

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT
**UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY
CHARTER SCHOOL FOR YOUNG MEN**

VISIT DATE: APRIL 22 – 23, 2025
REPORT DATE: AUGUST 5, 2025

SUNY Charter Schools Institute

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Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report offers an analysis of evidence collected during the school visit to University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men (“U Prep Young Men”) on April 22 – 23, 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 school 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 that outlines the school’s previous three years of performance, if available, and to 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

UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL FOR YOUNG MEN

1001 Lake Avenue, Rochester, NY 14613 | Grades: 6-8 | RCSD
1290 Lake Avenue, Rochester, NY 14613 | Grades: 9-12 | RCSD



MISSION

The mission of the University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men is to establish a culture that celebrates diversity and where all boys thrive academically and holistically. University Prep develops this culture through small classes, student empowerment, personalized attention from teachers and school staff, and a consistent focus on successful instructional outcomes. University Prep provides opportunities and experiences that balance the academic, social, physical, and creative development of young men. Consistent emphasis is placed on preparation for life after high school, a 100% graduation rate, and all students being college or work place ready.

CURRENT CHARTER

Opened:
2010

Serves: 6th – 12th

Chartered Enrollment:
501

Charter Expiration:
June 30, 2028

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Meet the needs of male learners	-	Safe, disciplined, and nurturing school culture	+
College and career readiness focus	+	Priority placed on reflection, positive relationships, and productive work habits	+
Daily student support check-ins	+	Ongoing professional development	+
Inquiry and self-discovery based instruction	-	All-male student environment	+
Student-centered, data-driven individualized instruction	-		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

U Prep Young Men maintains strong community trust and operational stability, particularly in its middle school grades, but fails to deliver a coherent, academically rigorous program across the full 6th – 12th grade program. The school maintains strong relationships with students and families. However, it does not consistently implement high quality instruction and has not established an effective program to support post-secondary readiness. While leaders have started to address long-standing instructional and organizational issues identified during multiple Institute site visits in the previous charter term, progress remains limited, and the impact on student outcomes is still unclear. Key gaps continue to exist in instructional coherence, performance management systems, and curriculum oversight.

At the middle school level, instruction benefits from clearer planning structures and greater consistency of implementation. By contrast, the high school lacks defined instructional expectations resulting in low cognitive demand, inconsistent teaching quality, and weak alignment to college and career standards. Leaders recognize this imbalance and have taken steps to increase walkthroughs, planning time, and collaboration, but these efforts remain fragmented and are not yet yielding measurable results.

Although U Prep Young Men maintains effective operational structures and a supportive school culture, its leaders have not developed cohesive strategies to enhance the quality of instruction throughout the academic program. The school lacks a performance management system that establishes clear instructional expectations and ensures consistent monitoring and support. Without regular observation and feedback cycles, teachers often rely on minimally planned lessons, limited differentiation, and teaching strategies that fail to engage students in higher order thinking. Although the school maintains partnerships with graduate programs and has internal leadership development structures, leaders do not actively use these initiatives to build instructional capacity or support accountability for student outcomes.

The board maintains fiscal compliance and long-term commitment to the school's mission. However, it does not yet provide the level of academic oversight necessary to ensure high student achievement. Without formal systems for monitoring student outcomes or evaluating school leadership against instructional performance benchmarks, the board risks perpetuating academic underperformance. To make meaningful progress, U Prep Young Men must move beyond its reliance on strong relationships and urgently develop the instructional systems and accountability structures necessary to drive academic outcomes.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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 English language arts (“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 Summary to each school detailing the school’s progress toward meeting its Accountability Plan goals. Because The New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998 (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 first year of the school’s current charter term and second year of the Accountability Period, U Prep Young Men posted low achievement on its ELA and mathematics goals. The school met its graduation goal but did not meet its postsecondary preparation goal. In order to make the most compelling case for earning renewal in 2027-28, the school must make unequivocal improvement in its performance and demonstrate that its graduates are prepared for college or career.

U Prep Young Men posted low achievement on the measures comprising its ELA goal in the second year of its Accountability Period. That year, only 24% of tested students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficient which was far below the absolute target of 75% and only four percentage points above the district results. Notably, 42% of tested students scored at level 1, the lowest possible level, which indicates performance far below grade level expectations. The school posted an effect size of -1.48, which was under the target of 0.3. In comparison to demographically similar schools across the state, U Prep Young Men performed lower than expected. In contrast, the school posted a mean growth percentile eight points above the target. In order to establish the best case for earning subsequent renewal, the school must continue to demonstrate high growth.

In mathematics, only 36% of 6th grade students who sat for the mathematics exam scored at or above proficient. U Prep Young Men administered a Regents mathematics exam to its students in 7th and 8th grade in lieu of the typical state assessment in 2023-24. That year, only 16% of tested students passed the Regents, falling below the district results. The school must improve its mathematics achievement at the middle school level to make the best case for earning renewal.

At the high school level, the large variation in statewide Regents exam participation rates and exemptions due to COVID-19 have confounded the Institute’s analysis of the required Accountability Plan measures relying on Regents exam attainment. However, U Prep Young Men’s 2020 Graduation Cohort had relatively high participation rates on

1. 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.

2. Education Law § 2850(2)(f).

3. Education Law § 2854(1)(d).

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

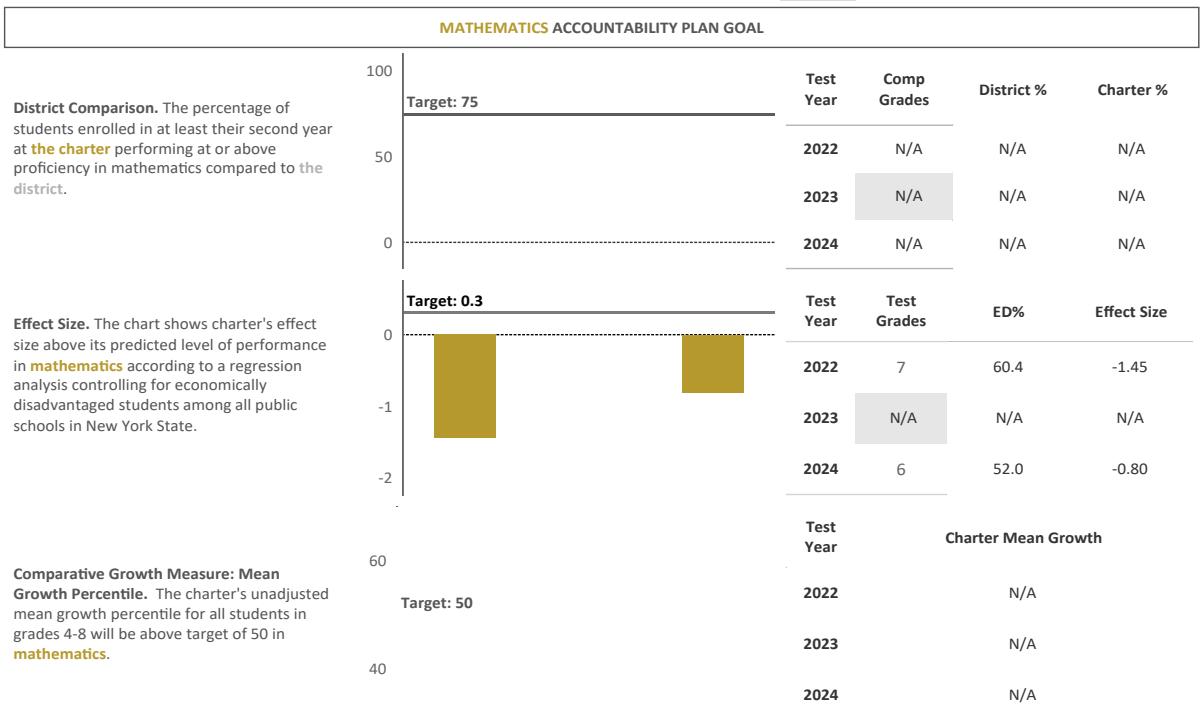
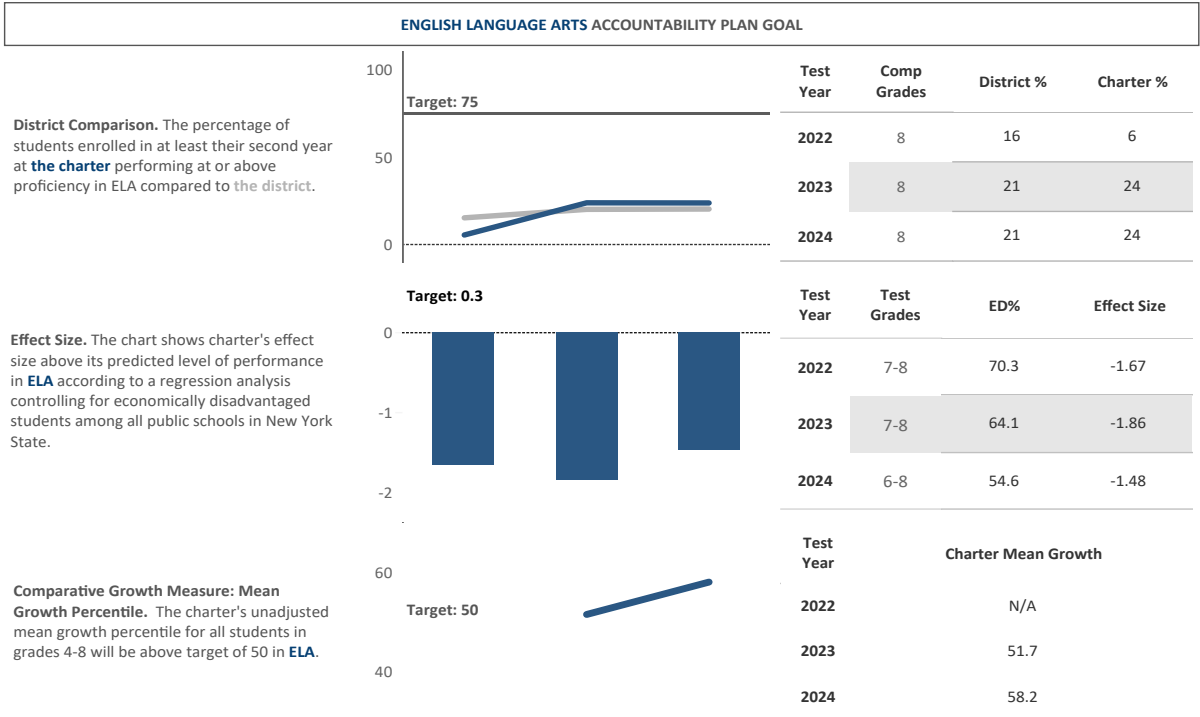
Regents exams in ELA and mathematics. Among all tested students in the 2020 Cohort, 72% passed the ELA Regents scoring at performance level 3 or higher. In mathematics, only 7% passed at least one Regents exam by the end of four years. This level of performance is far below the absolute target of 80%.

In 2023-24, the school met its graduation goal but did not meet its college preparation goal. That year, 90% of the school's 2020 Graduation Cohort graduated after four years exceeding the absolute target by 15 percentage points and the district results by 28 percentage points. The school demonstrates college and career preparation for its graduates through methods that include earning the Regents diploma with advanced designation, passing a college level course, and earning a Career and Technical Education ("CTE") endorsement in culinary arts. In 2023-24, only 26% of the 57 graduates in the 2020 Cohort achieved at least one of these distinctions falling under the target of 75%. U Prep Young Men must continue to increase the proportion of its graduates demonstrating postsecondary preparation.



ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL FOR YOUNG MEN





ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL FOR YOUNG MEN



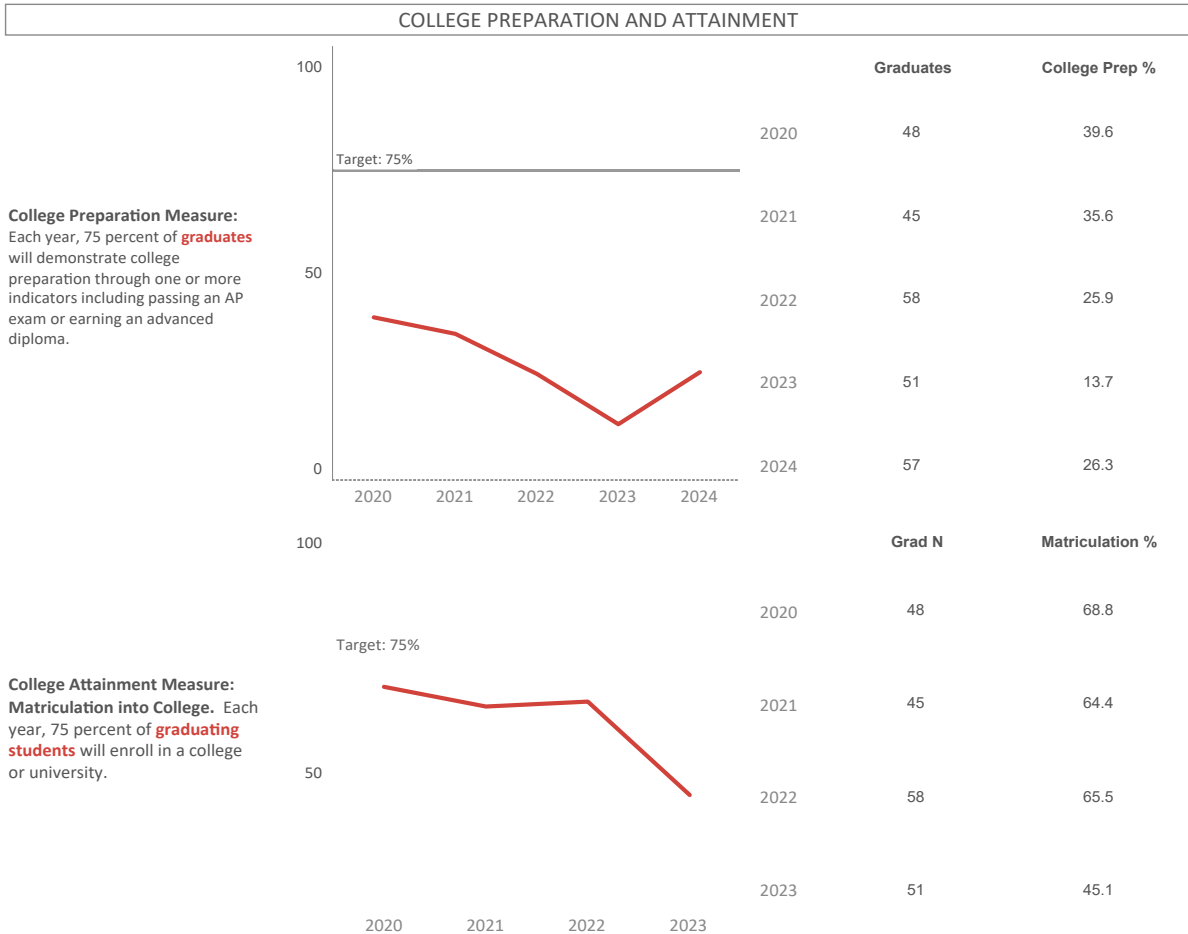
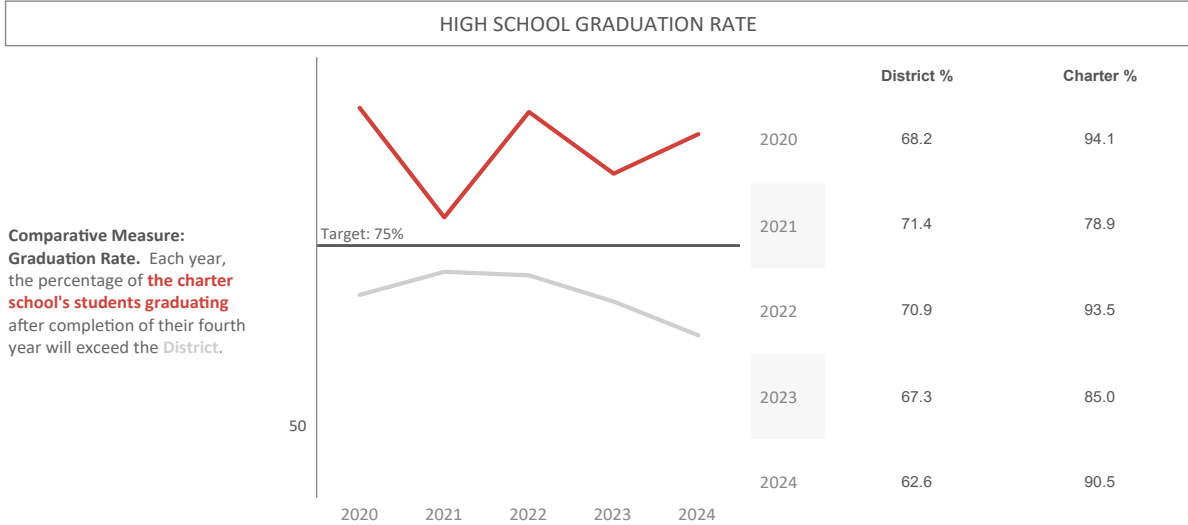
TESTED PERCENTAGES						
	2022		2023		2024	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
School Tested Number	125	128	124	121	175	175
School Tested %	96.9%	99.2%	95.4%	93.8%	93.6%	93.6%
District Tested %	83.8%	81.0%	82.9%	83.8%	83.5%	84.9%

SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE*			
	2022	2023	2024
Students with Disabilities Tested on State Exam	11	13	21
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	0.0	0.0	9.5
District Percent Proficient	1.5	2.9	2.6
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	3	5	8
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	s	s	25.0

* 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

UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL FOR YOUNG MEN



BENCHMARK SUMMARY

QUALITATIVE BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, grounded in the body of research from the Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University,⁴ 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

U Prep Young Men's assessment system does not improve instructional effectiveness. While the school regularly administers valid and reliable assessments, it does not consistently build teachers' skills to effectively use data to inform instruction. The suite of assessments include i-Ready for mathematics and ELA, common formative assessments, and practice Regents. These assessments provide a wide range of data, and leaders use initial diagnostic assessments to determine specific student groupings for remedial and support courses built into the schedule. For the middle school program, this includes informing student participation during learning lab periods to support with developing foundational skills. Teachers at the middle school program use student data more systematically than at the high school level, and middle school teachers are responsive to data gathered from weekly quizzes to inform teaching points and remediation efforts. At the high school level, teachers do not use data in similar ways to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of students. Students noted that teachers at the high school level inconsistently input grades, which impacts students' ability to have a timely understanding of their academic progress. For example, students shared that toward the end of a marking period, they may find out they are failing a class because the teacher did not regularly update grades through the period.

CURRICULUM

U Prep Young Men supports teachers somewhat effectively at the middle school level but does not provide sufficient curricular support or oversight at the high school. Teachers consistently use Independent Reading Level Assessment for ELA and Illustrative Math program assessments for mathematics. The middle school program provides supporting tools and resources for teachers to plan lessons including pacing guides and a lesson plan template. Middle school teachers plan purposeful lessons with support from leaders. Teachers create and submit lesson plans on a weekly basis, then receive feedback from the school leader. Based on classroom observations and document review, these efforts translate into purposeful lessons for students with a clear focus on building student engagement with multiple opportunities for students to practice the skill and objective for the day's lessons.

However, at the high school level, U Prep Young Men does not have a clear curricular framework that teachers deliver with fidelity. While the program may espouse use of specific programs for different content areas, teachers report largely creating their materials and planning backwards using state standards. High school level teachers create lesson plans, but the Institute's review demonstrated mixed levels of consistency and expectations within the plans. High school program teachers do not plan purposeful, rigorous lessons as demonstrated by lesson plan reviews. In many classrooms at the high school level, teachers provided students

4. An extensive body of research, including a [report from Harvard](#) and a [report from the United States General Accounting Office](#), identifying and confirming the correlates of effective schools exists dating back four decades.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

with significantly less work than at the middle school level. Despite a wide range of ability levels within classrooms, teachers planned little to no differentiation to meet student needs. Leaders do not review high school planning at the same level as at the middle school program. Leaders have not normed teachers at the high school level on expectations for high quality lesson planning and execution at U Prep Young Men.

PEDAGOGY

While U Prep Young Men's middle school program demonstrates some aspects of high quality instruction, the school must urgently improve instructional quality at the high school level. High school program teachers do not deliver purposeful instruction. While teachers have a standard lesson plan template with a consistent structure, including a bridge, mini-lesson, workshop, summary, and closure, few teachers effectively plan with the tool, and observations demonstrate that few teachers implement the plans with fidelity. Middle school program teachers adhere to the planning template with more fidelity and deliver more purposeful instruction.

While the Institute observed teachers checking for student understanding at a higher rate than previous site visits, teachers do not conduct these checks with full effectiveness across all classrooms. One area of consistency for the school is in its bridge activity at the start of each lesson. Some teachers use these activities effectively as a starting point for the day's lesson and will make adjustments as necessary to the lesson. However, the Institute did not observe effective adjustments to instruction consistently implemented across the program based on in the moment checks for understanding. In most lessons, teachers primarily check for completion of activities rather than collecting meaningful information about student understanding. As a result, teachers inconsistently collect or use data to adjust lesson pacing, modify activities, or differentiate instruction. For example, while some teachers use questioning techniques such as cold calling and turn-and-talk to clarify procedures, most teachers do not gather sufficient data to check for understanding of learning objectives.

Teachers do not consistently present students with opportunities to engage in higher order thinking activities. In most high school program classes, instruction lacks rigor and fails to develop critical thinking skills with limited opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking and problem solving. Most high school program teachers deliver instruction through a lecture style, and in these cases, the Institute observed few opportunities for students to share or engage with one another during lessons. In contrast, the middle school program demonstrates more consistent implementation of effective routines and strategies to support rigorous instruction.

Most high school and middle school teachers use effective classroom management techniques and routines to maintain calm and welcoming environments. School leaders, teachers, and support staff prioritize relationship building, personalized behavior interventions, and individualized social-emotional learning. In some classrooms, teachers are not as effective with these skills and allow students to opt out of learning and not complete work during the lesson. The school's short class period schedule presents challenges for lesson pacing. Specifically, teachers generally struggle to maximize learning time and implement efficient transitions, leading to difficulties with pacing, on-task student behavior, and providing rigorous instruction to students.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

U Prep Young Men does not have an effective instructional leadership system in place to ensure consistent, high quality teaching across all grade levels. Across both programs, leaders inconsistently communicate clear expectations for student learning. While the middle school program benefits from more structured lesson planning and clearer curricular expectations, the high school program lacks non-negotiable instructional expectations, consistent coaching, and aligned feedback cycles. Teachers report limited clarity around instructional priorities, and, at the high school level, modify the curriculum in a way that does not promote high expectations for student learning.

Leaders do not provide consistent support and coaching to improve teachers' instructional effectiveness. While leaders have increased classroom walkthroughs and initiated some coaching efforts, these remain disconnected from a clear instructional framework or data driven improvement plan. The school lacks a consistent system to monitor curriculum implementation, evaluate instructional quality, or use student performance data to guide feedback and professional learning. There are no formal structures for internal calibration, instructional goal setting, or differentiated teacher development based on need. As a result, expectations for lesson planning, content rigor, and formative assessment practices vary significantly across grade levels and content areas. These deficiencies impede the school's ability to ensure vertical alignment, promote consistent instructional improvement, or respond meaningfully to assessment results.

Leaders do not implement a professional development program that improves teacher skills. Professional development does not consistently target instructional delivery or support growth in pedagogical skill. Leaders have not developed a shared vision for excellent teaching or established systems to ensure it is enacted in classrooms, which inhibits the ability for leaders to provide a robust professional development program.

AT-RISK PROGRAM

U Prep Young Men lacks a comprehensive and coherent program to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities, English language learners ("ELLs"), and those at risk of academic failure. While the school meets basic compliance requirements for student identification of ELLs and students with disabilities, teachers report inconsistent referral practices and limited collaboration among teams when evaluating students for special education or ELL services. The absence of a coordinated Response to Intervention systems hampers timely and accurate identification.

U Prep Young Men has a variety of programs in place to support at-risk students, but it does not have strong instructional practices, oversight mechanisms, or progress monitoring practices in place to ensure that interventions are effective. For students with disabilities, the school provides integrated co-teaching ("ICT") classrooms, consultant teachers, and resource room. For related services, the school partners with the district. ELLs receive some language support services, but the school does not have a cohesive language acquisition model in place.

Leaders provide limited support for general education teachers to use effective strategies to support at-risk students within the general education program. The school is not consistent with implementing the ICT model, and special education teachers report unclear guidance about instructional expectations. Leaders conduct

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

progress monitoring through data meetings, but it is unclear how the school adjusts interventions to meet the needs of students based on progress monitoring activities. U Prep Young Men must improve its systems to provide high quality interventions and supports for at-risk students to ensure students receive a high quality educational experience.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

U Prep Young Men has clear operational systems in place, but these do not result in the effective delivery of the educational program. While most aspects of the school's operations have clear systems, policies, and procedures, the school does not leverage the strengths of its operational systems to develop its academic program. The organizational structure does not establish distinct lines of accountability, as evidenced by staff members reporting a lack of clarity about who is responsible for driving instructional improvement and inconsistent communication and decision making across leaders.

U Prep Young Men has prioritized implementing a clear and consistently applied student discipline system. Teachers report an improved culture amongst adults and students at the school. The school invested in additional staff members to strengthen behavioral support. The school works to establish a strong culture of relational care, and this culture is evident throughout the school. Students report feeling known and valued.

The school lacks procedures to regularly monitor and evaluate its programs to make changes as necessary. Leaders do not have systems in place to determine the effectiveness of professional development, coaching, and other supports for teachers. With no clear instructional vision or expectations in place, leaders are unable to hold teachers accountable to high expectations for student learning.

BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

U Prep Young Men's board does not work effectively to achieve the school's Accountability Plan goals. Board members possess relevant expertise. The board has put in place structures and procedures with which to govern the school including committees such as executive, finance, and career and technical education. While these structures enable the board to provide effective oversight of the school's legal and financial affairs, the board does not provide adequate oversight or accountability for the school's academic performance. The board reports it understands the importance of building a better system for collecting student alumni success. However, it still lacks a robust system and procedure for collecting this information, and the Institute has identified this as a priority for the board during previous visits. The board must demonstrate significant progress in developing its alumni tracking to clearly understand postsecondary success for students by the time the school comes to its renewal.

The board works with a consultant to help develop priorities and long term plans. However, it lacks structures and urgency in developing its oversight skills as to the academic performance of students, and it does not have effective accountability structures in place to ensure that the school is meeting or coming close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals.

U Prep Young Men

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APPENDICES

PAGES Ax 1-4



UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL FOR YOUNG MEN BOARD OF TRUSTEES¹

CHAIR	TRUSTEES
Dr. Edward Yansen	Dr. George Bovenzi
VICE CHAIR	Dr. Gayle W. Harrison
Denise Rainey & Larry Ellison	Wandah Gibbs
TREASURER	David Shakes
Allen K. Williams	
SECRETARY	
Sharon Delly	

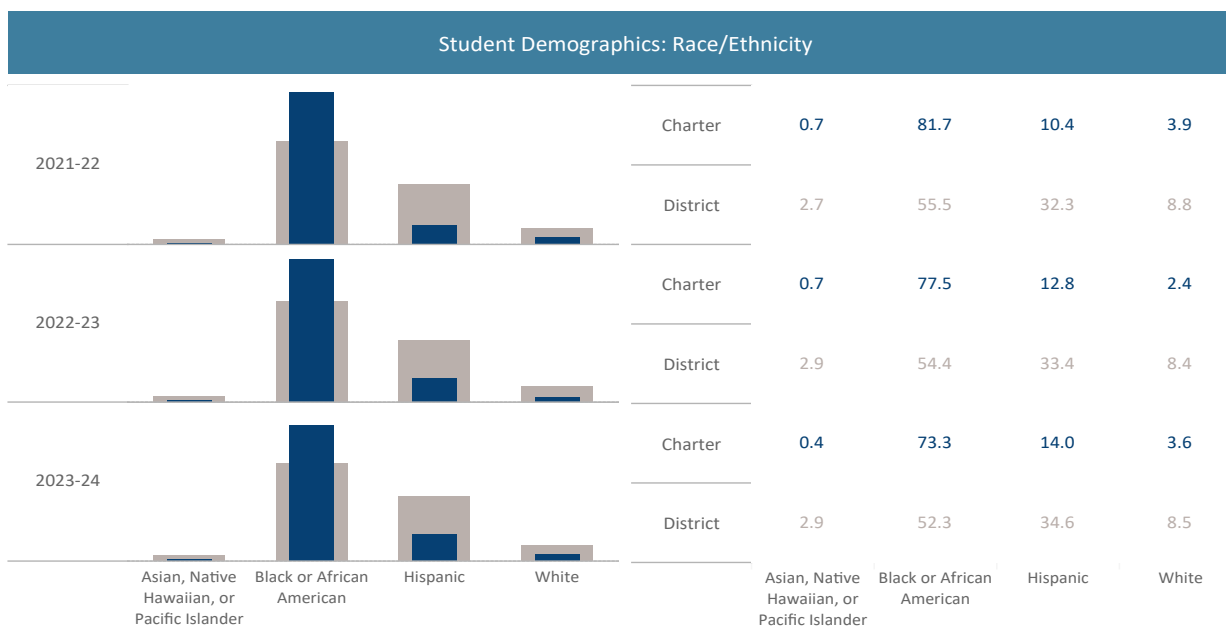
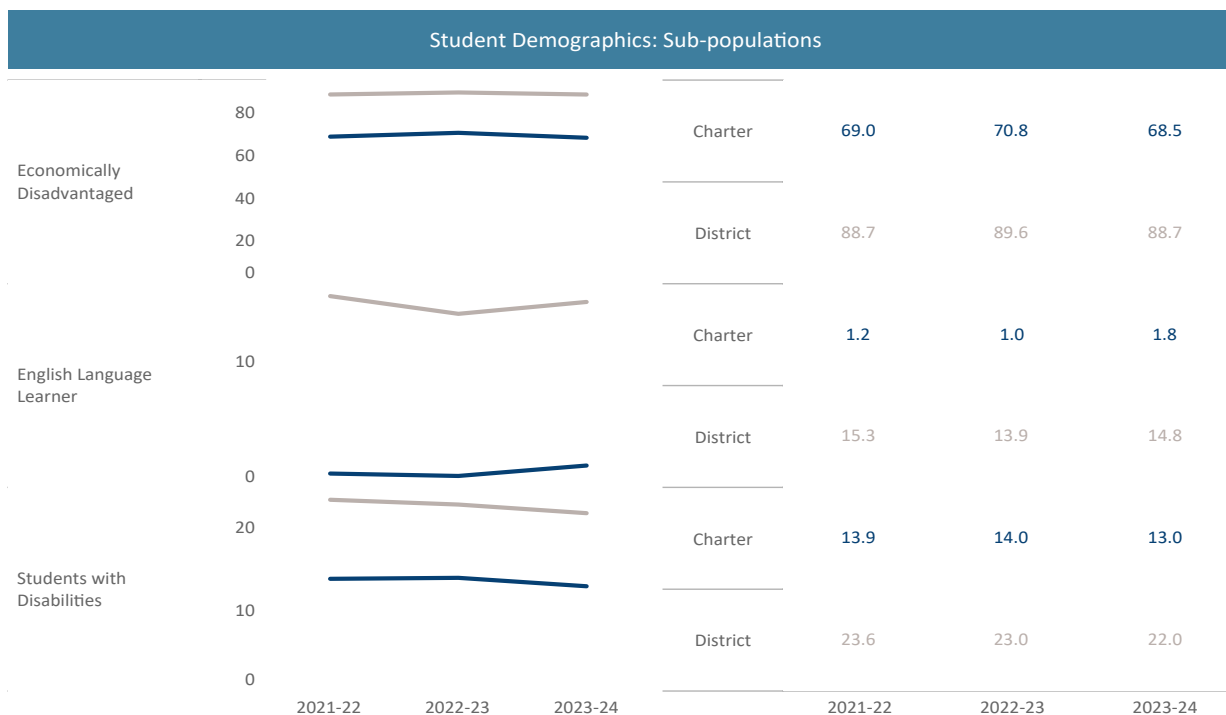
CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ²	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2020-21	450	410	91%	7 – 12
2021-22	450	418	93%	7 – 12
2022-23	450	421	94%	7 – 12
2023-24	525	492	94%	6 – 12
2024-25	525	509	97%	6 – 12

1. Source: The Institute’s board records at the time of the visit.
2. Source: Institute’s Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men

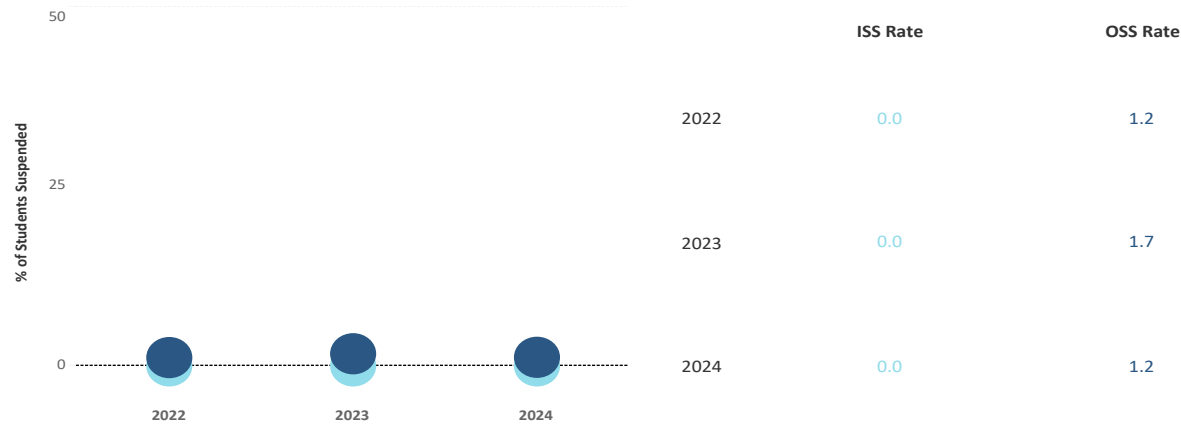
Rochester City School District



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



University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men



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	85.7			
2022-23	81.0	1	0	0
2023-24	83.1			

University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men's Enrollment and Retention
Status: 2023-24

		Target	Charter
enrollment	economically disadvantaged	86.3	68.5
	English language learners	16.3	1.8
	students with disabilities	19.0	13.0
retention	economically disadvantaged	93.2	84.3
	English language learners	93.6	50.0
	students with disabilities	92.9	81.6

Discipline data above reflect information reported by the education corporation and validated by the Institute. Enrollment and retention data reflect available BEDS day information as reported by the NYSED.

CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2010-11	First Year Visit	February 3, 2011
2011-12	Evaluation Visit	October 13, 2011
2012-13	Evaluation Visit	March 7 – 8, 2013
2014-15	Initial Renewal	November 18 – 19, 2014
2017-18	Subsequent Renewal	November 14 – 15, 2017
2021-22	Evaluation Visit	May 3, 2022
2022-23	Subsequent Renewal Visit	October 4 – 5, 2022
2024-25	Evaluation Visit	April 22 – 23, 2025

CONDUCT OF THE VISIT

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
April 22 – 23, 2025	Desree Cabrall-Njenga	School Evaluator
	Andrew Kile	Director for School Evaluation
	Kennesha Kelly	External Consultant

CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT

CHARTER TERM	TERM YEAR	ANTICIPATED RENEWAL VISIT
Fourth Term	Third Year of a Five Year Charter Term	Fall 2027

