

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

*RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY
WILDFLOWER NEW YORK CHARTER
SCHOOL*

REPORT DATE: APRIL 2, 2025

VISIT DATE: NOVEMBER 19 – 20, 2024



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

CONTENTS

1 CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

5 FISCAL DASHBOARD

6 COMPLIANCE REPORTING

7 COMMUNITY SATISFACTION AND RETENTION

9 APPENDICES

A: Charter School Overview

B: Benchmark Summary

C: Pre-Kindergarten Program Review

D: Student Demographics

E: Fiscal Benchmarks Summary

CHARTER SCHOOL BACKGROUND

WILDFLOWER NEW YORK CHARTER SCHOOL

1332 Fulton Avenue, Bronx, New York | Grades: K-5 | NYC Community School District 9 | Claremont



MISSION

Wildflower New York Charter School will offer Montessori educational environments in which children have the tools and freedom to do the great work of constructing themselves, led by teachers operating as social entrepreneurs. Our students will develop strong academic foundations and skills in the areas of critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication, and grow into curious, capable contributors to their communities and the world.

WILDFLOWER NEW YORK CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES¹

CHAIR

Chivona R. Newsome

VICE CHAIR

Christopher Wilson

TREASURER

Dr. Deja Jones

SECRETARY

Marissa Brady

TRUSTEES

Deena-Lee Leacock

Terence Nance

Zellie Thomas

Vivian Louie

Justin A. Moore

Bruce McIntyre III

Dr. Yolanda Sealy-Ruiz

CURRENT CHARTER INFORMATION

Year Opened: 2020

Serves: Kindergarten – 5th

Chartered Enrollment: 77

Charter Expires on: July 31, 2025

FUTURE CHARTER INFORMATION

Serves: Kindergarten – 5th

Chartered Enrollment: 114

Charter Expiration July 31, 2030

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Authentic Montessori method;



A new school model committed to innovation and teacher leadership;



Montessori in an enriched environment;



Individualized education using the Montessori method; and,



School interconnected with the community beyond the classroom;



Extended day Montessori learning program.



1. Source: The Institute's board records at the time of report finalization.

"+" : This indicator is generally present.

"-" : This indicator is generally not present.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FULL-TERM RENEWAL

The Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) recommends the SUNY Trustees’ Charter School Committee approve the Application for Charter Renewal of Wildflower New York Charter School (“Wildflower”) for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten through 5th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 114 students. The Institute makes this recommendation as Wildflower meets the requirements for renewal set forth in the Policies for 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”).²

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout its initial charter term, Wildflower successfully realized its key design elements implementing authentic Montessori classroom environments and instructional approaches, effective teacher leadership, purposeful learning opportunities beyond the school day, and successful partnerships with the community. Wildflower classrooms feature “prepared environments” with developmentally appropriate, organized materials that support multiple, simultaneous work activities and promote student exploration. Teachers function as instructional guides to deliver purposeful lessons, implement effective routines, and maintain a consistent focus on student learning and growth. Parent feedback affirms the school’s supportive community and its positive impact on student academic and social development.

Wildflower effectively employs a holacracy framework that assigns leadership and executive-level responsibilities to “teacher leaders” who provide instructional guidance to students and fulfill additional leadership roles outside of the classroom. During the charter term, Wildflower restructured its model of five microschools into one consolidated microschool with three multi-grade programs: a primary program serving pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten, a lower elementary program for Kindergarten and 1st grade, and an upper elementary program for 2nd – 5th grade. One teacher leads each multi-grade classroom. The Wildflower Foundation (“TWF”) provides governance and operational support to Wildflower under an affiliation agreement, including resources pertaining to financial management, professional development, curriculum, instruction, and compliance. As originally designed, TWF assisted with school management during Wildflower’s start-up period and phased out its services to transition management to teacher leaders.

Wildflower successfully addressed significant challenges during its opening in the 2020-21 school year, at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially, the school experienced lower than expected enrollment and quickly adapted its hands-on Montessori approach to remote instruction. The delayed receipt of the Charter School Planning and Implementation Grant hampered the school’s resource acquisition, staffing, and operational setup. To address these challenges, Wildflower delivered its Montessori learning materials to families bi-weekly during remote learning, allocated targeted funding to secure internet-enabled tablets for students, and established strategic partnerships with feeder daycare centers. Wildflower’s student enrollment improved in 2022-23 following these efforts and

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

continues to grow. To address learning loss, the school implemented an extended day Montessori learning program, providing additional instructional time for students. Now in its third year, the program targets both struggling and advanced students.

Wildflower developed multiple meaningful partnerships in its initial charter term. The school partners with Albee Square Montessori Public School (“P.S. 482”), the first New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) district Montessori school, to share best practices and support. Wildflower also partners with Brilla College Preparatory Charter Schools’ and Public Prep Charter School Academies’ joint high school, Vertex Partnership Academy (“Vertex”). Designated as an International Baccalaureate World School offering the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme, Vertex students are provided apprenticeship opportunities at Wildflower pipelining students through the Montessori early childhood career pathway with the goal of earning teacher assistant certification before graduation. These initiatives demonstrate Wildflower’s commitment to fostering student growth and building community connections.

The information below presents the key findings for the SUNY Trustees and highlights the successes of the school.

FINDINGS & INFORMATION

Is the charter an academic success?

Wildflower is an academic success with an effective instructional program. During its initial charter term, students demonstrated achievement and growth on the school’s suite of internal assessments that includes the nationally-normed NWEA MAP and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (“F&P”). Given the school’s small student population size and low participation rate on state exams, the school did not yet produce a record of results suitable for analysis aligned to the required measures under its English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics Accountability Plan goals. In 2022-23, none of the six eligible Wildflower students participated in state assessments. Only five out of the 10 eligible did so in 2023-24. This number of testing records is insufficient to provide reportable results. However, the school produced a compelling record of performance across grades on its internal assessments in ELA and mathematics. These results, coupled with the school’s strong academic program on the ground, provide sufficient evidence that the school is likely to meet or come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals in the upcoming term. The Institute will ensure that the school increases its participation rate on state exams in any future charter term. The school demonstrated success in the following ways:

- According to the school’s end of year administration of the F&P in 2023-24, Wildflower increased the proportion of students performing on grade level or above in ELA across all grades. Notably, Wildflower students with initial low absolute achievement in the fall demonstrated 1.6 years of growth in reading on average by the end of the 2023-24 school year.
- In mathematics, the school’s tested 3rd and 4th grade students posted a median growth percentile of 73 on the 2023-24 end of year NWEA MAP assessment far exceeding the established target of 50.
- The school also posted high growth in ELA on the NWEA MAP in 2023-24. That year, the school’s median growth percentile was five points above SUNY’s established target of 50.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Is the charter an effective, viable organization?

Wildflower is an effective, viable organization. Over the charter term, the board stabilized and expanded its oversight capacity, growing from eight to 11 members. Wildflower consistently achieves high levels of family satisfaction. Families provide positive feedback on the school's educational programs and overall environment, reflecting the school's strong community engagement and effective instructional practices.

Wildflower demonstrates success in implementing an innovative public Montessori education program. The school actively collaborates with various organizations and institutions to expand resources and enhance educational offerings. The New York City Public Schools' Office of New School Development and Design recognized Wildflower as a model for public Montessori education with Wildflower supporting the development of the P.S. 482 Montessori program. TWF recognizes Wildflower as an exemplar of public charter Montessori programming among its network of Wildflower schools.

Is the charter fiscally sound³?

Wildflower is fiscally sound based on the Institute's review of the renewal documentation. The education corporation has established strong methods for budget creation that involve all levels of the school to map priorities and develop accurate revenue and expense projections. The Wildflower finance team, composed of the Wildflower financial director and an external financial service provider, meets with the board monthly to present an enrollment report and receive feedback. The education corporation has maintained adequate enrollment, which allows it to cover its current expenses. The 2023-24 annual financial audit did not present any internal control issues, findings, or weaknesses. The education corporation has established a separate bank account with the established amounts for dissolution as required by the charter agreement.

Wildflower demonstrates positive financial performance during the current charter term, with net assets (\$0.7 million), and cash (4.7 months on hand) reserves growing each year. The education corporation maintains adequate teacher to student ratios and adjusts accordingly to reflect enrollment fluctuations. The education corporation has invested in student technology and continuous curriculum updates as necessary over the current charter term.

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

Wildflower's plans for the future are reasonable, feasible, and achievable. The school will implement the same core elements that led to its success over the current charter term and continue to leverage TWF resources, collaborate with other organizations to expand Montessorian principles, and upgrade its building to further reflect its environmental key design elements. Partnering with 1332 Fulton Daycare Center, Wildflower will provide guidance for the first public infant and toddler Montessori school in New York State during its second charter term.

The future budget presented in the renewal documentation contains revenue and expense projections that are reasonable and achievable.

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 blue – gray – orange. The categories generally correspond to levels of fiscal risk, but must be viewed in the context of each education corporation and the general type or category of school.

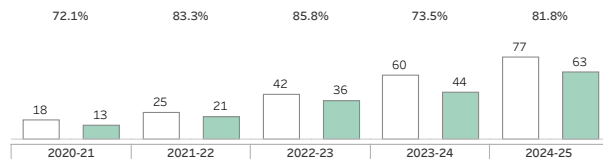
FISCAL DASHBOARD

WILDFLOWER NEW YORK CHARTER SCHOOL

Enrollment

77 Chartered | 63 Actual

as of 2024-25

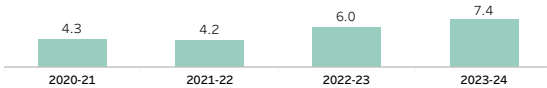


Student: Teacher Ratio

7.44 students : 6 teachers

+1.4 vs. PY

as of 2023-24

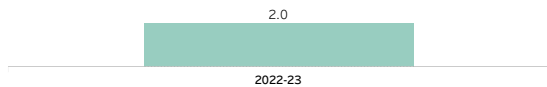


Faculty : Admin Ratio

2.0 faculty : admin

vs. PY

as of 2022-23

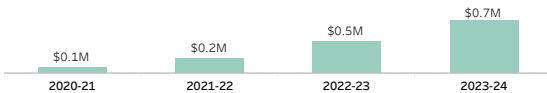


Net Assets

\$0.7M

▲59.9% | +\$0.27M vs. PY

as of 2023-24

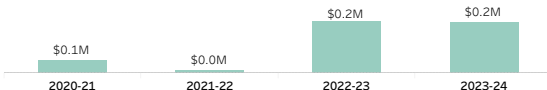


Surplus / Deficit

\$0.2M

▼0.6% | +\$0.0M

as of 2023-24



Working Capital

\$0.7M

+\$0.4M vs. PY

as of 2023-24



Score Methodology

- Financial Responsibility Composite Score | Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 / Needs Monitoring < 1.0
- Current Ratio Score | Excellent ≥ 3.0 / Good 1.4 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.4
- Quick Ratio Score | Excellent ≥ 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0
- Debt to Asset Ratio Score | Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0
- Months of Cash | Excellent > 3 mo. / Good 1 - 3 mo. / Poor < 1 mo.

Legend

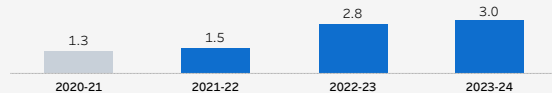
- ★ Strong / Excellent
- Adequate
- ▼ Needs Monitoring / Poor

Financial Responsibility Composite Score

3.0

+0.2 vs. PY

as of 2023-24

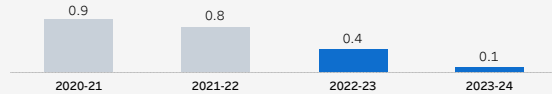


Debt to Asset Ratio

0.1

-0.3 vs. PY

as of 2023-24

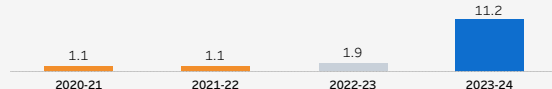


Current Ratio

11.2

+9.3 vs. PY

as of 2023-24



Months of Cash on Hand

4.7

+1.5 vs. PY

as of 2023-24

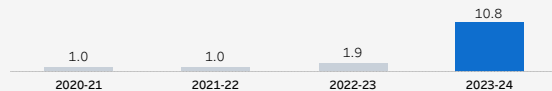


Quick Ratio

10.8

+8.9 vs. PY

as of 2023-24



COMPLIANCE REPORTING



HAS THE SCHOOL 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.

FOIL

Wildflower submitted a compliant Freedom of Information Law (“FOIL”) policy with the renewal application, but the FOIL notice and FOIL subject matter list must be posted on the website. The FOIL subject matter list must include a link to the website of the Committee on Open Government and the date last reviewed conspicuously indicated. The Institute will ensure compliance prior to the start of the next charter term.

Teacher Certification

The New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998 (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 or career and technical education courses.

Wildflower partners with Monroe College School of Education and the Southwest Institute of Montessori Studies to provide opportunities for advanced studies in Montessori education. These opportunities include regular workshops and seminars on best practices, emerging research, and innovations in Montessori education. Wildflower offers mentorship and Montessori certification programs through partnerships with training centers. It also provides tuition assistance and accommodates work schedule adjustments for certification and training.

At Wildflower, two out of the three lead teachers are uncertified, which is within the allowable limit under the Act. Both uncertified teachers meet the additional qualifications under the Act. The three teachers completed Montessori training affiliated with either the Association Montessori Internationale (“AMI”) or the American Montessori Society (“AMS”).

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION & ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

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

Parent Survey Data

The Institute compiled data from the NYCDOE annual family survey from the 2023-24 school year. In 2023-24, 64% of families who received the NYCDOE survey responded. Of the families who responded, 100% expressed satisfaction with the charter.

In addition to the NYCDOE survey, the TWF conducted a survey with 97% of families responding with high levels of satisfaction.

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 English language learners (“ELLs”).

The 18 parents and caretakers in attendance at the focus group expressed high satisfaction with the school. Participants emphasized that the school fosters a strong sense of community and provides a comfortable learning environment. Parents noted the school effectively addresses students’ needs and supports their learning. Parents highlighted the individualized curriculum and the hands-on approach to learning as key program strengths. The school’s emphasis on practical life skills and social-emotional development resonates with families. Multiple parents noted that after attending Wildflower, their children demonstrate advanced vocabulary and mature communication skills beyond their age level.

Parents also commended teachers for their willingness to engage directly with families and provide actionable guidance on student progress. The school delivers quarterly progress reports and encourages impromptu conversations between parents and staff members during drop-off and pick-up periods. Teachers promptly engage with parents to address academic concerns. The school provides families with bi-monthly parent-child workshops in partnership with Heketi Montessori and guidance to support communication and understanding. Workshops focus on strategies for effective communication with children and the application of classroom content at home.

Parents appreciated the school’s responsiveness to feedback and flexibility in meeting diverse family needs. The school also offers structured opportunities for parents to provide input including classroom observations, surveys, and virtual and in-person communication channels.

COMMUNITY SATISFACTION & ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION

Public Comments

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

The NYCDOE held its required hearing on the Wildflower renewal application via videoconference on October 28, 2024. No one spoke in support of or in opposition to the application.

Enrollment and Retention

Wildflower makes good faith efforts to meet its enrollment and retention targets. Due to its small student population, minor fluctuations in student enrollment have a substantial impact on target attainment. The school comes close to meeting its enrollment targets for economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities but does not meet the target for ELLs. For retention, the school exceeds the target for ELLs but does not meet its targets for economically disadvantaged students or students with disabilities.

Persistence in Enrollment

An additional indicator of parent satisfaction is persistence in enrollment. In 2023–24, 78% of Wildflower students returned from the previous year. Student persistence data from previous years of the charter term is available in the 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 New York State Education Department ("NYSED") is available to the Institute to provide either district or statewide context.

Wildflower New York Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2023-24			Target	Charter
enrollment	economically disadvantaged	<div><div></div></div>	90.7	86.7
	English language learners	<div><div></div></div>	27.5	15.6
	students with disabilities	<div><div></div></div>	21.5	20.0
retention	economically disadvantaged	<div><div></div></div>	88.7	82.9
	English language learners	<div><div></div></div>	90.1	100.0
	students with disabilities	<div><div></div></div>	87.6	54.5

Wildflower

Ax

APPENDICES

PAGES Ax 1-15

CO^A
CHARTER
OVERVIEW

PAGE Ax 1

BS^B
BENCHMARK
SUMMARY

PAGE Ax 2

PR^C
PRE-K
REVIEW

PAGE Ax 9

SD^D
STUDENT
DEMOGRAPHICS

PAGE Ax 11

FB^E
FISCAL
BENCHMARKS

PAGE Ax 13

APPENDIX A: CHARTER SCHOOL OVERVIEW



CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ¹	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2020-21	18	13	72%	K-1
2021-22	25	21	83%	K-2
2022-23	42	36	86%	K-3
2023-24	60	44	74%	K-4
2024-25	77	63	82%	K-5

CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2020-21	First Year Visit	June 3, 2021
2021-22	Evaluation Visit	March 22, 2022
2022-23	Evaluation Visit	April 24, 2023
2024-25	Initial Renewal Visit	November 19 – 20, 2024

CONDUCT OF THE RENEWAL REVIEW

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
November 19 – 20, 2024	Kathleen Haywood	School Evaluator
	Ciani Jones	Senior Analyst
	Mia Howard	External Consultant

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

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Wildflower demonstrates promising growth and achievement based on nationally-normed test results. In its initial charter term, Wildflower did not produce state testing results suitable for analysis due to the school's intentionally small class sizes and low number of students tested on the New York State English language arts ("ELA") and mathematics exams. As a result, the school has not yet produced data necessary to evaluate attainment of the measures included under its Accountability Plan goal areas. However, the school has produced promising aggregate growth and achievement results on its internal assessments aligned to New York State standards. These results, coupled with the school's strong academic programming on the ground, provide sufficient evidence that the school will meet or come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals in any future charter term.

In 2023-24, the school primarily used the NWEA MAP to demonstrate achievement and growth toward its ELA and mathematics goals. Across all tested students in Kindergarten – 4th grade, Wildflower posted median growth percentiles in both subjects that indicated progress on par with nationwide norms from beginning of year to end of year. In ELA, the school's median growth percentile surpassed the SUNY target of 50 by five points. The school also posted average scale scores that met or exceeded the national averages in the majority of grades. In mathematics, the school's median growth percentile was approximately the same as the national median. Notably, across 3rd – 4th grade, the school posted a median mathematics growth percentile 23 points above the target of 50.

ASSESSMENT

Wildflower's assessment system supports instructional effectiveness and improves student learning. The school tracks components of its Montessori curriculum emphasizing literacy through assessments such as NWEA MAP, Montessori for All's literacy screener, the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System ("F&P"), and primary vocabulary growth charts. These tools provide actionable data on student performance to inform instructional planning. The school communicates effectively and regularly with families through progress reports, informal updates, parent meetings, and workshops, including those offered in Spanish. Families appreciate the school's responsiveness and tailored support for student needs.

Teachers engage in weekly data analysis sessions and use lesson internalization protocols to track student progress toward learning goals. While teachers occasionally experience delays in updating data due to the time investment required, monthly professional learning communities ("PLCs") ensure consistent progress monitoring and alignment of instructional adjustments with student needs. Teachers monitor progress during student work cycles but lack standardized approaches for tracking real-time data in the classroom. School leaders recognize the potential benefit of adopting tools to streamline monitoring and improve communication about student mastery levels among adults in the shared learning environment.

At the time of the Institute's visit, the school's intentionally slim organizational structure limited its ability to regularly input and analyze its assessment data due to the time required for processing. School leaders plan to adopt assessments or platforms, such as Amplify, that streamline data collection and better integrate

performance tracking and analysis within the Montessori approach. The lack of sufficient state testing results also limits the school's ability to perform comprehensive data analysis of student performance. Given the school's small population, there is an opportunity for Wildflower to further evaluate its assessment system to determine if it adequately allows for school leaders to compare Montessori student achievement with traditional educational methods, including performance across subgroups.

School leaders primarily rely on observational data rather than assessment results to evaluate teacher effectiveness, inform professional development, and refine coaching strategies. Consequently, current professional development and coaching practices predominantly involve observing students and teachers in learning environments rather than conducting systematic assessment analysis. While this approach facilitates immediate instructional adjustments, the absence of a more comprehensive quantitative approach may hinder the school's ability to identify and respond to areas of student or teacher need.

CURRICULUM

Wildflower's curriculum supports teachers with instructional planning. Wildflower implements a comprehensive curricular framework aligned with New York State standards and vetted by the Association Montessori International USA ("AMI USA"), ensuring fidelity to high-quality Montessori standards. Teachers implement Heggerty Bridge to Reading and Phonemic Awareness curricula with consistency. The curriculum in the primary grade band, pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten, emphasizes five core areas: practical life, sensorial, geography/science, language, and mathematics. Teachers also provide foundational skills and phonics. Students engage in sensory-motor activities using materials that promote self-choice, exploration, and self-correction. The curricula in the school's lower elementary program, Kindergarten and 1st grade, and upper elementary program, 2nd – 5th grade, emphasize language arts, mathematics, and cultural studies which includes physical and social sciences. Students transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn" through activities that include independent research, creative writing, and letter writing. In mathematics, students progress from concrete to abstract problem solving, initially using manipulatives to understand the base-10 system and foundational operations before solving problems abstractly with pencil and paper. Across all grade bands, students participate in an uninterrupted work cycle supporting child-directed and teacher-guided learning. The school develops individualized learning plans and provides teachers and students with structured materials enabling students to self-pace, self-correct, and assess progress.

Teachers use a vertically aligned scope and sequence document mapped to state standards to facilitate instructional planning. Teachers organize classroom materials in a "prepared environment" that intuitively signals the next steps for students mastering content. Montessori lesson plans are maintained in "albums" that are reviewed and approved by AMI USA or the American Montessori Society ("AMS") for certification. The standardized foundational reading and language arts curriculum incorporates Scholastic EDGE guided reading, which helps to enhance phonemic awareness, oral language, and vocabulary. Teachers follow an internalization protocol to develop weekly lesson plans.

In mathematics, tier one instruction uses Golden Beads to emphasize observational and self-directed learning. Teachers monitor progress to identify gaps in understanding and form intervention groups for targeted instruction. Classrooms include materials spanning multiple developmental levels, enabling teachers to scaffold instruction to address both remedial and advanced learning needs.

PEDAGOGY

High quality pedagogy is evident across Wildflower classrooms and the school effectively delivers instruction aligned to Montessori principles. Teachers maintain classroom environments that foster self-direction, self-regulation, and a focus on academic achievement. Classrooms evidence structures that promote “freedom within limits,” a Montessorian principle empowering students to explore and learn while simultaneously establishing boundaries for student safety and well being. Wildflower’s multiple grade classroom structure, combined with its regular observation, assessment, and student work analysis cycles, allows teachers to introduce new concepts at an appropriate pace for all students. As a result, students advance beyond grade-level content or receive additional support whenever necessary.

Wildflower students follow individualized learning plans documented in the school’s Transparent Classroom platform and teachers guide them in progressing at a self-directed pace during extended work cycles. In the primary grade band, teachers facilitate student adjustment to routines, focusing on developing independence and collaboration. In the lower elementary grade band, teachers actively involve students in understanding learning goals during independent work cycles. For upper elementary students, teachers post weekly work plans and specific learning objectives alongside student work, allowing students to track progress and self-assess mastery.

Wildflower implements a co-teaching model across classrooms in which a lead teacher provides direct instruction while another teacher or assistant teacher monitors student engagement and productivity. Teachers primarily deliver instruction through small group or one-on-one sessions. In most classrooms, students are highly engaged while working independently or in pairs. Teachers establish warm classroom environments that reflect positive relationships among teachers and students. Classrooms feature an atmosphere of collaboration and trust that emphasizes student agency.

School leaders emphasize intentionality in managing student behavior, allowing students opportunities to self-correct unless safety concerns arise. Across classrooms, routines are clear and reinforce adherence to the schoolwide norms and expectations. Students use common hand signals to request assistance during work cycles demonstrating understanding of the school’s procedures. Teachers employ effective classroom management techniques that maintain focus on academics. However, teachers and assistant teachers inconsistently adapt to real-time changes in students’ engagement in the prepared environment designed for multiple simultaneous work activities. There is an opportunity for instructional staff members to norm thresholds for adult facilitation to more quickly distinguish between a productive struggle and a conceptual misunderstanding.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The school has strong instructional leadership that establishes an environment of high expectations and alignment to Montessori principles. The school’s instructional leadership team is composed of two teacher leaders responsible for maintaining the instructional mission and vision. One teacher leader functions as the school’s chief executive officer (“CEO”) and coordinator for at-risk programming services. The second teacher leader acts as the director of instruction (“DI”), a position Wildflower established in 2023-24 to improve efforts toward vertical alignment, curriculum selection and modification, and the creation of systems for data collection and analysis.

The school implements holacracy, a decentralized governance structure, to guide leadership and decision-making. The DI facilitates decisions by guiding team members through “circle” processes that de-emphasize a top-down approach. For example, the DI collaborates with a teacher leader on curriculum and program development. Across classrooms, instructional staff use the “circle” process to align on key instructional elements, including Montessori expectations, assessment strategies, instructional priorities, and student culture. This approach fosters a unified focus on purposeful self-direction, agency, and joy across the school.

The instructional leadership team prioritizes teacher development with a focus on literacy and foundational reading skills. Leaders communicate and reinforce this priority during extended summer professional learning sessions and the school’s regular observation and coaching cycles during the first eight to ten weeks of the school year. As a result, all instructional staff members articulate the school’s academic goals and priorities with high levels of specificity.

Teachers engage in weekly collaborative planning sessions to prepare for the upcoming week and input student data into shared progress monitoring tools. School leaders, including the DI, analyze and synthesize these data to inform instructional decisions. During PLCs, teachers identify and address gaps in data collection and focus on continuous improvement. Wildflower’s professional development includes individualized coaching for teachers and funding opportunities for staff members to pursue further education or establish a Wildflower school with assistance from the Wildflower Foundation (“TWF”) through the school’s affiliation agreement.

The school uses a performance management system to support teachers but lacks sufficiently objective measures to drive professional growth. The instructional leadership team provides teachers and assistant teachers with frequent informal feedback and mid-year and end-of-year evaluations. However, staff members could not clearly articulate how the self-reflection or peer reflection informs their professional growth. As a result of the dearth of objective measures in formal evaluations, the school’s ability to reduce subjectivity and provide effective instructional feedback is limited.

AT RISK PROGRAM

Wildflower effectively meets the needs of at-risk student populations. The school implements a robust Response to Intervention (“RTI”) system with tiered support. Under this model, all students receive small group instruction in tier 1 and students requiring additional intervention move to tier 2 for six to eight weeks. If progress remains insufficient, the school informs families and transitions the student to tier 3 for individualized, scaffolded instruction using tools such as Lalilo for reading and Extra Math for mathematics. Wildflower’s extended day Montessori learning program is available to all students regardless of tier and provides an additional two hours of instructional time. Now in its third year, the program targets both struggling and advanced students, adding 360 hours of instruction during the regular school year. Students participating in the summer program receive six hours of instruction per day over a 20-day session.

The school’s Montessori approach emphasizes individualized learning pathways for all students. Leaders noted the model allows for extended observation over the school year to assess students’ needs. While this observation timeline is longer than most schools, this approach ensures thorough data collection before initiating referrals for special education services. Leaders value the extensive data collected during this process, which strengthens referrals and intervention planning.

The CEO, also serving as the special education coordinator and English language learner/Multi-lingual learner (“ELL/MLL”) coordinator, provides special education services in the form of integrated co-teaching (“ICT”) and special education teacher support services (“SETSS”). The DI supplements these efforts with a background in special education and bilingual education, designing tailored interventions for at-risk students. The New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) provides related services. At the time of the Institute’s visit, related service vacancies at the NYCDOE for physical therapy and speech therapy impacted the delivery of services for Wildflower students. In order to mitigate this disruption, families access speech services remotely or in person at Lehman College through district arrangements. In the next charter term, school leaders plan to budget for an in-house speech language therapy service provider familiar with the Montessori approach to ensure continuity in future services.

The school tracks performance data for its students with disabilities. However, during the Institute’s visit, the school lacked a formal system for tracking progress toward individualized education program (“IEP”) goals. While school leaders acknowledged that students were meeting these goals, progress tracking focused on skills impacting IEP goals rather than the goals themselves. During the visit, the special education coordinator updated the school’s approach to include a tracker detailing IEP goal progress.

The school’s professional development program provides training on skills for all teachers to support at-risk students. During PLCs, teachers discuss the needs of specific students and highlight specific supports for future curricular planning. Teacher leaders model specific adaptations and interventions for at-risk students. The school holds teachers accountable for including intervention strategies and modifications for at-risk students in lesson plans.

Wildflower implements compliant procedures for identifying ELLs and provides adequate interventions to meet their needs. Under guidance from the ELL/MLL coordinator, teachers conduct vocabulary tracking and provide extended reinforcement time to ensure ELLs master content. The school’s Montessori scope and sequence includes English language acquisition components that teachers modify as necessary based on student progress.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Wildflower effectively implements its educational programming through customized organizational structures supported by a small executive leadership team. The school employs a co-director model in which two teacher leaders share responsibilities, including academic coaching, legal compliance, special populations coordination, financial management, and operations. School leaders seek support from external Montessori-trained consultants as needed. The school’s small class sizes and student-directed Montessori curriculum allow leaders to fulfill both instructional and operational responsibilities during the workday. Staff members adhere to clearly delineated roles outlined in an operations manual, which includes work planning documents, performance expectations, and reporting timelines.

Teacher leaders provide administrative support by assisting with parent communication, coordinating transportation, and offering food services. Teacher leaders participate in a three-year “startup journey” that provides intensive training in the administrative aspects of opening and leading Montessori-based microschools. This model prepares teachers for potential leadership roles at Wildflower and builds capacity

to expand the Montessori model in low-income communities. To attract high quality teacher candidates, Wildflower offers competitive salaries for apprentices and teaching assistants, supplemented by tuition subsidies through TWF for Montessori certification coursework.

Wildflower primarily backfills Kindergarten seats to address challenges in transitioning upper elementary students to the Montessori model. The school relies on word-of-mouth recruitment and achieves consistently adequate enrollment. To continue expanding its student enrollment and strengthen community ties, Wildflower developed a multi-year plan to partner with and develop the Gloria Alston Center's pre-school program, Wildflower's main pre-school feeder site, into a Montessori program for two and three-year-olds.

The school does not have a defined strategy for supporting 5th grade students transitioning to middle school or assisting families in identifying schools aligned with the Montessori philosophy. Wildflower has the opportunity to strengthen its transition support to prepare students for diverse educational environments after the matriculate out of the school.

BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

The Wildflower board works effectively to achieve the school's Accountability Plan goals. The board implements appropriate policies and receives sufficient information to make informed decisions. The board possesses the necessary skills to guide the school's operations and demonstrates a commitment to granting school leaders significant autonomy. However, the board has an opportunity to strengthen oversight practices to align with its governance role while maintaining its commitment to school leader autonomy.

The 11 current board members bring diverse expertise in Montessori education, traditional elementary education, facilities management, funds allocation, legal counseling, and community engagement. One board member also serves as a community liaison and parent representative. To prepare for committee roles, board members follow TWF's holacratic organizational framework, which includes one-on-one mentorship meetings with the school's CEO. Through these mentorship meetings, the CEO provides board members with valuable insights into critical operational processes, including budget management and teacher recruitment.

The board evaluates school leaders by reviewing student achievement data and financial statements but has not set goals with specific targets in these areas. Board members receive regular updates on school performance through monthly teacher leader presentations that include data visualizations highlighting academic trends and financial performance. These presentations assist the board in tracking expenditures and holding leaders accountable for spending decisions. Additionally, the board reviews parent survey results to assess program effectiveness and the extent to which families integrate Montessori principles at home following workshops. The board does not conduct a self-evaluation to assess its own effectiveness.

Although the board has established key oversight practices, it lacks a formal process for strategic planning, long-term goal setting, or progress monitoring to ensure timely attention to school priorities. For instance, although the school identifies teacher recruitment as a priority, the board has not developed a strategy to build broader teacher pipelines suited to the Montessori context. Additionally, despite acknowledging that

APPENDIX B: BENCHMARK SUMMARY

Ax^b
BENCHMARK
SUMMARY

low student participation on state assessments limits progress monitoring toward accountability measures, the board has not outlined strategies to increase participation or proposed alternative measures to address this challenge. The board has the opportunity to refine its practices in these areas to enhance its governance role and support the school's long-term success.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM REVIEW

New York City charter schools have the opportunity to contract with the New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) to provide a universal pre-Kindergarten (“pre-K”) program. State statute requires the Institute to conduct ongoing monitoring for full day universal pre-K programs at all SUNY authorized charter schools. The Institute conducted its annual visit to the pre-K program in each year of the current charter term. During renewal, the Institute conducted a review of the pre-K program. The NYCDOE and New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (“NYCDOH”) conducts detailed reviews annually focusing on program compliance in regard to the facility, teacher certification, health standards, and finances. The Institute reviews this information as needed. Given the focus from the NYCDOE and NYCDOH, the Institute reviews programmatic elements related to teacher and student interactions, family engagement, and academic program requirements.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Wildflower offers a Montessori-informed pre-K program, which includes a multi-grade classroom. For 2024-25, Wildflower enrolls 10 pre-K aged students who participate in a multi-grade classroom with Kindergarten aged students, not exceeding the 18 student limit. Through this model, students learn at their pace and often benefit from older-aged students to learn and establish peer to peer relationships. With the multi-grade model, teacher leaders build high expectations for student learning. Utilizing Montessori frameworks, the program focuses on building strong levels of independence among students.

ACADEMIC SUMMARY

Wildflower implements a Montessori-informed curricular program with a variety of resources to inform instruction. While the primary modality of instruction is through independent learning workshops, the school also implements opportunities for small group learning using a wide range of resources including the NYCDOE Creative curriculum. The school complies with all required assessment and evaluation tools as required by the NYCDOE contract.

From observations, Wildflower prioritizes ensuring every staff member engages in positive teacher-student interactions. The Institute observed effective teacher-student and student-student interactions. Teacher leaders embed verbal communication throughout the day, and much of this communication extends student learning and values student voice in the pre-K setting. Students have ample opportunities to interact and converse with other students, and teachers support these conversations by extending learning through meaningful questioning strategies.

REQUIRED PROGRAM INFORMATION

Curriculum:
Association Montessori Internationale

Initial Screener:
ASQ-3

Authentic Assessment:
Montessori for All

Teacher/Student Interaction Evaluation:
Early Childhood Education Curriculum Implementation Tool (NYCDOE-provided tool)

Environmental Evaluation:
Early Childhood Education Curriculum Implementation Tool (NYCDOE-provided tool)



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

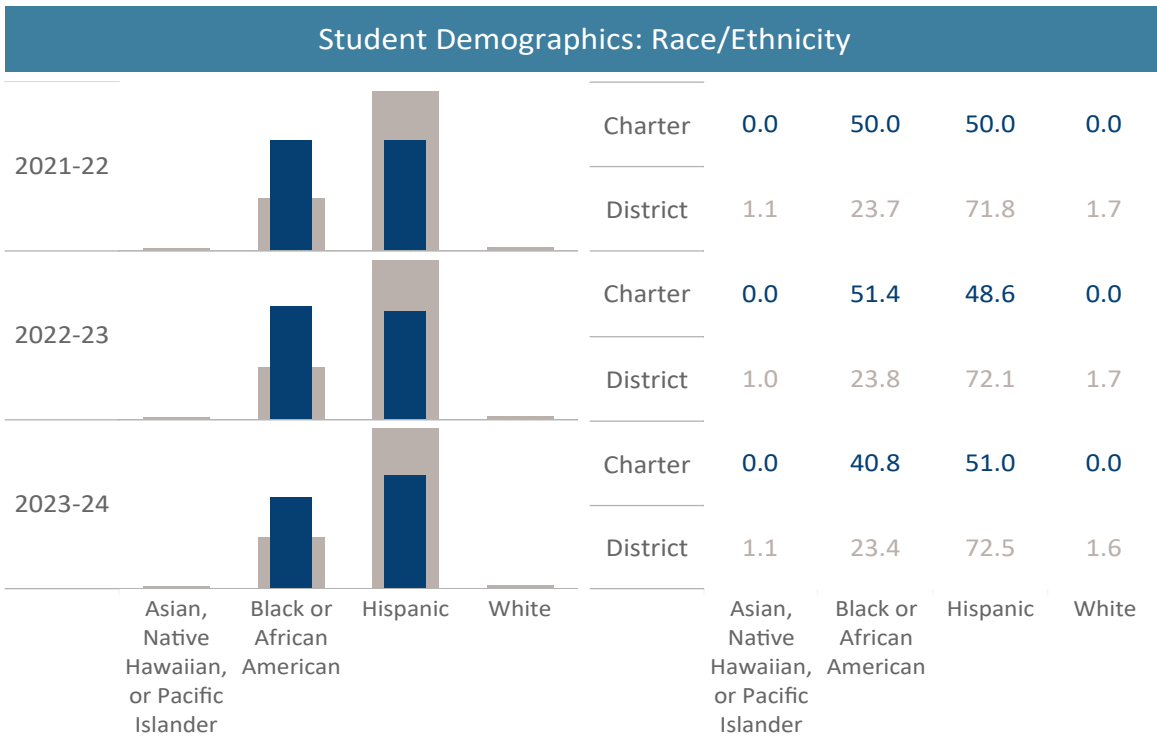
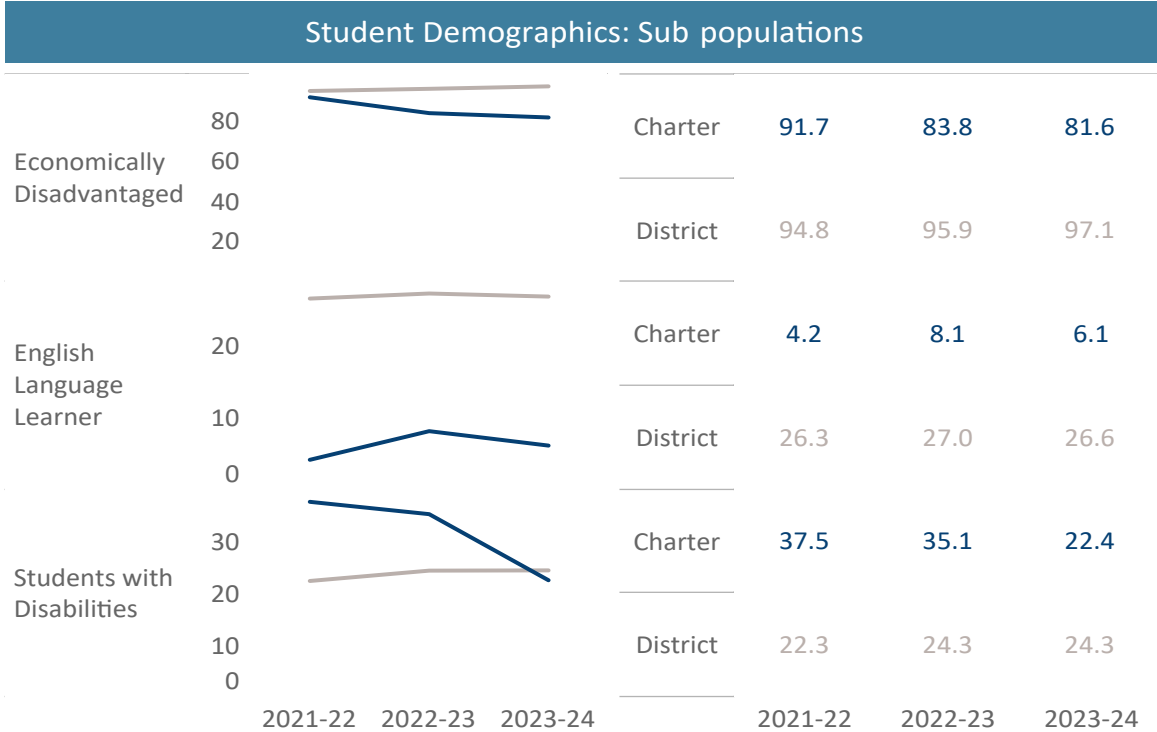
Wildflower strives to build strong relationships with families and views them as partners in each student’s education program. Given the unique Montessori model, the school offers onboarding opportunities for families to understand the model and how to support at home. Leadership also recognizes that families that speak languages other than English have been difficult to engage, and so the school began offering Spanish-only, the predominant language other than English, workshops to better engage families.

ANNUAL AUTHORIZER VISITS

SCHOOL YEAR	DATE
2020-21	June 3, 2021 (virtual)
2021-22	March 22, 2022
2022-23	April 24, 2023
2023-24	February 6, 2024
2024-25	November 19, 2024

Wildflower New York Charter School

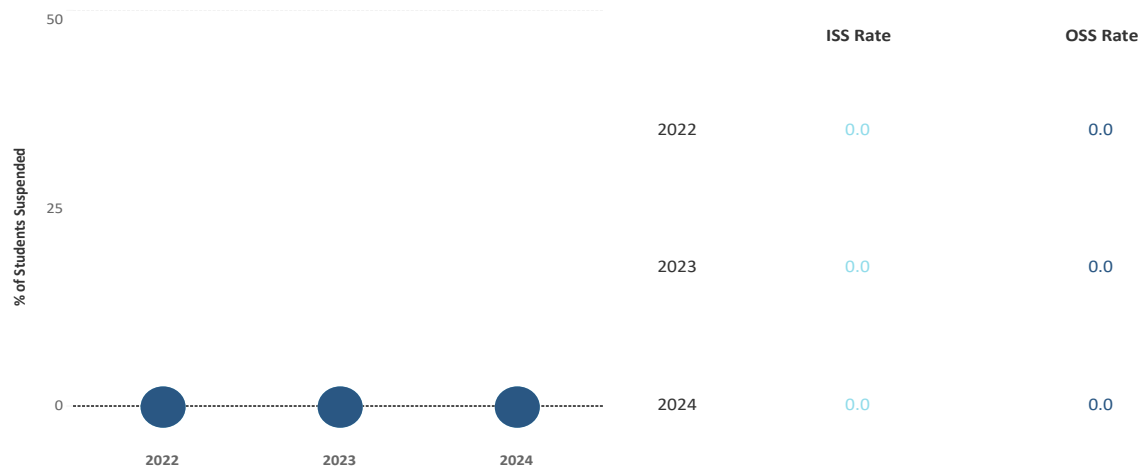
Bronx CSD 9



* Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED.



Wildflower New York Charter School



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		
		2022	2023	2024
2021-22	83.3			
2022-23	79.2	0	0	0
2023-24	77.8			

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

FISCAL BENCHMARKS SUMMARY

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.	+

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.	+

"+" : 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.

APPENDIX E: FISCAL BENCHMARKS SUMMARY

INDICATORS	EVIDENT?
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.	AUGUST 2020

DOES THE EDUCATION CORPORATION COMPLY WITH FINANCIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

The education corporation has complied 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 will have generally been 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.	+
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.	N/A
Grant expenditure reports.	N/A

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



SUNY Charter Schools Institute
H. Carl McCall SUNY Building
353 Broadway
Albany, NY 12246

518.445.4250
www.newyorkcharters.org



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York