculum based on rigorous standards of excellence;
• a longer day with the time to master essential skills, reflect deeply, and fall in love with learning;
• a college-bound school culture;
• frequent, diagnostic assessment of student progress that drives continual instructional improvement;
• tutoring, Saturday school and study hall;
• a culture of accountability for academic achievement;
• talented, dedicated teachers with subject area expertise;
• a small, safe, nurturing environment emphasizing kindness, integrity, compassion, hard work, social justice and responsibility;
• an advisory system providing support and personal attention;
• after-school activities including karate, chess and dance; and
• a clear, strict code of conduct that is consistent throughout the school.

## School Characteristics

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Revised Charter Enrollment	Actual Enrollment <sup>4</sup>	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades	Days of Instruction
2005-06	312	56	59	6-8	5	183
2006-07	416	107	114	6-9	5-6	180
2007-08	165	N/A	159	5-7	5-7	186
2008-09	212	N/A	209	5-8	5-8	183
2009-10	242	N/A	288	5-9	5-9	180

## Student Demographics

	2006-07 <sup>5</sup>		2007-08 <sup>6</sup>		2008-09	
	School Enrollment	NYC CSD 4 Enrollment	School Enrollment	NYC CSD 4 Enrollment	School Enrollment <sup>7</sup>	NYC CSD 4 Enrollment <sup>8</sup>
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>						
American Indian or Alaska Native	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	N/A
Black or African American	68%	33%	78%	32%	63%	N/A
Hispanic	32%	62%	20%	62%	34%	N/A
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	0%	3%	0%	4%	2%	N/A

<sup>4</sup> Source: SUNY Charter School Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

<sup>5</sup> Source: 2006-07 School Report Cards, New York State Education Department.

<sup>6</sup> Source: 2007-08 School Report Cards, New York State Education Department.

<sup>7</sup> Source: 2008-09 Demographics and Limited English Proficient Percentages calculated from BEDS reports submitted at the beginning of the school year. This information is unverified by the schools. It also does not include Free/Reduced Lunch status, but rather categorizes students as "economically disadvantaged." Village Academy Leadership 74% of students that fall into this category.

<sup>8</sup> Aggregated district data not yet available for 2008-09.

	2006-07 <sup>5</sup>		2007-08 <sup>6</sup>		2008-09	
	School Enrollment	NYC CSD 4 Enrollment	School Enrollment	NYC CSD 4 Enrollment	School Enrollment <sup>7</sup>	NYC CSD 4 Enrollment <sup>8</sup>
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>						
White	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	N/A
Multiracial	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	N/A
<b>Special Populations</b>						
Students with Disabilities <sup>9</sup>	11%	N/A	9%	N/A	12%	N/A
Limited English Proficient	0%	12%	1%	13%	1%	N/A
<b>Free/Reduced Lunch</b>						
Eligible for Free Lunch	57%	77%	52%	74%	N/A	N/A
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	25%	5%	23%	6%	N/A	N/A

### Current Board of Trustees<sup>10</sup>

Board Member Name	Position/Committees	Term Expires
David Zwiebel	Chairman/Finance	June, 2010
Donna Wilson Brown	Vice-Chairman	June, 2010
Deborah Kenny (School Executive Director)	Trustee/Finance	June, 2010
Andrew August	Trustee	June, 2010
James Thompson	Trustee	June, 2010
Catherine Viscardi Johnston	Treasurer/Finance	June, 2010

### School Leader(s)

School Year	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2005-06 – 2009-10 (present)	Deborah Kenney, Executive Director

### School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2005-06	First-Year Visit	Institute	April 4, 2006
2006-07	Second-Year Visit	Institute	April 13, 2007
2007-08	Third-Year Visit	External (SchoolWorks)	May 12-13, 2008
2008-09	None	N/A	N/A
2009-10	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	September 21-24, 2009

<sup>9</sup> New York State Education Department does not report special education data. School data is school-reported from charter renewal applications. District data not available for NYC CSD 4.

<sup>10</sup> Source: Application for Renewal.

## ACADEMIC ATTAINMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

### Background

At the beginning of the charter period the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of English language arts and mathematics, as well as science and social studies. The plan also included an NCLB goal. For each goal in the Accountability Plan specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. Furthermore, the Institute has established a set of required outcome measures that include the following three types: 1) the absolute level of student performance on state examinations; 2) the comparative level of student performance on state examinations; and 3) the growth in student learning according to year-to-year comparisons of grade level cohorts. The following table shows the outcome measures currently required by the Institute in each subject area goal, as well as for the NCLB goal. Schools may have also elected to include additional optional goals and measures in their Accountability Plan.

Summary of Required Goals and Outcome Measures in Elementary/Middle School (K-8) Accountability Plans					
GOAL	Required Outcome Measures				
	Absolute		Comparative		Growth
	75 percent proficient on state exam	Performance Index (PI) meets Annual Measurable Objective (AMO)	Percent proficient greater than that of local school district	School exceeds predicted level of performance compared to similar public schools by small Effect Size	Grade-level cohorts reduce by half the gap between prior year's percent proficient and 75 percent
English Language Arts	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦
Mathematics	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦
Science	✦		✦		
Social Studies	✦		✦		
NCLB	School is deemed in "Good Standing" under state's NCLB accountability system				

The most important criterion for renewal is academic success, which is demonstrated in large part by meeting or coming close to meeting the goals in a school's Accountability Plan. The Institute determines the outcome of a goal by evaluating the multiple measures associated with that goal.

The following presentation indicates the outcome of each of the school's goals, as well as an analysis of the respective measures for each goal during the Accountability Period.<sup>11</sup> Italicized text indicates

<sup>11</sup> Because the renewal decision is made in the last year of a Charter Period, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of the Charter Period. For an Initial Renewal, the Accountability Period is the first four years of the Charter Period. For a

goals or measures as written in the school’s Accountability Plan; bold numbers appearing in the tables are the critical values for determining if a measure was achieved in a given year. Aside from required Accountability Plan measures, the following also presents the results of optional measures that the school may have included in its plan.

### **English Language Arts**

**Accountability Plan Goal:** Students at Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School (“HVA Leadership”) will meet or exceed state performance standards for mastery of skills and content knowledge in the area of English language arts. Students will also demonstrate proficiency in advanced skills in the area of English language arts necessary for admission into and success in college.

**Outcome:** Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has met its English language arts goal.

### **Analysis of Accountability Plan Measures:**

<b>Absolute Measure:</b> <i>By the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the charter, 75% of seventh and eighth grade students who have been enrolled in the school for two or more years will score proficient (i.e. at level three) on the New York State English language arts (ELA) assessment.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b> (Tested: 0)	<b>2006-07</b> (Tested: 0 )	<b>2007-08</b> (Tested:40)	<b>2008-09</b> (Tested: 79)
<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>4</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>5</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>6</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>7</b>	-	-	85.0	97.5
<b>8</b>	-	-	-	89.7
<b>All</b>	-	-	85.0	93.7 <sup>12</sup>

Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School’s Accountability Plan measure specifies that by the end of the fifth year of the charter period, 75 percent of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have been enrolled in the school for two or more years will achieve proficiency on the state’s English language arts exam. As the measure does not apply until the 2009-10 school year, the data provide context on the school’s progress toward achieving its target. In 2007-08, the first year the school enrolled students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 85 percent of the students enrolled for two or more years scored proficient. In the most recent year, the school improved its performance and 94 percent of students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades enrolled for two or more years scored proficient. While the data necessary to evaluate the school’s success in achieving the measure will not become available until the end of the fifth year of the school’s charter, results to date indicate that the school is on track to achieve its target.

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Subsequent Renewal, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous Charter Period through the next to last year of the current Charter Period.

<sup>12</sup> The school’s Accountability Plan measure does not apply until the 2009-10 school year.



<b>Absolute Measure:</b> <i>Each year, Village Academy's aggregate Performance Index will meet its Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability system</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Index</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06<sup>13</sup></b> (Tested: 59)	<b>2006-07</b> (Tested: 107)	<b>2007-08</b> (Tested: 154)	<b>2008-09</b> (Tested: 206)
<b>PI</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>AMO</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>144</b>

Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has surpassed the English language arts Annual Measureable Objective (AMO) established by the state's NCLB accountability system during each year of its Accountability Period.

<b>Comparative Measure:</b> <i>Each year, the percent of students who have been enrolled at Village Academy for at least two years performing at or above Level 3 on the State ELA exam in each tested grade will be greater than that of the local community school district.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Comparison</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b> (Grade 5)	<b>2006-07</b> (Grade 6)	<b>2007-08</b> (Grades 6-7)	<b>2008-09</b> (Grades 6-8)
<b>School</b>	-	<b>71.7</b>	<b>85.3</b>	<b>89.1</b>
<b>District</b>	-	<b>35.2</b>	<b>48.2</b>	<b>61.3</b>

Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has consistently outperformed New York City Community School District 4 by a wide margin. In the most recent year, the school's proficiency rate exceeded that of the district by nearly 30 percentage points.

<b>Comparative Measure:</b> <i>Each year, the school will exceed to at least a small degree its expected level of performance on the State ELA exam, according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Index</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b> (Grades 5) (Tested: 59)	<b>2006-07</b> (Grades 5-6) (Tested: 107)	<b>2007-08</b> (Grades 5-7) (Tested: 154)	<b>2008-09</b> (Grades 5-8) (Tested: 138)
<b>Predicted</b>	58.4	57.0	66.3	73.7
<b>Actual</b>	66.1	62.3	81.8	85.9
<b>Effect Size</b>	<b>0.38</b>	<b>0.20</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>0.85</b>

In comparison to demographically similar schools, Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has performed better than expected during each year of the Accountability Period. In the last two years, the school has performed better than expected to a large degree and exceeded its 0.3 Effect Size target with Effect Sizes of 1.00 and 0.85, respectively.

<sup>13</sup> In 2005-06 English language arts and mathematics testing began in grades 3-8, and the Performance Index was henceforth calculated based on the aggregate of all tested students.

<b>Growth Measure:</b> Each year, grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State ELA exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State ELA exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Percent Level 3 &amp; 4</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07<sup>14</sup></b> (Grade 6) (N= 45)	<b>2007-08</b> (Grades 6-7) (N= 75)	<b>2008-09</b> (Grades 6-8) (N= 129)
Baseline	-	66.7	73.3	86.0
Target	-	70.9	74.1	86.1
Actual	-	71.1	85.3	88.4
Cohorts Made Target	-	(1 of 1)	(1 of 2)	(1 of 3)

English language arts growth data first became available for Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School in 2006-07 when the school's 6<sup>th</sup> graders were tested for the second time. In 2006-07 the school's only cohort achieved its growth target. In 2007-08 when growth data was available for both the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade cohorts, one of the cohorts achieved its growth target and overall performance improved. In the most recent year, one out of three cohorts achieved its target and overall performance improved by a small margin.

## **Mathematics**

**Accountability Plan Goal:** Students at Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School will meet or exceed state standards for mastery of skills and content knowledge in the area of mathematics. Students will demonstrate further proficiency in advanced skills in mathematics necessary for admission into and success in college.

**Outcome:** Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has met its mathematics goal.

### **Analysis of Accountability Plan Measures:**

<b>Absolute Measure:</b> By the 5 <sup>th</sup> year of the charter, 75% of seventh and eighth grade students who have been enrolled in the school for two or more years will score proficient (i.e. at level three) on the New York State Mathematics assessment.				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06<sup>15</sup></b> (Tested: 0)	<b>2006-07</b> (Tested: 0)	<b>2007-08</b> (Tested: 40)	<b>2008-09</b> (Tested: 79)
3	-	-	-	-
4	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-
6	-	-	-	-
7	-	-	100.0	100.0
8	-	-	-	97.4
<b>All</b>	-	-	100.0	98.7 <sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> New York State began administering English language arts and mathematics exams in grades 3-8 in 2005-06, thus year-to-year growth could not be evaluated until 2006-07 when two years' of results were first available.

<sup>15</sup> In 2005-06 New York State implemented English language arts and mathematics exams in grades 3-8. Prior to that, the exams in these subjects were administered only in grades 4 and 8.

Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School's Accountability Plan measure specifies that by the end of the fifth year of the charter period, 75 percent of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have been enrolled in the school for two or more years will achieve proficiency on the state's mathematics exam. As the measure does not apply until the 2009-10 school year, the data provide context on the school's progress toward achieving its target. Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has consistently posted strong results on the state's mathematics exam. In 2007-08, the first year the school enrolled students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 100 percent of the students enrolled for two or more years scored proficient. In the most recent year, the school maintained this high level of performance and 99 percent of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled for two or more years were proficient. While the data necessary to evaluate the school's success in achieving the measure will not become available until the end of the fifth year of the school's charter, results to date indicate that the school is on track to achieve its target.

<b>Absolute Measure:</b> <i>Each year, Village Academy's aggregate Performance Index will meet its Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Index</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06<sup>17</sup></b> (Tested: 59)	<b>2006-07</b> (Tested: 104)	<b>2007-08</b> (Tested: 153)	<b>2008-09</b> (Tested: 204)
<b>PI</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>197</b>
<b>AMO</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>119</b>

Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has surpassed the mathematics Annual Measureable Objective (AMO) established by the state's NCLB accountability system during each year of its Accountability Period.

<b>Comparative Measure:</b> <i>Each year, the percent of students who have been enrolled at Village Academy for at least two years performing at or above Level 3 on the State math exam in each tested grade will be greater than that of the local community school district.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Comparison</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b> (Grade 5)	<b>2006-07</b> (Grade 6)	<b>2007-08</b> (Grades 6-7)	<b>2008-09</b> (Grades 6-8)
<b>School</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>97.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>99.3</b>
<b>District</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>49.4</b>	<b>62.7</b>	<b>67.6</b>

Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School has consistently outperformed New York City Community School District 4 on the state mathematics test by a wide margin. In the most recent year, the school's proficiency rate exceeded that of the district by more than 30 percentage points.

<sup>16</sup> The school's Accountability Plan measure does not apply until the 2009-10 school year.

<sup>17</sup> In 2005-06 English language arts and mathematics testing began in grades 3-8, and the Performance Index was henceforth calculated based on the aggregate of all tested students.

<b>Comparative Measure:</b> <i>Each year, the school will exceed to at least a small degree its expected level of performance on the State math exam, according to a regression analysis controlling for students eligible for free lunch among all public schools in New York State.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Index</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b> (Grades 5) (Tested: 59)	<b>2006-07</b> (Grades 6) (Tested: 104)	<b>2007-08</b> (Grades 6-7) (Tested: 153)	<b>2008-09</b> (Grades 6-8) (Tested: 204)
<b>Predicted</b>	60.3	66.8	75.9	81.0
<b>Actual</b>	79.7	92.3	96.7	96.6
<b>Effect Size</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>1.43</b>	<b>1.31</b>	<b>1.18</b>

In comparison to demographically similar schools Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School, has performed better than expected to a large degree during each year of the Accountability Period, exceeding its 0.3 Effect Size target by a wide margin each year.

<b>Growth Measure:</b> <i>Each year, grade-level cohorts of students will reduce by one-half the gap between the percent at or above Level 3 on the previous year's State math exam and 75 percent at or above Level 3 on the current year's State math exam. If a grade-level cohort exceeds 75 percent at or above Level 3 in the previous year, the cohort is expected to show at least an increase in the current year.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Percent Level 3 &amp; 4</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07<sup>18</sup></b> (Grade 6) (N=45)	<b>2007-08</b> (Grades 6-7) (N=74)	<b>2008-09</b> (Grades 6-8) (N=128)
Baseline	-	82.2	97.3	98.4
Target	-	82.3	97.4	98.5
Actual	-	97.8	100.0	99.2
Cohorts Made Target	-	<b>(1 of 1)</b>	<b>(2 of 2)</b>	<b>(2 of 3)</b>

Mathematics cohort growth data first became available for Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School in 2006-07 when the school's 6<sup>th</sup> graders were tested for the second time. In 2006-07 the school's only cohort achieved its growth target. In 2007-08 when growth data was available for both the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade cohorts, both cohorts achieved their targets and overall performance improved. In the most recent year, two out of three cohorts achieved their targets and overall performance remained extraordinarily high with 99 percent of students scoring proficient.

## **Science**

**Accountability Plan Goal:** Students at Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School will meet and exceed state standards for mastery of skills and content knowledge in the area of social studies.

**Outcome:** Based on the limited data available, the school met its science goal.

## **Analysis of Accountability Plan Measures:**

<sup>18</sup> New York State began administering English language arts and mathematics exams in grades 3-8 in 2005-06, thus year-to-year growth could not be evaluated until 2006-07 when two years' of results were first available.

<b>Absolute Measure:</b> <i>In each year, 75 percent of seventh and eighth graders who have been enrolled in the school for two or more years will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State science examination.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b> (Tested: )	<b>2006-07</b> (Tested: )	<b>2007-08</b> (Tested: )	<b>2008-09</b> (Tested: 39)
<b>4</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>8</b>	-	-	-	<b>82.9</b>

In 2008-09, when Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School administered the state science test to its first group of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 83 percent of students scored proficient and the school exceeded its 75 percent target.

<b>Comparative Measure:</b> <i>Each year, the percent of students who have been enrolled in the school for two or more years and performing at or above Level 3 on the State Science exam will be greater than that of the local community school district.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Comparison</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b> (Grade )	<b>2006-07</b> (Grade )	<b>2007-08</b> (Grade )	<b>2008-09</b> (Grade 8)
<b>School</b>	-	-	-	<b>82.9</b>
<b>District</b>	-	-	-	<b>NA</b>

While comparison data for the 2008-09 school year is yet unavailable, Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School's 83 percent proficiency rate exceeds the district's performance in each of the two previous years. Assuming district performance remained at a similar level on the 2008-09 exam, the school will have met its target.

### **Social Studies**

**Accountability Plan Goal:** Students at Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School will meet and exceed state standards for mastery of skills and content knowledge in the area of social studies.

**Outcome:** Based on the limited data available, the school met its social studies goal.

### **Analysis of Accountability Plan Measures:**

<b>Absolute Measure:</b> <i>In each year, 75 percent of seventh and eighth graders who have been enrolled in the school for two or more years will perform at or above Level 3 on the New York State Social Studies examination.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Grade</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b> (Tested: )	<b>2006-07</b> (Tested: )	<b>2007-08</b> (Tested: )	<b>2008-09</b> (Tested: 40)
<b>5</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>8</b>	-	-	-	<b>92.5</b>

In 2008-09, when Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School administered the state social studies test to its first group of 8<sup>th</sup> graders, 83 percent of students scored proficient and the school exceeded its 75 percent target.

<b>Comparative Measure:</b> <i>Each year, the percent of students who have been enrolled in the school for two or more years and performing at or above Level 3 on the State Social Studies exam will be greater than that of the local community school district.</i>				
<b>Results (in percents)</b>				
<b>Comparison</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b> (Grade )	<b>2006-07</b> (Grade )	<b>2007-08</b> (Grade )	<b>2008-09</b> (Grade 8)
<b>School</b>				<b>92.5</b>
<b>District</b>				<b>NA</b>

While comparison data for the 2008-09 school year is yet unavailable, Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School's 83 percent proficiency rate exceeds the district's performance in each of the two previous years. Assuming district performance remained at a similar level on the 2008-09 exam, the school will have met its target.

## **NCLB**

In addition to meeting its specific subject area goals, the school is expected under No Child Left Behind to make adequate yearly progress towards enabling all students to score at the proficient level on the state English language arts and mathematics exams. In holding charter schools to the same standards as other public schools, the state issues an annual school accountability report that indicates the school's status each year.

**Accountability Plan Goal:** Students at Village Academy will meet and exceed state standards in all areas required by NCLB accountability guidelines.

**Outcome:** The school met the goal. Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School was deemed to be in good standing in each of the four years of the Accountability Period.

<b>Absolute Measure:</b> <i>Under the state's NCLB accountability system, the school's Accountability Status will be "Good Standing" each year.</i>				
<b>Results</b>				
<b>Status</b>	<b>School Year</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2008-09</b>
<b>Good Standing</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

## **Analysis of Additional Evidence**

Harlem Village Academy Leadership Charter School received a letter grade of "A" on its 2008-09 New York City Department of Education (DOE) Progress Report. According to the DOE, overall Progress Report scores are based on school performance in three categories: School Environment, Student Performance and Student Progress, with the greatest emphasis placed on Student Progress. District schools or district authorized charter schools that receive As and Bs are eligible for rewards while schools that get Ds and Fs, or Cs over three years in a row, face possible consequences.

Consistent with the data presented for the Accountability Plan measures in English language arts and mathematics above, Leadership Village received the highest possible grade for both Student Performance and Student Growth on its DOE Progress Report. These high marks reflect the school's near-perfect proficiency rate on state mathematics exams, its high level of performance on state English language arts exams and the strong year-to-year growth in student proficiency rates from 2007-08 to 2008-09 on both exams.