



**THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS
INSTITUTE**

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION REPORT
HARLEM LINK CHARTER SCHOOL*

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The State University of New York

CONTENTS

1 CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND

3 RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

4 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

6 DATA PRESENTATION

22 FISCAL ANALYSIS

27 FUTURE PLANS

28 APPENDICES

A: Charter School Overview

B: Report Information

CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND

HARLEM LINK CHARTER SCHOOL

21 West 111th Street, New York, New York | Grades: K-5 | NYC Community School District 3

The State University of New York Board of Trustees (the “SUNY Trustees”) approved the original charter for Harlem Link Charter School (“Harlem Link”) on June 22, 2004. The charter opened in fall 2005, serving 108 students in Kindergarten and 1st grade.

“ MISSION

Harlem Link Charter School, a pre-Kindergarten to 5th grade public school, links academics, values, and community to graduate scholars who learn and serve in their communities. Families, staff, and the Harlem community partner to provide a safe, supportive learning environment that empowers students and alumni to take an active role in their learning and lead with their values.

CURRENT CHARTER

Serves: Kindergarten – 5th

*Chartered Enrollment:
500*

*Charter Expiration:
July 31, 2023*

PROPOSED FUTURE CHARTER

Serves: Kindergarten – 5th

*Chartered Enrollment:
412*

*Charter Expiration:
July 31, 2028*

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Rigorous, high expectations, and a belief in students;



A data driven curriculum and pedagogy that support the school’s mission;



High levels of professional learning;



Family and community involvement strategies; and,



Supportive school culture.



CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND



NOTEWORTHY

During the 2020-21 school year, the charter commissioned a mural for the community on 111th St. The mural celebrates families, educators, school staff members, and medical personnel that supported the community through the hardships caused by COVID-19. The mural also honors the memories of those lost through the pandemic while preserving hope for future growth.

RESPONSE TO INTERRUPTED INSTRUCTION CAUSED BY COVID-19

Harlem Link reflected on the effectiveness of programmatic changes implemented during the period of remote learning to identify priorities for the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years. Instructional leaders and the board identified small group instruction, technological fluency, and social emotional awareness as program priorities following the COVID-19 pandemic. To prioritize small group instruction, Harlem Link hired both an additional English language learner (“ELL”) teacher and a special education teacher support services (“SETSS”) instructor to support students who experienced interrupted instruction during the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. The charter incorporates Zearn and Lexia Core 5, two adaptive learning software programs, into the educational program to provide tailored support for students. Harlem Link implements additional emotional supports to encourage self regulation and increase focus on the academic program. Harlem Link continues to strategically modify its educational program in response to academic achievement gaps exacerbated by interrupted instruction.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

FULL-TERM RENEWAL

Full-Term Renewal. *The Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) recommends the SUNY Trustees’ Charter Schools Committee approve the Application for Charter Renewal of Harlem Link Charter School for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten – 5th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 412 students. The Institute makes this recommendation based on Harlem Link Charter School meeting the criteria for charter renewal set forth in the Policies for the Renewal of Not-for-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”).¹*



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

REQUIRED FINDINGS

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the charter has met the SUNY Trustees’ specific renewal criteria, the Institute makes the following findings required by the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended, the “Act”):

- 1: the charter, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal, meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules, and regulations;
- 2: the education corporation can demonstrate the ability to operate the charter in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and,
- 3: given the programs it will offer, its structure, and its purpose, approving the charter to operate for another five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.²

1. SUNY Renewal Policies (p. 14) are available on the [Institute’s website](#).

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During its five year charter term, Harlem Link is an academic success having come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals. The information below demonstrates the key findings for the SUNY Trustees and highlights the successes of the charter.

FINDINGS & INFORMATION

Is the charter an academic success?

Harlem Link demonstrated academic success in the following ways:

- In each year of the charter term for which there is reliable state exam data, Harlem Link outperformed the district in both English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics;
- Harlem Link demonstrated high comparative achievement statewide during the 2018-19 school year. The charter posted effect sizes in ELA and mathematics far above the target of 0.3 indicating that the charter performed higher than expected to a large degree compared to demographically similar schools; and,
- Harlem Link exceeded the absolute performance target of 75% proficiency on the New York State science assessment for each year for which there is reliable state exam data during the charter term. In those years, Harlem Link also outperformed the district in science.

Is the charter an effective, viable organization?

Harlem Link is an effective, viable organization, and the board provides effective oversight. During the charter term, the board reflected on the community’s needs and academic priorities and revised the charter’s leadership structure. Two co-principals now lead the charter, and the board works effectively to provide support.

Is the charter fiscally sound?

Harlem Link is fiscally sound based on the fiscal evidence collected through renewal review. The education corporation has met or come close to meeting its fiscal benchmarks throughout the charter term and presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term.

If the SUNY Trustees renew the charter, are the education corporation’s plans for the charter reasonable, feasible, and achievable?

Harlem Link’s plans for the future are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The charter plans to implement the same core elements that led to its success over the current charter term and plans to add two classrooms with intensive special education support over the next charter term to meet community demand for additional special education services.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Harlem Link made considerable progress since the last charter term, when the SUNY Trustees approved a five year renewal with conditions. Harlem Link exceeded district performance in ELA, mathematics, and science according to state assessment results prior to the COVID-19 pandemic interrupting instruction in 2019-20 and thereafter. Based on those credible assessment results, the Institute deemed Harlem Link met the conditions of renewal. In 2021-22, the charter's students with disabilities and ELLs posted proficiency rates in ELA and mathematics higher than their comparison district peers. The charter, guided by the leadership of the co-principals, prioritizes program continuity, data informed instruction, and the social emotional wellness of students and staff members alike. These efforts surfaced in results from the spring 2022 New York City Department of Education ("NYCDOE") family survey, where 97% of families who received the survey responded and 93% expressed overall satisfaction with the program. The charter also anticipates it will retain over 80% of staff members in the upcoming school year, despite considerable turnover in the teaching professions in the years following the pandemic.

Based on the Institute's review of the charter's performance as posted over the charter term; a review of the Application for Charter Renewal submitted by the education corporation; a review of academic, organizational, governance, and financial documentation; and a renewal review of the charter's academic program, the Institute finds that the charter meets the required criteria for renewal.

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees grant Harlem Link Charter School a Full-Term Subsequent Renewal of five years.



A stack of several books is shown, with a pair of glasses resting on top. The entire image has a blue color overlay. A white-outlined box is centered over the books, containing the text 'DP', 'DATA PRESENTATION', and 'PAGES: 7-21'. At the bottom of the image, there are four small white boxes, each containing a letter and a corresponding category name: 'AP' for Academic Performance, 'CP' for Compliance Performance, 'CS' for Community Satisfaction, and 'SD' for Student Demographics.

DP

DATA PRESENTATION

PAGES: 7-21

AP

ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE

CP

COMPLIANCE
PERFORMANCE

CS

COMMUNITY
SATISFACTION

SD

STUDENT
DEMOGRAPHICS

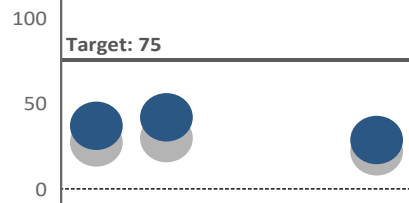


ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

HARLEM LINK CHARTER SCHOOL

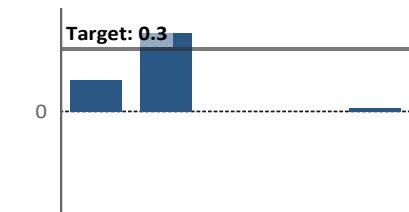
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

District Comparison. The percentage of students at **the charter** performing at or above proficiency in ELA compared to the district.



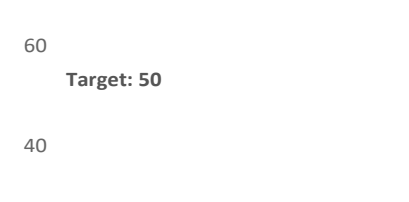
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2018	3-5	28	37
2019	3-5	30	42
2020	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021	N/A	N/A	N/A
2022	3-5	23	29

Effect Size. The chart shows charter's effect size above its predicted level of performance in **ELA** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2018	3-5	0.15
2019	3-5	0.38
2020	N/A	N/A
2021	N/A	N/A
2022	3-5	0.01

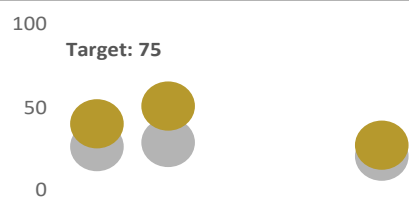
Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. The charter's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **ELA**.



Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2018	42.1
2019	48.8
2020	N/A
2021	N/A
2022	N/A

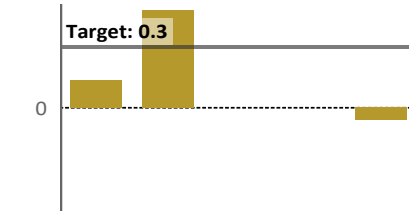
MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

District Comparison. The percentage of students at **the charter** performing at or above proficiency in mathematics compared to the district.



Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2018	3-5	26	40
2019	3-5	29	51
2020	N/A	N/A	N/A
2021	N/A	N/A	N/A
2022	3-5	20	27

Effect Size. The chart shows charter's effect size above its predicted level of performance in **mathematics** according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.



Test Year	Test Grades	Effect Size
2018	3-5	0.14
2019	3-5	0.47
2020	N/A	N/A
2021	N/A	N/A
2022	3-5	-0.06

Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile. The charter's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **mathematics**.

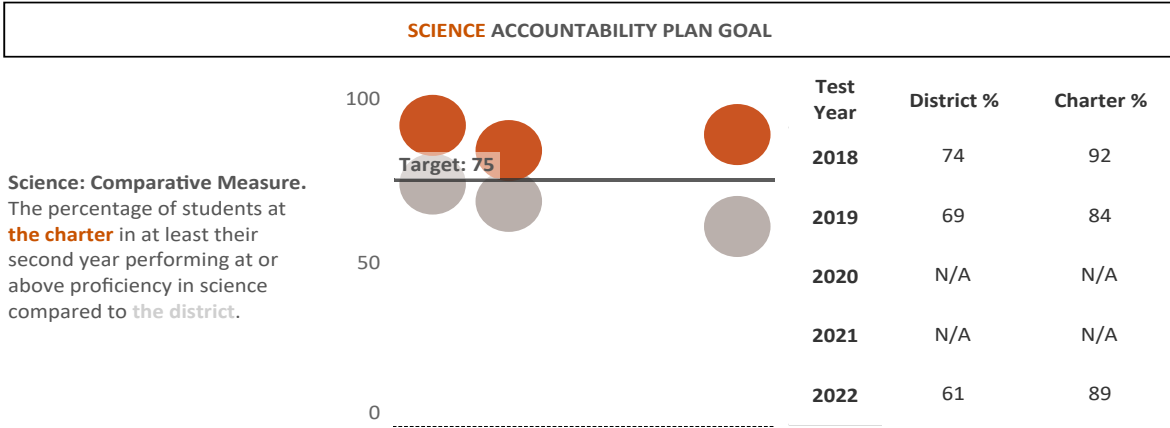


Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2018	44.0
2019	45.3
2020	N/A
2021	N/A
2022	N/A



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

HARLEM LINK CHARTER SCHOOL



SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE*

	2018	2019	2022
Students with Disabilities Enrollment	104	107	108
Tested on State Exam	28	39	42
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	21.4	25.6	14.3
District Percent Proficient	14.0	14.8	8.0
ELL Enrollment	32	29	49
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	29	27	43
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	41.4	3.7	7.0

* The academic outcome data about the performance of students receiving special education services and English language learners ("ELLs") above is not tied to separate goals in the charter school's formal Accountability Plan. The NYSESLAT, the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, is a standardized state exam. "Making Progress" is defined as moving up at least one level of proficiency. Student scores fall into five categories/proficiency levels: Entering; Emerging; Transitioning; Expanding; and, Commanding. In order to comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations on reporting education outcome data, the Institute does not report assessment results for groups containing five or fewer students and indicates this with an "s".

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE



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

Harlem Link came close to meeting its key academic Accountability Plan goals in ELA and mathematics over the majority of its subsequent five year Accountability Period. The SUNY Trustees placed conditions on the charter's renewal in 2017-18 requiring Harlem Link to meet certain performance targets to be eligible to apply for a subsequent renewal. The charter met those conditions in 2018-19, the final year when the conditions remained applicable before disruptions to the state exams. Harlem Link also met its science and Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA") goals over the term.

From 2017-18 through 2021-22, Harlem Link's students enrolled in at least their second year posted proficiency rates in ELA and mathematics that surpassed the comparison district average in each year with data suitable for analysis. In ELA, the charter posted positive effect sizes over the term indicating the charter performed at least slightly higher than expected in comparison to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students. In mathematics, after posting positive effect sizes in 2017-18 and 2018-19, the charter posted an effect size in 2021-22 that demonstrated lower than expected performance.

Given the absence of reliable and credible performance data from the state's ELA and mathematics assessments for 3rd – 8th grade students in 2019-20 and 2020-21, the Institute worked with charters and testing experts to develop a set of performance measures for use with internal and nationally normed assessments. The Institute continues to analyze each charter's internal assessments to evaluate the charter's academic attainment in lieu of reliable state exam data in 2020-21 and to contextualize the baseline state exam data from 2021-22. During the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years, the charter demonstrated academic success against key academic Accountability Plan goals using the nationally normed NWEA MAP ("MAP") assessment. In 2021-22, the charter's students enrolled for at least two years posted rates of achieving the proficiency equivalent of 17% in ELA and 15% in mathematics. Although the charter's absolute performance was low, the charter posted mean growth percentiles in both subjects that came close to the target of 50.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

ASSESSMENT

Harlem Link’s instructional leaders and teachers plan to continue improving assessment systems including evaluating assessments for alignment with the rigor of the New York State learning standards in the next charter term, if renewed. Harlem Link’s present assessment system allows regular and sustained data analysis that improves teacher competencies and student learning. One of Harlem Link’s stated priorities for the current charter term is improving data analysis systems and teachers and staff members across the organization accurately reflect these goals.

The charter has initiated the process of auditing assessments to ensure alignment with the rigor of state standards. The charter administers assessments and organizes data into five levels aligned to the charter’s curriculum and state performance standards: qualitative assessments at level 1, classroom exit tickets at level 2, internal benchmark assessments at level 3, MAP and Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (“F&P”) at level 4, and standardized state assessments at level 5. In the present charter term, Harlem Link’s co-principals and instructional coaches evaluated and updated level 3 assessments to ensure alignment with the charter’s curricula, mission, and values. Instructional leadership can continue this work to improve alignment between level 3 assessments and the rigor of the state learning standards.

Harlem Link’s data team, comprised of a manager of data and accountability and a data and assessment coordinator, builds a collection of data trackers and reports that organize data from all five levels of assessment. All data, trackers, and reports are available to instructional leaders and teachers via Google Data Studio. The data team also facilitates meetings in advance of each unit to align teachers in reliably and consistently scoring assessments, as well as training that supports teachers in navigating and building reports in Google Data Studio.

Harlem Link’s systems for synthesizing and distributing data facilitate adjustments to classroom instruction including small group interventions, special education services, and deploying additional coaching. The charter’s instructional leadership team (“ILT”) meets weekly to review data from student assessments and co-principal walkthroughs, and then identifies teachers needing additional support. Instructional leaders match instructional coaches with teachers to intentionally align coaching expertise and teacher need. For example, leaders may pair a teacher needing improved differentiation strategies for English language learners (“ELLs”) with the multilingual learners manager.

Since Harlem Link identified strengthening data systems as a priority for the 2021-2022 and 2022-23 school years, instructional leadership updated the professional development calendar to include regular meetings and professional development to expand teachers’ capacity to respond to data. In addition to ILT meetings, staff members regularly review assessment results in professional learning community (“PLC”) meetings, individual coaching sessions, curriculum and data meetings, and Response to Intervention (“RTI”) planning meetings.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Improved data systems and tools support Harlem Link in strategically setting growth goals and monitoring progress toward those goals. Strong data systems also allow instructional leaders to make informed improvements to curricula and instructional coaching and professional development to improve the classroom environment for Harlem Link students.

CURRICULUM

Harlem Link's curricular program supports teachers with instructional planning. The charter provides teachers with a clear set of resources that include scope and sequence documents, unit plans, and lesson plans with materials. The ELA curriculum is an internally developed program based on the reading workshop model and a balanced literacy approach, two instructional methods that focus on the independent work of the reader. The charter also uses Foundations as its core phonics program for Kindergarten – 2nd grade. During this charter term, leaders introduced two phonics programs: Heggerty for the lower grades (to supplement Foundations) and Words Their Way for the upper grades. The charter has many resources for guided reading, which is a facet of the ELA program at Harlem Link. For mathematics, the charter uses Savvas and Cognitively Guided Instruction curricula. Recognizing some limitations within Savvas, leaders compiled resources and tools to supplement and ensure alignment to the New York State learning standards. Teachers are responsible for updating lesson plans to include daily conference schedules, differentiation strategies, and co-teaching models. Since the previous renewal visit, leaders have built teachers' skills to develop clear learning objectives consistently across lessons. During the charter term, leaders began working closely with teachers on intellectual preparation for lessons. During the visit, the Institute observed an effective grade level meeting where the grade team leader helped teachers unpack and internalize a specific mathematics concept, discuss student misconceptions, and plan ways to address misunderstandings as students work through the learning.

Leaders recognize a need to improve the overall rigor of teaching and learning. Given that the curricular program utilizes many supplemental materials, and in efforts to meet students at their ability and skill levels, the curricular program does not meet the rigor of grade level standards consistently across subject areas. In response to this need, leaders developed an annual process to reflect on and revise curricular programs each summer. Teachers provide feedback on how well lessons went and review student achievement data alongside leaders to make curricular adjustments for the following school year. The charter's experience building a pre-Kindergarten curricular program highlighted the value in integrating more experiential learning opportunities for all Harlem Link students. The annual reflection process now includes a focus on project based learning. An example of this is a restaurant study unit in 1st grade. Teachers plan out learning activities that involve both ELA and mathematics, and students have opportunities to experience learning in local Harlem restaurants.

PEDAGOGY

Since its previous renewal, Harlem Link demonstrated clear improvement in teaching and learning throughout the charter. However, lesson materials do not consistently meet the rigor of state standards, and the charter would benefit from reviewing its materials to ensure that all lessons appropriately reach these standards.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Generally, teachers are intellectually prepared and deliver purposeful lessons. With teachers focused on intellectual preparation of content during grade team meetings, teachers' understanding and development of concepts has improved since the Institute's previous renewal visit. Teachers present students with a clear objective for each lesson. Teachers outline clear teacher roles and responsibilities for co-taught lessons in lesson plans and then execute co-teaching models effectively including a focus on supporting students through small group work and individualized support. Teachers check for understanding with exit tickets and with individual conferences with students. Although these checks are effective, leaders recognize the opportunity for teachers to develop more strategies to check for student understanding throughout lessons. The ongoing curricula and assessment audit for rigor and alignment will ensure teachers and students have access to high quality grade level materials in every lesson.

The Institute observed consistently safe and welcoming learning environments across classrooms, which reflects the charter's focus on Responsive Classrooms and building in social emotional learning components throughout the day. Teachers plan many opportunities for students to work with one another and share ideas during lessons. Teachers also build in opportunities for music and movement breaks throughout the day. At Harlem Link, learning time is maximized since teachers consistently establish a welcoming environment and clear routines for students.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Harlem Link has strong instructional leadership that establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance. Harlem Link restructured its leadership team in the 2021-22 school year, following the deliberate dismissal of the charter's co-founders/executive directors, and the resignation of multiple board members. Committed to a shared leadership model, the board selected two leaders with more than a decade of experience as classroom teachers, and most recently as assistant principals, to serve as the charter's co-principals. The long standing community relationships held by the co-principals stabilized the community during the leadership transition and pandemic.

Harlem Link's co-principals share instructional oversight by splitting supervision, evaluation, and coaching of Kindergarten – 2nd grade and 3rd – 5th grade teachers. Supported by an expanded ILT, the co-principals identify clear goals and systems necessary to deliver a rigorous, mission-aligned, instructional program that is highly responsive to the needs of students and staff members. The ILT is comprised of the two co-principals, two co-directors of student and family affairs, a director of literacy, a multi-language learner specialist, and the manager of special education. Together, this team is making considerable progress toward meeting internal goals around providing a rigorous, mission-aligned instructional program, supported by strong data analysis systems.

A culture of transparency, reflective practice, and professional learning permeates Harlem Link. In response to the community's experience through the leadership transition, Harlem Link increased opportunities for parent and community involvement in decision making. As a result, teachers, staff members, and caretakers demonstrate alignment and understanding of the charter's articulated goals, priorities, and expectations for academic progress. For example, through evidence collected through document review and interviews

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

conducted at the time of the visit, instructional and operational staff members reiterated data analysis and integration as schoolwide priorities. Teachers and staff members indicate the shift in transparent leadership and inclusivity, which was also echoed by caretakers in the 2021-22 NYCDOE family satisfaction survey, where 93% respondents indicated that Harlem Link has inclusive leadership. Instructional leaders recently introduced PLCs as a key lever to improve teaching and learning across the charter. PLCs center on specific topics related to improving the educational program and topics range from new teacher development, restorative justice, the science of reading, and student independence and empowerment. Leaders expect instructional and operational staff members to participate in PLCs to create continuity and a culture of learning across the campus.

In conjunction with the board, leaders developed an annual performance evaluation that prioritizes accountability and growth. Leaders formally observe teachers in their respective grade bands at least four times a year. Teachers receive feedback and coaching from the ILT based on a four week coaching cycle focused on skill development and growth areas identified during weekly ILT meetings.

Co-leaders demonstrate the capacity to address gaps in the academic program. However, given the expanded roles outside of the instructional program, additional expertise is needed to ensure teachers have consistent support, coaching, and professional development to address pedagogical skill gaps. Harlem Link has a culture of growing and developing leaders within the charter with most teachers and administrators having seven to 10 years of experience at the charter. Low turnover and high retention are positives for any organization, yet this also evidences a correlation to historical low proficiency scores evident in Harlem Link's previous charter terms. Harlem Link can expand support for the charter's co-principals by strategically creating staff member roles dedicated solely to instructional coaching, modeling, professional development, and evaluation of pedagogical skills.

AT RISK PROGRAM

Harlem Link's at-risk program supports the educational needs of students with disabilities, ELLs, and students at risk of academic failure. In response to feedback from the Institute during the last renewal visit and increasing academic need as a result of interrupted instruction, the charter updated its procedures for identifying students with disabilities and ELLs and increased capacity to provide intervention services.

The charter implements a data tracker that integrates qualitative and quantitative data about student performance. Teachers and instructional leaders concerned about students' academic progress complete forms to identify students in need of intervention services. The charter implements a RTI process in which students receive multi-tiered system of supports ("MTSS") services based on level of need. The RTI planning team, composed of ILT members, grade level teachers, and various at-risk service providers, meets every three weeks to evaluate interventions and modify as needed. Harlem Link provides tier 1 and tier 2 push-in and pull-out services with the support of SETSS and academic intervention services ("AIS") providers. If students do not make considerable academic progress, then Harlem Link's manager for special education and the intervention team work with the committee on special education ("CSE") and families to refer the student for evaluation

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

for special education services. In response to the growing number of students demonstrating a need for intervention services in the current charter term, Harlem Link hired both an additional AIS and SETSS provider to provide expanded services. In response to community demand, Harlem Link is also strategically planning for two 12:1+1 classrooms, which provide intensive supports to students in a classroom with a maximum 12 to 2 student to teacher ratio, the first of which will open in the 2023-24 school year, if renewed.

Harlem Link provides an integrated ELL program to a diverse student body that speaks multiple languages including Spanish, Haitian Creole, Arabic, French, and others. The charter employs an ELL specialist and an ELL teacher to provide push-in and stand alone ELL instruction. To identify ELLs, the charter administers the home language questionnaire and an informal interview upon enrollment. The charter then administers the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (“NYSITELL”) to determine students’ speaking, listening, reading, and writing needs. In the current charter term, Harlem Links’ ELL team updated the programs’ curricular materials to better align with content taught in general classrooms, as well as ensure alignment with the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (“NYSESLAT”). This included moving away from English Now! and For Sure! curricula in favor of curricular materials developed internally by the ELL team. The charter’s ELL specialist also developed progress monitoring trackers and ELL program specific lesson templates. As a result of the updates to both the ELL program procedures and the curricular materials and supporting documents, Harlem Link supports ELL students in making considerable growth on assessments, often outperforming their district peers. For example, while no ELL student tested proficient on the state ELA exam in 2018-19, Harlem Link ELL students posted a 31% proficiency rate for ELLs on the ELA exam in 2022. In spring 2022, Harlem Link ELL students outperformed the comparison district in both ELA and mathematics exams respectively: 31% versus 6% ELA and 22% versus 10%, respectively.

Instructional leaders set rigorous goals for academic progress for all sub-populations of students at Harlem Link and provide the resources and professional development to support teachers in delivering interventions. All instructional staff members reiterate the goals and systems and procedures are in place to track progress toward these goals. For instance, Harlem Link’s manager of special education provides custom “at a glance” documents that support classroom teachers in accessing all accommodations, goals, and required progress monitoring for each student in their classroom. During summer training, teachers receive professional development on co-teaching and differentiation strategies. The manager of special education and the ELL specialist also provide targeted observation and coaching to teachers and co-teachers that demonstrate an additional need for coaching to support sub-populations’ learning. Harlem Link’s schedule provides weekly opportunities for special education and ELL teachers to collaborate with general education teachers. All at-risk instructional staff members are expected to participate in grade level and whole school planning sessions. Given the coordination of at-risk services and the pedagogical support provided to teachers, Harlem Link delivers a strong at-risk program that supports the educational needs of all students and fosters the belief that all students can succeed.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Harlem Link's organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program. As evidenced by document review and interviews conducted at the time of the visit, the restructured shared leadership model facilitates streamlined communication across the charter and allows for greater transparency between administrators and families. Staff members understand the reporting structure, express appreciation for greater transparency, and identify themselves as accountable for specific goals and functions.

At the time of the renewal, both co-principals supervise the director of operations; however, leaders indicated this was a temporary structure given the recent leadership transition and shared plans to revise the reporting and supervision structure for the upcoming school year. Leaders plan, if renewed, a further assessment of staff capacity across instructional and operations staff to maximize staff capacity and resources.

Over the charter term, Harlem Link's actual enrollment was 82% of chartered enrollment on average. Enrollment declined over the charter term; however, the charter identified specific strategies to address enrollment gaps in the upcoming charter term, if renewed. In addition to dedicating a staff position to recruitment, marketing, and outreach efforts, leaders and the board developed a specific committee dedicated to student recruitment, enrollment, and retention strategies.

Leaders acknowledge limitations in offering a 12:1+1 program resulted in families withdrawing from Harlem Link. As such, the board and leadership are exploring options to offer the specialized classroom setting to meet the needs of more students. Leaders also discussed exploring a bus transportation option for students living in districts where families have expressed interest. Lastly, the committee is exploring intentional marketing and outreach efforts to families within the located and adjacent districts by partnering with community organizations and daycare centers and establishing a parent ambassador program to facilitate referrals.

BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

Harlem Link is governed by an eight member trustee board with backgrounds in law, higher education, finance, independent schools, and professional learning. Harlem Link's board works to support leaders in executing the day-to-day operations of the charter and ensuring the charter's future.

During the 2021-22 school year, Harlem Link's board experienced turnover in conjunction with changes in the charter's building level instructional leadership. Five members of the board departed, but the board was able to secure membership from three new individuals and continues the process of recruiting new board members. Following the charter's leadership transition, the board is committed to evaluating its effectiveness and goals as it enters a new charter term. Along with the new building level organizational structure, the board re-aligned its committee structures, reporting cadence, and data dashboards to promote greater accountability and reduce outright deference to the building leadership team. The board also evaluated its leader evaluation practices and updated the annual school leader evaluation template to include student performance measures. Harlem Link's co-principals regularly meet with the board chair and the board to provide information on the charter's performance including measures of student performance, financial status, and staff member updates.

COMPLIANCE REPORTING



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

The education corporation substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations, and provisions of its charter. During the current charter term, the education corporation demonstrates a clear record of compliance with the terms of its charter including the timely submission of required reporting to the Institute.

HARLEM LINK CHARTER SCHOOL

Board Minutes

The board meeting minutes do not properly record votes in accordance with the Open Meetings Law. The Institute is working with the board to ensure it records and reports votes in compliance with the law.

Code of Ethics/Conflicts of Interest Policy

At the time of the renewal submission, the education corporation's code of ethics and conflicts of interest policies were missing several required components. The Institute is working with the education corporation to ensure it adopts a more comprehensive policy.

Teacher Certification

The Act allows charters to hire up to 15 uncertified lead teachers contingent upon those teachers meeting certain requirements including: two years of Teach for America experience; three years of teaching experience; status as a higher education professor; exceptional experience in a subject; or, teaching science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) or career and technical education courses.

At the time of the visit, the charter employed 17 uncertified lead teachers with all but four meeting the appropriate qualifications under the Act. The education corporation offers tuition reimbursement to teachers completing the certification process.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

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

PARENT SATISFACTION: SURVEY RESULTS

RESPONSE RATE	OVERALL SATISFACTION	EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	STRONG FAMILY & COMMUNITY TIES	TRUST
97%	93%	93%	92%	94%

Parent Survey Data

The Institute compiled data from the NYCDOE’s annual family survey from the 2021-22 school year for each school due for renewal. In 2021-22, 97% of families who received the NYCDOE survey responded. Of the families who responded, 93% expressed satisfaction with the charter.

Parent Focus Group

The Institute asks all charters facing renewal to convene a representative set of parents for a focus group discussion. A representative set includes parents of students in attendance at the charter for multiple years, parents of students new to the charter, parents of students receiving general education services, parents of students with special needs, and parents of ELLs. Focus group participants reported high levels of satisfaction with Harlem Link’s social emotional learning curriculum, citing that the charter supports students with significant behavioral or emotional needs using innovative and non-exclusionary techniques. Parents also stated that Harlem Link provides strong reading intervention services, and that AIS teachers have been highly effective in spurring rapid reading growth for students reading below grade level. For mathematics instruction, parents described the extensive assistance that Harlem Link provides for families who are unfamiliar with the charter’s method of instruction, giving families supplemental materials and software applications to help them provide homework assistance to their children. Parents expressed appreciation for the charter’s responsiveness to students struggling in mathematics, citing that the program integrates new curriculum and small group instruction as needs arise.

Parents shared the perspective that Harlem Link teachers and staff members are highly accessible and keep them well informed of children’s progress using email, in-person communication, and the Parent Square platform. Harlem Link sends communications to parents explaining every unit of study, and it holds meetings at the beginning of the school year to walk parents through its curriculum. Parents also expressed appreciation of Harlem Link’s Start to Finish program, which supports families with the process of applying to selective middle schools, along with the school’s efforts to keep them informed of enrichment programs and community activities to encourage students to develop interests, talents, and relationships.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

Public Comments

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

The NYCDOE held its required hearing on Harlem Link’s renewal application on December 12, 2022 by videoconference. School leaders spoke of how excited they are for the improvements in the program and its continued partnerships with its co-located schools and the community. Leaders spoke of the community ties and family collaboration focusing on an inclusive model with a responsive and restorative approach and how they have seen success when hearing from alumni. A parent of a student with a disability spoke of how supportive the school is and how staff members ensure her child receives all the services needed and how the program is supportive of all students socially, emotionally, and academically. She commented on how each classroom ensures there is space for students to gain calmness when needed. No one spoke in opposition to the application.

Persistence in Enrollment An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2021-22, 88% of Harlem Link students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data from previous years of the charter term is available in student demographics section of the report.

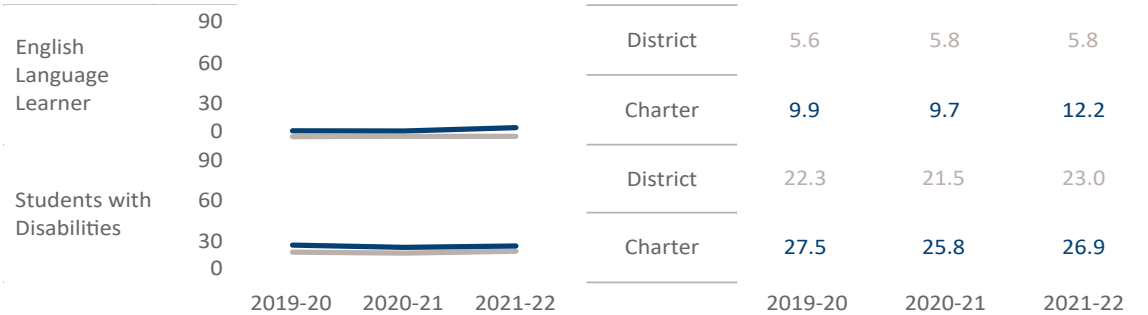
The Institute derived the statistical information on persistence in enrollment from its database. No comparative data from the NYCDOE or the NYSED is available to the Institute to provide either district or statewide context.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

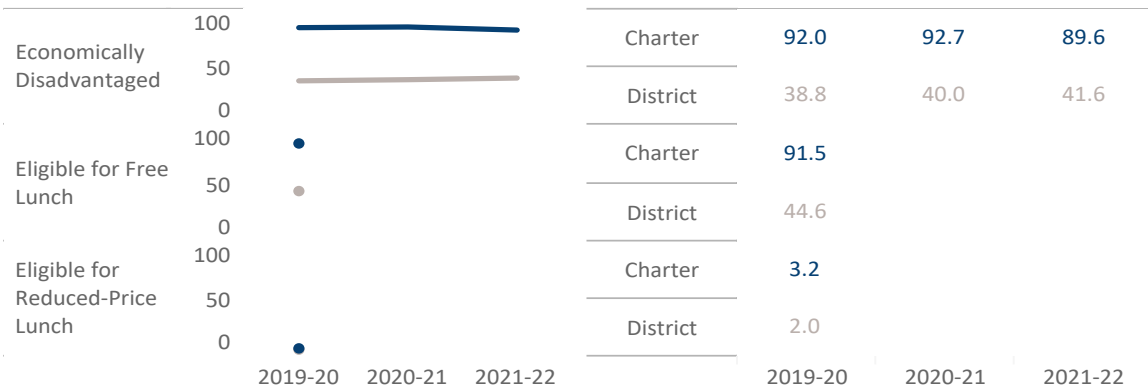
Harlem Link Charter School

Manhattan CSD 3

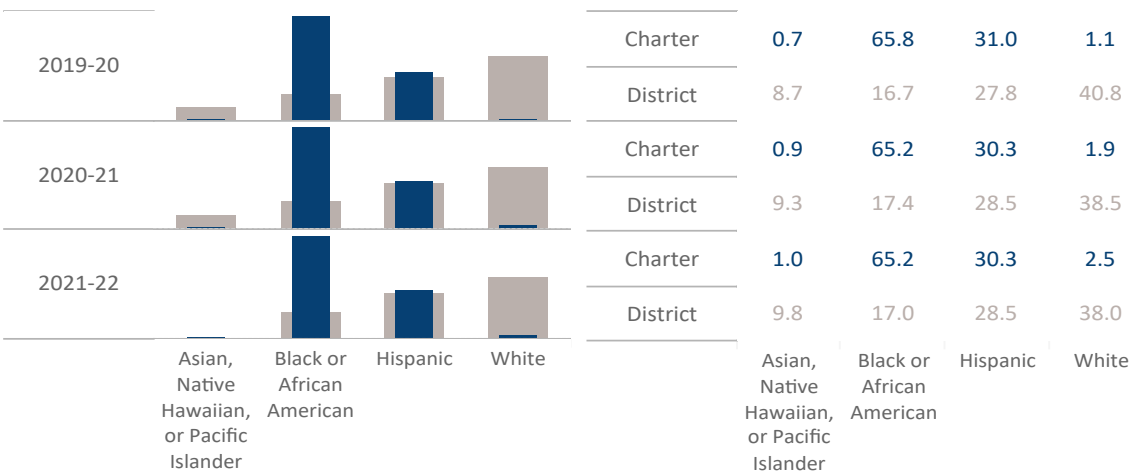
Student Demographics: Special Populations



Student Demographics: Free/Reduced Lunch



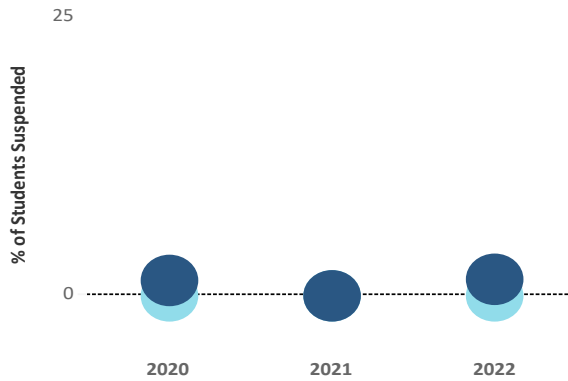
Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED except for the charter's 2020-21 ELL enrollment which reflects data reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Harlem Link Charter School



Manhattan CSD 3

	ISS Rate	OSS Rate
2020	0.0	1.4
2021	0.0	0.0
2022	0.0	1.5

Data suitable for comparison are not available. The percentage rate shown here is calculated using the method employed by NYCDOE: the total number of students receiving an in school or out of school suspension at any time during the school year is divided by the total enrollment, then multiplied by 100.

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

Expulsions: The number of students expelled from the charter each year

	2020	2021	2022
2019-20			
2020-21	77.9	0	0
2021-22	77.0	0	0
	88.4		

Harlem Link Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2021-22

		Target	Charter
enrollment	economically disadvantaged	50.1	89.2
	English language learners	7.6	12.1
	students with disabilities	16.6	24.6
retention	economically disadvantaged	93.9	87.8
	English language learners	93.7	88.6
	students with disabilities	94.6	85.7

* Data reported in these charts reflect information reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TARGETS

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a charter must include in its renewal application information regarding the efforts it will put in place to meet or exceed SUNY's enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, ELLs, and students who are eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch ("FRPL") program. The Institute examines each charter's progress toward meeting or coming close to meeting its targets over the charter term as well as the efforts it has and will put in place to meet or continue to meet those targets.

Harlem Link makes good faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets. Harlem Link meets or approaches all enrollment and retention targets for subgroups of students. The charter plans to conduct the following recruitment efforts:

- Conducting extensive outreach in high needs neighborhoods in the district of location and surrounding districts;
- Sending recruitment materials by mail to families who live in zip codes with high rates of economic hardship;
- Conducting information sessions and distributing materials at numerous community-based organizations, health care clinics, and housing complexes including Harlem GEMS, the Adair House, the Abyssinian Development Corporation, and the Goddard Riverside Head Start Center;
- Conducting outreach for students with disabilities in areas with a high percentage of students receiving services for disabilities;
- Including a clear description of the charter's extensive services for students with disabilities in all recruitment materials;
- Working with several preschools that serve large populations of students with disabilities including the Annie G. Newsome Head Start Center and the Union Street Settlement Associate Day Care, to notify families about the charter's program;
- Emphasizing the charter's inclusive model, grounded in collaborative team teaching, which facilitates the integration of students with disabilities and general education students in all recruitment efforts;
- Sending translated materials to neighborhoods and zip codes with large immigrant populations;
- Offering the student enrollment application in multiple languages;
- Providing an interpreter for every school presentation, recruitment fair, and information session;
- Hosting information sessions in day care centers throughout Harlem including the Dorothy Day Early Childhood Center and the East Harlem Bilingual Head Start Center;
- Partnering with the NYC Charter School Center to participate in its recruitment efforts aimed at ELLs;
- Providing trauma informed and emotionally responsive practices in the classroom; and,
- Partnering with the Northside Center for Child Development, which provides an onsite counselor for Harlem Link students.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Harlem Link is fiscally sound based on the Institute’s analysis of the fiscal evidence collected through the renewal review. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard presents color-coded tables and charts indicating that the education corporation has demonstrated fiscal soundness over the majority of the charter term.³



DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION OPERATE PURSUANT TO A FISCAL PLAN WITH REALISTIC BUDGETS THAT IT MONITORS AND ADJUSTS WHEN APPROPRIATE?

The education corporation operates pursuant to a long-range financial plan in which it creates realistic budgets that it monitors and adjusts when appropriate. The following elements are generally present:

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation has clear budgetary objectives and budget preparation procedures.	+
Board members, charter management, and staff members contribute to the budget process, as appropriate.	+
The education corporation frequently compares its long-range fiscal plan for the charter to actual progress and adjusts it to meet changing conditions.	+
The education corporation routinely analyzes budget variances for the charter; the board addresses material variances and makes necessary revisions.	+
Actual expenses are equal to, or less than, actual revenue with no material exceptions.	+

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

“+” : This indicator is generally present.

“-” : This indicator is generally not present.

“P” : The education corporation is progressing toward this indicator being present.

“N/A” : This indicator is not applicable.



FISCAL ANALYSIS

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION MAINTAIN APPROPRIATE INTERNAL CONTROLS AND PROCEDURES?

The education corporation maintains appropriate internal controls and procedures. The following elements are generally present:

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation has a history of sound fiscal policies, procedures, and practices, and appropriate internal controls.	+
The most recent audit report was free of any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls.	+
The education corporation reviews and updates its Financial Policies and Procedures Manual (“FPPM”), which covers the charter, on a regular basis. The most recent review of the FPPM is found in the next column. The Institute recommends, as a best practice, that the education corporation review and update its FPPM on an annual basis to ensure current operating systems are reflected.	JULY 2018
The most recent review of the FPPM was July 2018. The Institute recommends governing boards review and update the manual annually to ensure it illustrates current operating systems.	

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

The education corporation complies with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and NYSED with required financial reports that are on time, complete, and follow generally accepted accounting principles. The following reports are generally filed in a timely, accurate, and complete manner:

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
Annual financial statement audit reports including federal Single Audit report, if applicable.	+
Annual budgets.	+
Un-audited quarterly reports of income, expenses, and enrollment.	+

FISCAL ANALYSIS

Bi-monthly enrollment reports to the sending districts and, if applicable, to NYSED including proper documentation regarding the level of special education services provided to students.

+

Grant expenditure reports.

+

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION MAINTAIN ADEQUATE FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO ENSURE STABLE OPERATIONS?

The education corporation maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. Critical financial needs of the charter are not dependent on variable income (grants, donations, and fundraising). The following elements are generally present:

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
The education corporation maintains sufficient cash on hand to pay current bills and those that are due shortly.	+
The education corporation maintains adequate liquid reserves to fund expenses in the event of income loss (generally 30 days).	+
The education corporation prepares and monitors cash flow projections.	+
If the education corporation includes philanthropy in its budget, it monitors progress toward its development goals on a periodic basis.	N/A
If necessary, the education corporation pursues district state aid intercepts with NYSED to ensure adequate per pupil funding.	N/A
The education corporation accumulates unrestricted net assets that are equal to or exceed two percent of the charter's operating budget for the upcoming year.	+
The education corporation is in compliance with all loan covenants.	N/A

The education corporation reported operating surpluses. The fiscal dashboard for June 30, 2022 reflects fiscally strong with approximately \$3.5 million in net assets and 4.1 months of cash on hand to pay liabilities due shortly. Harlem Link has funded and maintained the required \$75,000 in a separate dissolution account as per the charter agreement.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

HARLEM LINK CHARTER SCHOOL

CHARTER INFORMATION

BALANCE SHEET

Opened 2005-06

Assets

Current Assets

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 1	1,587,506	2,153,262	2,653,916	4,174,457	3,531,350
Grants and Contracts Receivable	507,601	154,354	307,991	247,957	341,395
Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	-	-
Prepaid Expenses	45,277	22,460	14,438	13,139	1,908
Contributions and Other Receivables	-	-	-	-	-
Total Current Assets - GRAPH 1	2,140,384	2,330,076	2,976,345	4,435,553	3,874,653
Property, Building and Equipment, net	174,743	351,921	-	510,820	478,961
Other Assets	75,245	75,267	578,630	75,297	75,305
Total Assets - GRAPH 1	2,390,372	2,757,264	3,554,975	5,021,670	4,428,919

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	197,542	162,688	88,287	165,479	355,775
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	450,816	472,840	552,461	663,204	557,613
Deferred Revenue	-	-	-	-	-
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	-	-	-	-
Other	45,804	-	-	-	10,106
Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 1	694,162	635,528	640,748	828,683	923,494
Deferred Rent/Lease Liability	-	-	-	-	-
All other L-T debt and notes payable, net current maturities	-	-	-	1,132,500	-
Total Liabilities - GRAPH 1	694,162	635,528	640,748	1,961,183	923,494

Net Assets

Without Donor Restrictions	1,696,210	2,046,469	2,914,227	3,060,487	3,505,425
With Donor Restrictions	-	75,267	-	-	-
Total Net Assets	1,696,210	2,121,736	2,914,227	3,060,487	3,505,425
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	2,390,372	2,757,264	3,554,975	5,021,670	4,428,919

ACTIVITIES

Operating Revenue

Resident Student Enrollment	5,645,186	6,176,198	6,890,937	6,909,802	6,706,018
Students with Disabilities	1,030,339	1,249,570	1,663,757	1,664,494	1,483,441
Grants and Contracts					
State and local	29,563	27,776	27,422	33,028	-
Federal - Title and IDEA	520,162	342,018	395,462	480,881	649,862
Federal - Other	-	-	-	-	239,483
Other	368,644	364,403	372,914	385,948	355,581
NYC DoE Rental Assistance	-	-	-	-	-
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operating Revenue	7,593,894	8,159,965	9,350,492	9,474,153	9,434,385

Expenses

Regular Education	5,429,463	5,119,140	5,663,164	6,311,120	6,870,128
SPED	1,280,177	1,557,934	1,797,871	1,975,773	1,989,821
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Program Services	6,709,640	6,677,074	7,461,035	8,286,893	8,859,949
Management and General	954,619	1,222,190	1,162,086	986,639	1,161,282
Fundraising	82,804	80,517	98,812	203,299	223,038
Total Expenses - GRAPHS 2, 3 & 4	7,747,063	7,979,781	8,721,933	9,476,831	10,244,269
Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations	(153,169)	180,184	628,559	(2,678)	(809,884)

Support and Other Revenue

Contributions	65,463	222,275	156,281	148,134	121,579
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Income	439	23,067	7,651	804	1,133,243
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-
Total Support and Other Revenue	65,902	245,342	163,932	148,938	1,254,822

Total Unrestricted Revenue

7,784,796	8,405,307	9,514,424	9,623,091	10,689,207	
(125,000)	-	-	-	-	
Total Revenue - GRAPHS 2 & 3	7,659,796	8,405,307	9,514,424	9,623,091	10,689,207

Change in Net Assets

(87,267)	425,526	792,491	146,260	444,938	
Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 2	1,783,477	1,696,210	2,121,736	2,914,227	3,060,487
Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	-
Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 2	1,696,210	2,121,736	2,914,227	3,060,487	3,505,425

FISCAL ANALYSIS

HARLEM LINK CHARTER SCHOOL

CHARTER INFORMATION - (Continued)

Functional Expense Breakdown

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Personnel Service					
Administrative Staff Personnel	1,477,199	2,017,050	2,472,159	2,692,332	2,888,132
Instructional Personnel	3,316,095	3,419,880	3,663,399	4,234,362	4,213,305
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	27,700	-	-
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-
Total Salaries and Staff	4,793,294	5,436,930	6,163,258	6,926,694	7,101,437
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	977,902	1,088,953	1,257,779	1,492,830	1,550,285
Retirement	-	-	88,190	116,676	108,298
Management Company Fees	-	-	-	-	-
Building and Land Rent / Lease / Facility Financing	-	-	-	-	-
Staff Development	164,400	252,383	205,786	90,945	157,360
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	885,130	297,617	251,017	216,067	444,638
Marketing / Recruitment	147,666	108,149	104,567	84,011	108,623
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	419,602	464,984	52,098	237,097	414,888
Depreciation	66,654	115,320	144,239	167,110	185,019
Other	292,415	215,445	454,999	145,401	173,721
Total Expenses	7,747,063	7,979,781	8,721,933	9,476,831	10,244,269

CHARTER ANALYSIS

ENROLLMENT

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Original Chartered Enrollment	386	446	474	500	500
Final Chartered Enrollment (includes any revisions)	386	446	474	500	500
Actual Enrollment - GRAPH 4	382	392	422	425	388
Chartered Grades	K-5	K-5	K-5	K-5	K-5
Final Chartered Grades (includes any revisions)	-	-	-	-	-

Primary School District: NYC CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

Per Pupil Funding (Weighted Avg of All Districts)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Increase over prior year	3.4%	5.1%	5.2%	0.0%	4.1%

PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN

Revenue

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Operating	19,896	20,816	22,158	22,292	24,315
Other Revenue and Support	173	626	388	350	3,234
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	20,069	21,442	22,546	22,643	27,550

Expenses

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Program Services	17,580	17,033	17,680	19,499	22,835
Management and General, Fundraising	2,718	3,323	2,988	2,800	3,568
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	20,298	20,357	20,668	22,298	26,403
% of Program Services	86.6%	83.7%	85.5%	87.4%	86.5%
% of Management and Other	13.4%	16.3%	14.5%	12.6%	13.5%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5	-1.1%	5.3%	9.1%	1.5%	4.3%
% of Revenue Expended on Facilities	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Student to Faculty Ratio

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
9.5	8.7	7.7	7.1	6.9

Faculty to Admin Ratio

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
2.0	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6

Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6

Score	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Fiscally Needs Monitoring < 1.0	2.2	2.7	3.0	2.8	3.0
	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong

Working Capital - GRAPH 7

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Net Working Capital	1,446,222	1,694,548	2,335,597	3,606,870	2,951,159
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	18.6%	20.2%	24.5%	37.5%	27.6%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	3.1	3.7	4.6	5.4	4.2
Risk (Low ≥ 3.0 / Medium 1.4 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4)	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

Quick (Acid Test) Ratio

Score	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Risk (Low ≥ 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	3.0	3.6	4.6	5.3	4.2
Rating (Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7

Score	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

Months of Cash - GRAPH 8

Score	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Risk (Low > 3 mo. / Medium 1 - 3 mo. / High < 1 mo.)	2.5	3.2	3.7	5.3	4.1
Rating (Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.)	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

FUTURE PLANS



IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE CHARTER, ARE THE EDUCATION CORPORATION’S PLANS FOR THE CHARTER REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?

Harlem Link is an academic success having met or come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals. The charter is supported by a viable organization that continues to reflect on how to best support the day to day operations of the charter and ensure a viable future. Both the charter and the education corporation are fiscally sound and present sound financial plans. As such, the plans for Harlem Link for the next charter term are reasonable, feasible, and achievable.

HARLEM LINK CHARTER SCHOOL

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

Plans for the Educational Program. Harlem Link plans to implement the same core elements of its educational program that enabled the charter to meet or come close to meeting its key Accountability Plan goals in the current charter term. The charter plans to continue serving Kindergarten – 5th grade students, as well as add intensive special education classrooms in response to community demand.

Plans for Board Oversight & Governance. Harlem Link’s present board members express interest in continuing to serve the charter in the next charter term. The board continues to recruit new members with various expertise in response to leadership turnover in January 2022.

Fiscal & Facility Plans. Based on evidence collected through the renewal review including a review of the five year financial plan, Harlem Link presents a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the next charter term that is feasible and achievable.

Harlem Link utilizes NYCDOE co-located space and plans to continue in the same space for the next charter term.

	CURRENT	END OF NEXT CHARTER TERM
Enrollment	500	412
Grade Span	K-5	K-5
Teaching Staff	48	52
Days of Instruction	180	180

Harlem Link

AX

APPENDICES

PAGES AX 1-6

^A
CO
CHARTER
OVERVIEW

PAGE Ax 1

^B
RI
REPORT
INFORMATION

PAGE Ax 3



HARLEM LINK CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CHAIR	TRUSTEES
Naheem Harris, Co-Chair Brandilyn Dumas, Co-Chair	Monica Chestnut Kenneth M. Catandella Edward C. Robinson Jr. Kyle S. Haver Janelle Ashley Charles
TREASURER	
Jonathan Barrett	

CHARTER LEADERS

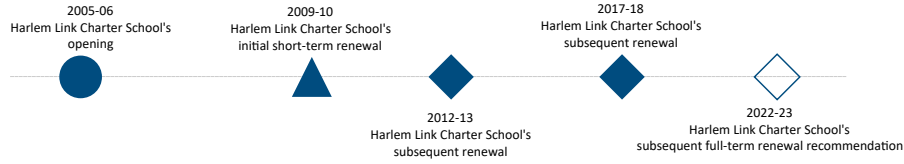
- PRINCIPAL**
- Aviva Buechler, Co-Principal (January 2022 to Present)*
 - Daniel Steinberg, Co-Principal (January 2022 to Present)*
 - Margaret Ryan, Co-Executive Director (July 2021 to January 2022)*
 - Steven Evangelista, Co-Executive Director (July 2021 to January 2022)*
 - Steven Evangelista, Principal (2010-11 to 2021-22)*
 - Margaret Ryan, Director of Inclusive Learning and Supports (2010-11 to 2021-22)*
 - Steven Evangelista, Co-Director of Operations (2005-06 to 2009-10)*
 - Margaret Ryan, Co-Director of Instruction (2006-06 to 2009-10)*

CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2018-19	446	392	88%	K-5
2019-20	474	422	89%	K-5
2020-21	500	425	85%	K-5
2021-22	500	388	78%	K-5
2022-23	500	345	69%	K-5



TIMELINE OF CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL



CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2005-06	First Year Visit	March 15, 2006
2006-07	Evaluation Visit	March 12, 2007
2007-08	Evaluation Visit	April 16-17, 2008
2008-09	Evaluation Visit	March 24, 2009
2009-10	Initial Renewal	October 27-29, 2009
2010-11	Evaluation Visit	March 1-2, 2011
2011-12	Evaluation Visit	January 17-19, 2012
2012-13	Subsequent Renewal	November 7-8, 2012
2015-16	Evaluation Visit	June 7, 2016
2016-17	Evaluation	May 22-23, 2017
2017-18	Subsequent Renewal	October 25-26, 2017
2017-18	Informal Visit	November 28, 2017
2022-23	Subsequent Renewal	December 1-2, 2022

CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL REVIEW

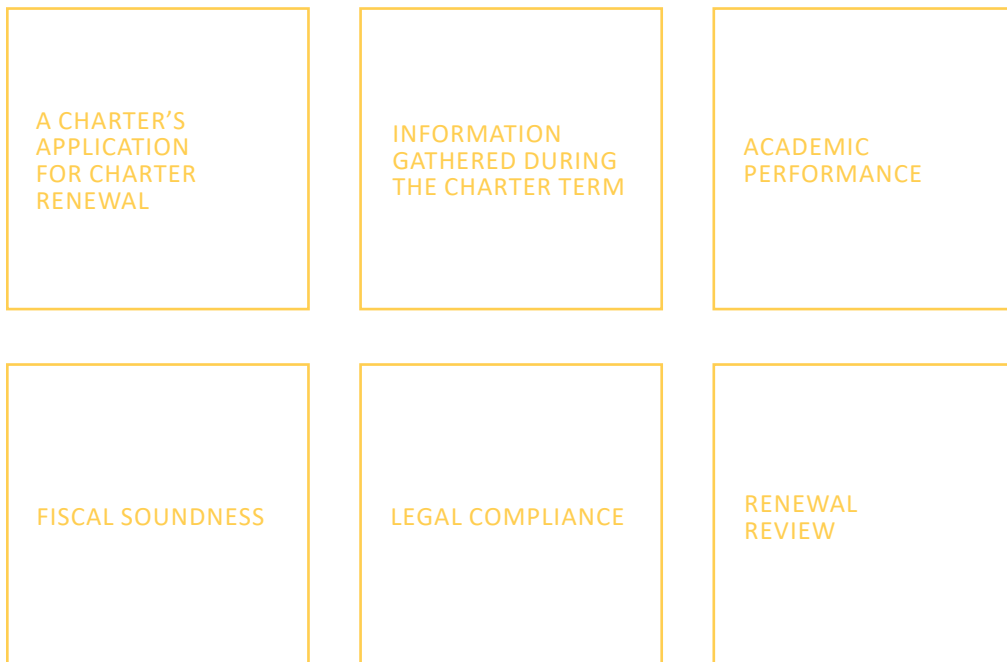
DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
December 1 - 2, 2022	Erin Allen	Senior Analyst
	Ciani Jones	Senior Analyst
	Andrew Kile	Managing Director of School Evaluation
	Jeffrey Wasbes	Executive Deputy Director for Accountability
	Carrie Gee	Chief Counsel
	Shenita Johnson	External Consultant

The sections below contain general information about the SUNY Trustees’ and Institute’s approach to renewal.

REPORT FORMAT

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

THE INSTITUTE MAKES ALL RENEWAL RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON



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

1. Revised September 4, 2013 and available on the [Institute’s website](#).

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

RENEWAL QUESTIONS



IS THE CHARTER AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

IS THE CHARTER AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

IS THE CHARTER FISCALLY SOUND?

IF THE SUNY TRUSTEES RENEW THE CHARTER, ARE THE EDUCATION CORPORATION’S PLANS FOR THE CHARTER REASONABLE, FEASIBLE, AND ACHIEVABLE?

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



Additional information about the SUNY renewal process and an overview of the requirements for renewal under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended, the “Act”) are available on the [Institute’s website](#).

2. Version 5.0, May 2012, are available on the [Institute’s website](#).



IS THE CHARTER AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS? THE INFORMATION BELOW HIGHLIGHTS THE INSTITUTE'S AND SUNY TRUSTEES' APPROACH TO ACCOUNTABILITY PLANS FOR EACH SUNY AUTHORIZED CHARTER.

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,³ the charter developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals for performance in the key subjects of ELA and mathematics, as well as science and the federal Every Student Succeeds Act ("ESSA"). High school Accountability Plans also include goals for High School Graduation, College Preparation, and Social Studies. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. The Institute examines results for all required Accountability Plan measures to determine goal attainment. The Act requires charters be held "accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results"⁴ and states the educational programs at a charter school must "meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents"⁵ for other public schools. SUNY's required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by statewide assessments. Historically, SUNY's required measures include measures that present schools':

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

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

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

Absolute, comparative, and growth achievement provide a basis for triangulating charter performance within each academic goal area. Furthermore, every SUNY authorized charter school may propose additional, mission aligned goals and measures of success when crafting its Accountability Plan. The final Accountability Plan adopted by the education corporation's board and approved by the Institute is included in the charter and frames the analysis of the charter's student achievement results.

The Institute consistently emphasizes comparative and growth performance over absolute measures in its analysis of goal attainment. Nevertheless, the Institute analyzes every measure included in a charter's Accountability Plan to determine its level of academic success, including the extent to which each charter has established and maintained a record of high performance and demonstrated progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals throughout the charter term. Whether or not a charter includes additional measures in its Accountability Plan, the Institute considers all available evidence of charter performance at the time of renewal.

3. Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision before student achievement results for the final year of a charter term become available, the Accountability Period ends with the school year prior to the final year of the charter term. For a charter in a subsequent charter term, the Accountability Period covers the final year of the previous charter term and ends with the school year prior to the final year of the current charter term. In this renewal report, the Institute uses "charter term" and "Accountability Period" interchangeably.

4. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

5. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

State assessment data in ELA, mathematics, and science in 3rd- 8th grade form the basis of data required to analyze the required accountability measures for elementary and middle schools. These data were not available in 2019-20 following the state’s cancellation of all state exams during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although schools participated in state assessments in ELA and mathematics in 2020-21, the participation rates that year were inconsistent. The resulting data is not sufficiently reliable or credible for cogent analyses of charter academic performance. In response, the Institute provided all SUNY authorized charter schools a framework for the analysis of norm-referenced and internally developed exam data. To every extent possible, the Institute attempted to maintain a consistent framework of examining absolute, comparative, and growth performance. During 2019-20 and 2020-21, charters reported data on a variety of norm-referenced and internally developed assessments to demonstrate student academic success. This renewal report contemplates charter performance during the pandemic through the lenses of absolute and growth performance on norm-referenced and internally developed ELA, mathematics, and science assessments along with high school completion and college readiness data.



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York