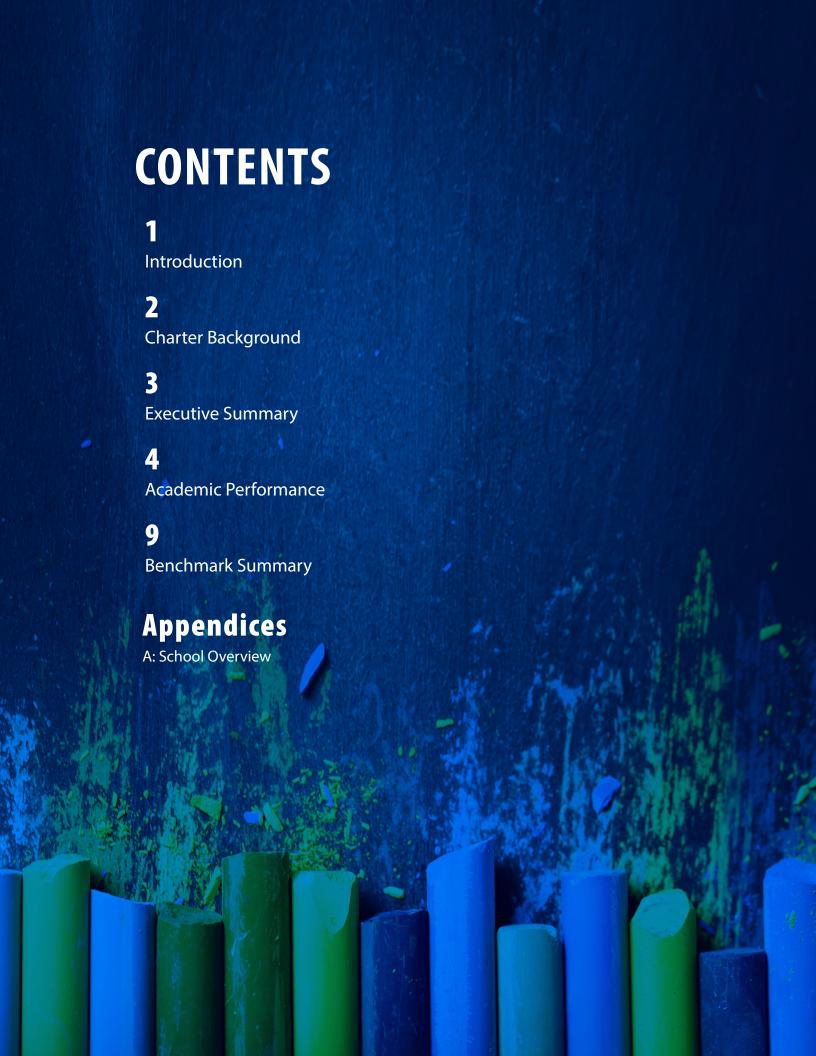


SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT
GREEN TECH CHARTER SCHOOL

VISIT DATE: MARCH 5, 2025 REPORT DATE: JUNE 25, 2025





## INTRODUCTION

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This School Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school visit to Green Tech Charter School ("Green Tech") on March 5, 2025. While the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the "Institute") conducts a comprehensive review of evidence related to all the State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks (the "SUNY Renewal Benchmarks") near the end of a charter term, most mid-cycle charter school evaluation visits focus on a subset of these benchmarks addressing the academic success of the charter and the effectiveness and viability of the charter school organization. It provides a framework for examining the quality of the educational program, focusing on teaching and learning (e.g., curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, and services for at-risk students), as well as leadership, organizational capacity, and board oversight. The Institute uses the established criteria on a regular basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

The Institute provided the school an Accountability Summary outlining the school's previous three years of performance. The Accountability Summary indicates the extent to which the school is meeting, coming close to meeting, or not meeting its Accountability Plan goals. Within the performance review, the Institute shares if the school's renewal is in jeopardy based on the quantitative record of performance. For more information about the school's performance, see the 2023-24 School Performance Review section below.

The Appendix to the report contains a School Overview with descriptive and historical information about the school, as well as background information on the conduct of the visit. Together this information puts the visit in the context of the school's current charter term.

This report serves as a summary of the school's program based on the Qualitative Education Benchmarks. The Institute intends this selection of information to be an exception report in order to highlight areas of concern. As such, limited detail about positive elements of the educational program is not an indication that the Institute does not recognize other indicators of program effectiveness.

While the Institute posts the evaluation report on its website and makes it publicly available, the Institute encourages school leaders to share the report with its stakeholders including, but not limited to, the full board of trustees, staff members, and families





# **CHARTER BACKGROUND**

# **GREEN TECH CHARTER SCHOOL**

99 Slingerland St, Albany, NY 12202 | Grades: 6-12 | Albany City School District



The mission of the Green Tech Charter School is to prepare young men to complete high school with a Regents diploma so they will have the opportunity to attend college or choose an alternative, responsible career path as they enter adulthood. Green Tech will succeed in this mission by providing a complete college preparatory high school curriculum that ensures every student will attain the skills and coursework necessary for a Regents diploma, including the use of computer technology with an added knowledge and understanding of the environment.

#### **CURRENT CHARTER**

Opened: 2008

Serves:  $6^{th} - 12^{th}$ 

Chartered Enrollment:

505

Charter Expiration: July 31, 2026

#### **KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS**

Single gender model;	+
College preparatory curriculum and class offerings;	+
Safe, small school setting;	+
Extended school day and year;	-
Extensive literacy instruction;	+
Teachers as advisors throughout a student's career; and,	+
Particular emphasis on technology and the environment.	-



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Over the current charter term, Green Tech completed the expansion of its middle school program and currently enrolls students in  $6^{th}-12^{th}$  grade. Approximately half of the  $9^{th}$  grade cohort is made up of students matriculating from the middle school program each year, and Green Tech continues to recruit students from other charter and district schools seeking an all-boys educational experience.

Green Tech has experienced three leadership transitions and subsequent reorganizations of its administrative structure over the charter term. A middle and a high school principal currently co-lead the program and report directly to the board of trustees, which has also experienced significant turnover in membership. Following the departure of the chief executive officer ("CEO") and elimination of the CEO position in the fall of 2024, the administrative team, comprised of the two principals, a director of student support and community partnership, a dean of students, a director of curriculum and assessment, a chief information officer, and a vacant director of operations position, has worked to stabilize staff and student culture and navigate new challenges in Green Tech's 17<sup>th</sup> year of operation.

Although the school has clear curricular and assessment tools in place to inform instruction, the large number of new and inexperienced teachers necessitates stronger instructional leadership systems and routines to support teacher development. The middle school program has increased English language arts ("ELA") performance throughout the charter term, but the school has not met its Accountability Plan goal for mathematics and the Institute identified significant deficiencies in the quality of mathematics instruction throughout the program at the time of the visit. Green Tech has prioritized classroom management in its professional development activities, which is evident in the generally warm relationships and calm environment throughout the school, but teachers do not implement effective questioning and engagement strategies to drive learning and hold students accountable for higher order thinking. Leaders recognize that the large number of inexperienced teachers and inconsistent staffing in the mathematics department necessitates urgent improvements to the quality of instructional support the school provides.

Green Tech added several new credit-bearing college course offerings this year while also building out local partnerships to support internships and career pathways. However, the school's key design element emphasizing technology and the environment was not evident at the time of the visit. As Green Tech prepares for renewal in the fall of 2025, the school must improve the rigor of instruction across the academic program to ensure it is delivering on its mission to prepare young men for college and career success.



#### 2023-24 CHARTER PERFORMANCE REVIEW

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,¹ the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of high school graduation, college preparation, ELA, and mathematics. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal. Throughout the charter term, the Institute examines results for five required Accountability Plan measures on an annual basis and provides an Accountability Dossier to each school detailing the school's progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals. Because the New York Charter Schools Act (the "Act") requires charters be held "accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results"² and states the educational programs at a charter school must "meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents"³ for other public schools, SUNY's required accountability measures rest on performance as measured by statewide assessments. More information about the required Accountability Plan measures can be found on the Institute's website.

In 2023-24, the third year of the school's charter term and fourth year of the current Accountability Period, Green Tech did not meet its mathematics or college preparation goals. The school did meet its ELA and graduation goals. In order to make the most compelling case for earning subsequent renewal, the school must improve its mathematics performance.

In ELA, Green Tech met its goal with 52% of its students enrolled in at least their second year scoring at or above proficiency on the state's ELA exam for middle school grades. The school outperformed the district results by 19 percentage points and made demonstrable progress toward the absolute target of 75%. The school posted an effect size approximately at the target, which indicates that the school performed higher than expected to a meaningful degree compared to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students. Green Tech posted a mean growth percentile that exceeded the target by two points.

In contrast, the school did not meet its mathematics goal for middle school grades in 2023-24. With only 26% of its students enrolled in at least their second year scoring at or above proficiency, the school's performance was 49 percentage points below the absolute target of 75% and nine percentage points below the district results. Further, only 24% of the 38 Green Tech 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who took the Algebra I Regents exam in lieu of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics exam scored at or above proficiency. The school posted a -0.68 effect size according to the Institute's comparative performance analysis indicating that the school performed lower than expected compared to demographically similar schools. Green Tech also did not meet its growth target with a mean growth percentile of 31. The school must make clear improvement in its middle school mathematics achievement to establish the best case for earning subsequent renewal.

- 2. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).
- 3. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).



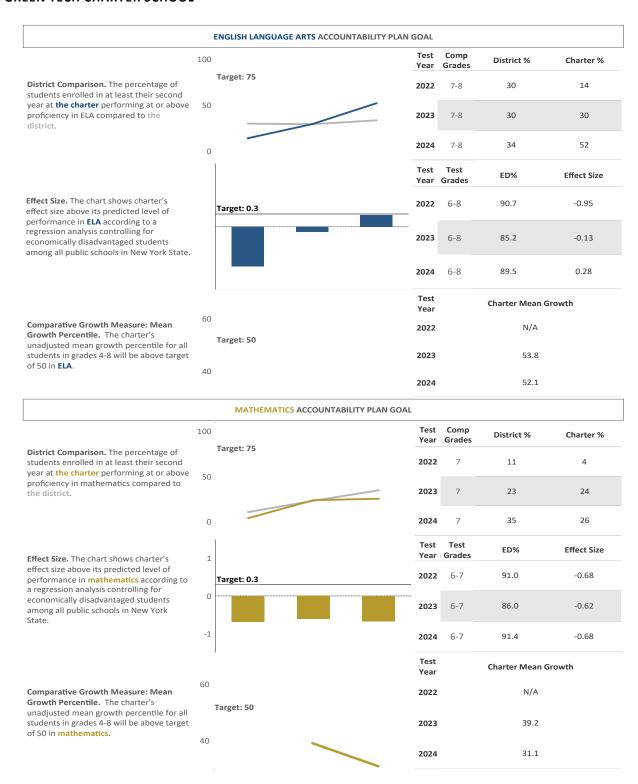
<sup>1.</sup> Because the SUNY Trustees make a renewal decision before student achievement results for the final year of a charter term become available, the Accountability Period ends with the school year prior to the final year of the charter term. In the case of initial renewal, the Accountability Period covers the first four years of the charter term.



At the high school level, Green Tech met its graduation goal but did not meet its college preparation goal in 2023-24. Of the school's 2020 Graduation Cohort, 91% graduated after four years exceeding the absolute target by 16 percentage points and the local district average by 18 percentage points. The school demonstrates college preparation for its graduates through a variety of methods including earning a Regents diploma with advanced designation, achieving the college and career readiness benchmark on the SAT, and passing a college level course. Only 39% of the school's graduates achieved at least one of these distinctions in 2023-24 falling under the target of 75%.



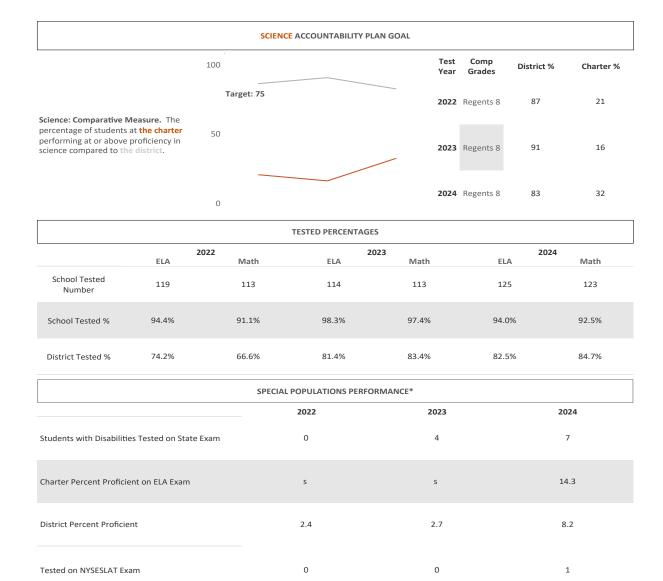
#### **GREEN TECH CHARTER SCHOOL**





#### **GREEN TECH CHARTER SCHOOL**

Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress



\* 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".

S



Graduates

62

60

56

49

41

Grad N

62

56

49

2020

2021

2022

2023

2023

College Prep %

69 4

15.0

80.4

46.9

39.0

Matriculation %

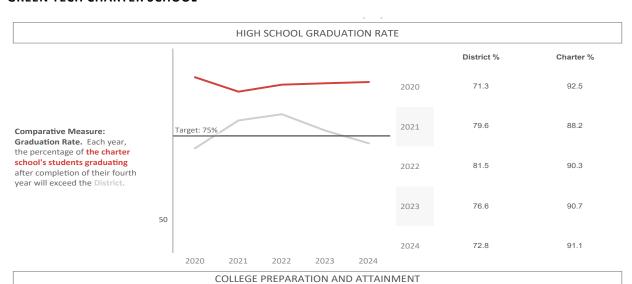
77.4

66.7

69.6

55.1

#### **GREEN TECH CHARTER SCHOOL**



College Preparation Measure: Each year, 75 percent of graduates will demonstrate college preparation through one or more indicators including passing an AP exam or earning an advanced diploma. 100

50

Target: 75%

2020

2021

2023

0 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024

100 2020

Target: 75%

2021

50 2022

College Attainment Measure: Matriculation into College. Each year, 75 percent of graduating students will enroll in a college or university.

2022



### **QUALITATIVE BENCHMARK ANALYSIS**

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, grounded in the body of research from the Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University,<sup>4</sup> describe the elements in place at schools that are highly effective at providing students from low-income backgrounds the instruction, content, knowledge, and skills necessary to produce strong academic performance.

#### **ASSESSMENT**

Green Tech implements a consistent assessment system designed to track student progress toward schoolwide goals. The school utilizes Edulastic, a web-based assessment tool that allows teachers to create exams by selecting question-and-answer formats from a bank of items aligned to New York State standards, to streamline a valid and reliable testing process. Green Tech administers biweekly formative assessments in each content area, interim benchmarks each quarter, and the i-Ready three times each year to measure student learning. These assessment routines allow the school to collect a robust body of data, which the chief information officer summarizes for teachers and leaders to gauge progress and identify students for intervention.

Although the school effectively collects data, there is limited evidence of structured, schoolwide expectations for teachers' use of data to meet students' needs. Assessment results are readily accessible, but teachers' and leaders' processes for analysis and response are inconsistent, particularly in mathematics courses. The school devotes significant instructional time to assessment but leaders do not provide corresponding support to ensure teachers incorporate student performance information in their planning and teaching strategies. Further, leaders do not use assessment results to inform targeted professional development, coaching, or curricular priorities for teachers.

#### **CURRICULUM**

Green Tech's curricula support teachers in their instructional planning but do not yet meet teachers' needs across all subject areas and grade levels. While most teachers have access to curricular maps, scope and sequence documents, and unit outlines, the materials vary in quality and detail. The school's curricular framework provides student performance expectations and a general trajectory for the year's learning, but gaps in both resources and implementation result in inconsistencies in instructional rigor. For example, portions of the ELA curricula include explicit teaching techniques but lack strong student-facing tasks to promote engagement, while the mathematics curriculum provides a library of student materials but does not include objectives and guiding questions for teachers to inform alignment across units and lessons. As a result, teachers' lesson plans follow a common template but do not demonstrate a depth of standards-driven planning to support student mastery of grade level content.

In ELA, students engage with complex texts and develop analytical writing skills. However, there is a need for more targeted support for students reading and writing below grade level, as instructional strategies do not consistently scaffold learning for all students. Mathematics lessons follow the structured progression of the Green Tech lesson template but rely on procedural activities with minimal real-world applications or

<sup>4.</sup> An extensive body of research, including a <u>report from Harvard</u> and a <u>report from the United States General Accounting Office</u>, identifying and confirming the correlates of effective schools exists dating back four decades.



problem-solving tasks. Lesson planning, execution, and standards alignment for most mathematics courses do not demonstrate sufficient quality to close achievement gaps in the subject. Science courses align with Next Generation Science Standards, incorporating hands-on learning and inquiry-based approaches, but do not emphasize technology or the environment as stated in the school's key design elements. Social studies and elective courses employ different designs with some teachers relying on externally sourced materials rather than a cohesive curriculum.

The school lacks a formalized process for selecting, developing, and reviewing curricular materials based on student performance data. Teachers report that they have some autonomy in adapting curricular resources and sourcing supplemental materials. However, in the absence of a clear process for vetting these additions, instructional rigor and standards alignment remain inconsistent across the school.

### **PEDAGOGY**

High quality instruction is evident in some classrooms but is not yet consistent throughout the Green Tech academic program. In particular, the school does not provide effective mathematics instruction likely to grow student proficiency. Although teachers deliver lessons with a clear structure, they are not consistently purposeful or of sufficient academic rigor to close gaps and improve student learning.

Some Green Tech teachers deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives aligned to student-centered activities, while others rely on worksheets and tasks that require low-level, factual recall. For example, in some college course offerings teachers facilitate effective student discourse and maintain high levels of rigor. However, most mathematics lessons do not engage students with standards aligned materials as the school has struggled to retain qualified teachers with relevant content knowledge throughout the year. The Institute observed inconsistencies in questioning techniques and opportunities for higher-order thinking throughout the middle and high school programs. Some teachers effectively check for understanding and adjust instruction in response to student misconceptions, but leaders have not held teachers accountable for these practices throughout the school.

Given a large number of new and inexperienced teachers, leaders have prioritized classroom management and culture routines. In most classrooms, there are minimal disruptions and students demonstrate an internalization of schoolwide expectations. While the emphasis on culture contributes to a stable learning environment, overall student engagement is low, and teachers do not effectively differentiate material or integrate activities to develop student independence. Professional development opportunities evidence a limited focus on content-specific instructional strategies. Teachers, particularly in mathematics, report a need for more targeted support in differentiating instruction and integrating assessment data into planning.

#### **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Although Green Tech implements some elements of a high quality instructional leadership system, leaders do not establish an environment of high expectations for student and teacher performance consistently throughout the school. A director of curriculum and instruction works with two consultant instructional coaches, one for new teachers and one for experienced teachers, to deliver professional development and



coaching. The middle school and high school principals conduct a formal evaluation of each teacher twice annually, and deans provide classroom management assistance. Following the board's decision to eliminate the CEO position, the principals increased their administrative duties and limited their direct development of teaching staff members. In response to additional teacher vacancies, the leaders began to deliver more direct coaching at the time of the visit. While these structures offer different avenues to support the development of teachers, instructional leaders have not yet coalesced around sustained, systemic, and effective coaching and supervision routines to ensure all teachers are equipped to deliver high quality instruction to students. For example, leaders only initiated a weekly observation and feedback cycle in January, and much of the professional development is dedicated to school culture rather than to instructional strategies that would promote student learning. Although the school has a mentorship program to pair new and experienced teachers, it lacks formal structures or clear expectations to facilitate observations and meetings. Despite leaders' stated open door policy, their responsiveness to teachers' pedagogical needs and curricular concerns is limited.

Green Tech provides some opportunities in the weekly schedule for teachers to collaborate. Teachers meet with one another during prep periods, lunch hour, and after school to discuss lesson planning and student needs, but the school does not provide formal structures to guide collaboration around instructional techniques, data use, or student learning. Leaders hold intermittent whole staff professional development days throughout the year and select topics based on classroom observation trends. However, the school's professional development strategy is not sufficiently comprehensive to support the needs of the large number of novice teachers and teachers new to Green Tech's model. As a result, classroom instruction does not demonstrate high levels of rigor or clear expectations for how students can and should engage in the content. Leaders cite a plan to return to a multi-week summer institute to build teachers' skills at the outset of the school year after the previous school leader abbreviated the training series. Leaders also anticipate that improvements to school culture throughout the year will result in higher teacher retention and establish a foundation on which leaders can continue to build teachers' capacity. As Green Tech enters the final year of its charter term and stabilizes under its new leadership model, the school has the opportunity to strengthen and clarify its instructional leadership systems to ensure effective teacher support results in high quality instruction. Leaders recognize that the school's mathematics program is not producing adequate outcomes, and acknowledge the urgent need to improve teachers' ability to provide effective mathematics instruction.

### AT-RISK PROGRAM

Green Tech implements adequate systems to meet the educational needs of at-risk students but can strengthen the capacity of all teachers to support students within the general education program. The school uses appropriate procedures to identify students with disabilities, English language learners ("ELLs"), and students struggling academically. Green Tech's response to intervention ("RTI") process uses i-Ready diagnostic data to form ELA and mathematics intervention groups. Teachers also identify students for additional academic, behavior, or attendance support using the school's "student of concern" referral procedures, which allow school administrators and teachers to meet to share data, design interventions, and assess impact. If students do not make sufficient progress, they are referred for evaluation to their home district Committee on Special Education ("CSE"). For students with disabilities, the middle school coordinator and high school coordinator



communicate with the student's home district CSE during the enrollment process to access individualized education programs ("IEPs"). The school administers a home language questionnaire and the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners ("NYSITELL") for students learning English as a new language.

Green Tech monitors the progress and success of at-risk students using biweekly Edulastic tests in each subject area, i-Ready benchmarks, interim assessments, and summative state exam results. However, the school does not make this data readily accessible to all staff members who work with at-risk student populations. The school's data tracking systems are extensive, but leaders do not provide similarly comprehensive support to teachers in analyzing and responding to data to ensure comparable outcomes for general education and at-risk student populations. Further, the school's frequent testing cycle obligates special education teachers to pull students to deliver exam accommodations every other week rather than directly support students in the classroom environment.

Although the school implements direct and indirect consultant teacher services in addition to resource room, effective differentiation and small group intervention strategies were not evident in most of the Institute's classroom observations. Leaders do not deliver ongoing training to support teachers in meeting the needs of at-risk student populations or understanding the school's programs for serving all students. While at-risk program teachers and general education teachers coordinate informally during the school day, the professional development and lesson planning structures do not prioritize effective collaboration between these teaching teams. Green Tech implements a daily schedule with designated intervention blocks for all students, but leaders can strengthen expectations and support for teachers to ensure the time is purposeful and targeted to specific student needs. At the time of the visit, school leaders described a plan to increase the number of students using Edmentum, an online individualized learning platform, and Varsity Tutors, a live virtual small group tutoring service, to address persistent gaps in student learning.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY**

Green Tech's organizational structure and systems enable staff members to weather leadership transitions and carry out the school's academic program with relative consistency. In the fall of 2024, the board decided to eliminate the CEO position and reallocate its responsibilities across the school's senior leaders. Most staff members and stakeholders understand each other's roles and the organization's lines of reporting, but an ongoing director of operations vacancy strains capacity and generates concerns about sustainability. To recruit, hire, and retain qualified leaders and teachers, Green Tech has increased its base salaries and offers stipend-bearing opportunities to mentor novice colleagues and lead professional development workshops. The school also strategically deploys resources to expand programming to meet students' needs, such as investing in twelve additional college courses and supplemental teacher coaching from external consultants. While school leaders have adjusted the administrative structure and duties appropriately to operate without a CEO position, they recognize the need to strengthen in-house instructional leadership capacity to effectively develop teachers.

Green Tech prioritizes a strong and positive culture, which is founded upon a clear merit-based student discipline system consistently applied across classrooms and grade levels. With almost half of the school's teachers new this past year, deans and coaches play a proactive role in helping build teachers' classroom



management skills alongside their instructional delivery. This support, combined with a shift toward more restorative disciplinary practices, has effectively reduced the number of out of school suspensions compared to past years. Increased student attendance rates and decreased chronic absenteeism rates over the charter term also indicate improvements to school culture and student and family accountability systems.

Although the school has effectively navigated the potential disruptions of leader turnover, the board and leadership team do not describe a clear process for monitoring and evaluating the school's systems to make changes as necessary. Given the stability the school has established in its fourth charter term, a comprehensive internal review of the academic program could help inform strategic planning for the future.

#### **BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE**

The Green Tech board of trustees possesses the appropriate skills, experience, and expertise to effectively govern the school and work toward achieving its Accountability Plan goals. Other than the board chair, the majority of trustees joined the board during the current charter term. Despite the large degree of turnover, the board successfully recruited and onboarded several new members over the past year and elected new officers. The board is still actively seeking additional membership and hopes to add both parent and student representatives as well as trustees with connections to local industries and philanthropies to enhance students' job opportunities. Green Tech's board chair meets weekly with the school's two principals to stay abreast of issues. The board meets regularly to monitor the school's overall performance through monthly leader reports and the review of its data dashboard that includes assessment results, enrollment and attendance data, and other indicators of interest to the trustees that inform decision making. The board recently established three standing committees to streamline its oversight of the school's academics, finances, and human resources workstreams.

Over the course of this school year, the board has focused on ensuring leadership stability after the departure of the CEO, hiring and retaining high-quality teachers, and the implementation of internal controls. The board has not yet established a concrete timeline or process for strategic planning to set mid- to long-term goals for the school as it approaches renewal.





#### **GREEN TECH CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES<sup>1</sup>**

**CHAIR** 

Dona S. Bulluck

**VICE CHAIR** 

Tony T. Kelley

SECRETARY

Marie Allen-Campbell

**TRUSTEES** 

Izabella Martin Vinay Pai Barry D. Walston Thomas E. Mueller

### **CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS**

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT <sup>2</sup>	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2020-21	440	390	89%	6-7, 9-12
2021-22	480	417	87%	6-12
2022-23	490	410	84%	6-12
2023-24	500	398	80%	6-12
2024-25	505	432	86%	6-12

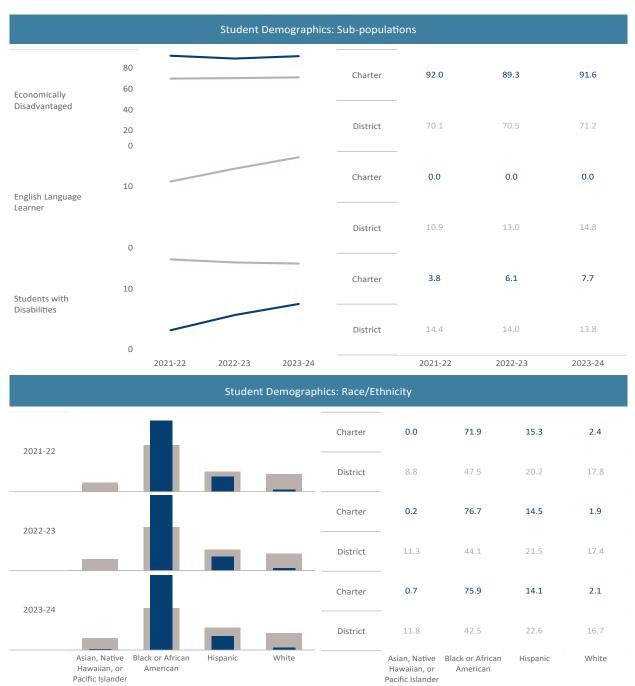
<sup>1.</sup> Source: The Institute's board records at the time of the visit.

<sup>2.</sup> Source: Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)



#### **Green Tech Charter School**

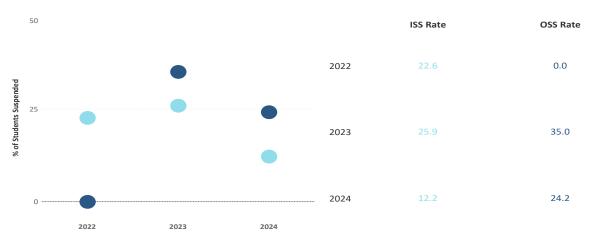
#### **Albany City School District**



<sup>\*</sup> Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS day enrollment counts as reported by the NYSED.

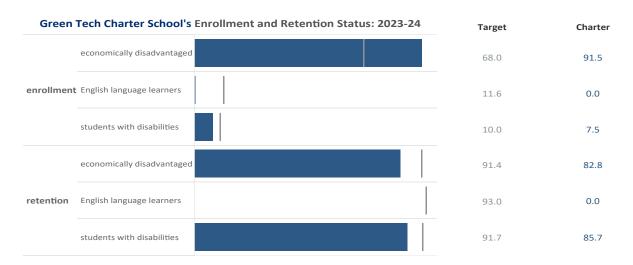


#### **Green Tech Charter School**



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		<b>Expulsions:</b> The number of students expelled from t charter each year		
		2022	2023	2024
2021-22	78.9			
2022-23	76.3	0	0	0
2023-24	76.4			



<sup>\*</sup> Data reported in these charts reflect BEDS Day enrollment as reported by the NYSED and information reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute.



## **CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY**

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2008-09	First Year Visit	March 12, 2009
2009-10	Evaluation Visit	May 25–29, 2010
2010-11	Evaluation Visit	May 12, 2011
2012-13	Initial Renewal Visit	December 11–12, 2012
2014-15	Evaluation Visit	April 23, 2015
2015-16	Subsequent Renewal Visit	November 9–10, 2015
2020-21	Subsequent Renewal Visit	October 13–16, 2020
2022-23	Evaluation Visit	March 7, 2023
2024-25	Evaluation Visit	March 5, 2025

## **CONDUCT OF THE VISIT**

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
	Katy Clayton	School Evaluator
March 5, 2025	Tanya Lewis Jones	Director for New Charters
	Heather Wendling	External Consultant

## **CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT**

CHARTER TERM	TERM YEAR	ANTICIPATED RENEWAL VISIT
Fourth	Fourth Year of its Five Year Charter Term	Fall 2025

