

# THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

*SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT*  
**INTELLECTUS PREPARATORY  
CHARTER SCHOOL**

*VISIT DATE: MAY 20–21, 2025*

*REPORT DATE: NOVEMBER 19, 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 Intellectus Preparatory Charter School (“Intellectus Prep”) on May 20 – 21, 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

# INTELLECTUS PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

175 -177 Gramatan Ave Mount Vernon, NY 10550 | Grades: 6-9 | Mount Vernon City School District

### “ MISSION

*Intellectus Prep delivers an equitable educational experience for scholars in grades 6 –12. Through experiential learning, restorative practice, and personal development, scholars are prepared to compete academically, contribute socially, and choose their pathway to college and career.*

### CURRENT CHARTER

Opened:  
2022

Serves:  
6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>

Chartered Enrollment:  
320

Charter Expiration:  
July 31, 2027

### KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Experiential learning	-
Enjoyment of learning	-
Counseling for all	+
Pathway choice	+
Family and community partnerships	+
Continuous improvement	+

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SUNY Trustees approved the original charter for Intellectus Prep on June 15, 2021, and the school opened in the fall of 2022 serving 112 students in 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. In 2024-25, Intellectus served students in 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade and will expand to include 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade by the end of the charter term.

In its third year of operation, Intellectus Prep has made progress in developing its academic program, but continues to struggle with enrollment to build the originally planned program. As the school expands to serve high school students, it intends to partner with Westchester Community College to offer 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students dual enrollment coursework. However, the school must determine if it is feasible to offer the program given its enrollment challenges. The Institute observed some improvement in student engagement and student culture across classrooms, but instructional leaders have not yet defined a vision for high quality instruction. Given the budget constraints, school directors often fulfill the duties of multiple roles and are unable to consistently provide teachers with an effective level of support and coaching. The Institute team did not find sufficient evidence of a compliant English language learner (“ELL”) program at the time of the site visit. As such, the Institute will work with the school to ensure it makes any changes to come into compliance if necessary.

Intellectus Prep continues to struggle with enrollment having reached just 28% of chartered enrollment for the 2024-25 school year. Based on the school’s May 2025 Student Application Summary, the school anticipated filling 220 out of 424 available seats for the 2025-26 school year. At the time of the evaluation visit, leaders did not have a clear recruitment strategy to fill the remaining 204 seats.

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

### 2023-24 CHARTER PERFORMANCE REVIEW

At the beginning of the Accountability Period,<sup>1</sup> 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”<sup>2</sup> and states the educational programs at a charter school must “meet or exceed the student performance standards adopted by the board of regents”<sup>3</sup> 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 second year of the school’s initial charter term, Intellectus Prep met its mathematics Accountability Plan goal and demonstrated growth in ELA. Notably, the school exceeded the target for its growth measure in both subjects. In order to make the best case for earning renewal in 2026-27, Intellectus Prep must continue to demonstrate growth and meet or come close to meeting its goals.

In ELA, 45% of tested students enrolled in at least their second year scored at or above proficient, which was four percentage points below the district rate. The school posted a comparative effect size of -0.46 according to the Institute’s regression analysis. This level of performance fell under the target of 0.3 indicating the school performed lower than expected compared to schools across the state enrolling similar percentages of economically disadvantaged students. In contrast, Intellectus Prep exceeded the target for its growth measure by six percentile points. The school must improve its comparative performance in the final two years of its Accountability Period in order to make the most compelling case for renewal.

Intellectus Prep met its mathematics goal in 2023-24 with 67% of tested students enrolled in at least their second year scoring at or above proficient on the state’s mathematics exam. The school outperformed the district by 27 percentage points and performed higher than expected compared to demographically similar schools according to the Institute’s effect size analysis. The school administers the Regents Algebra I exam to students in 8<sup>th</sup> grade in lieu of the typical assessment. In 2023-24, 50% of students passed the exam. Intellectus Prep also exceeded the target for its growth measure by nearly 20 points.

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).

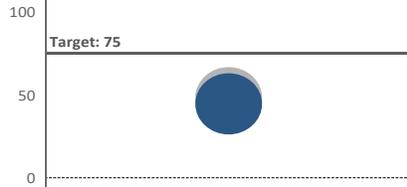


# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## INTELLECTUS PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

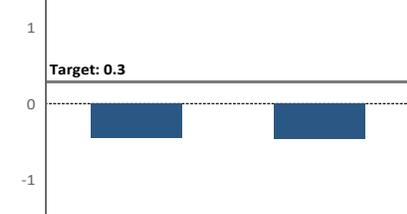
### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

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



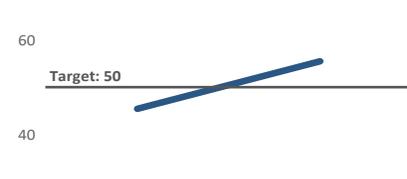
Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2024	7-8	49	45

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



Test Year	Test Grades	ED%	Effect Size
2023	6-7	57.9	-0.46
2024	6-8	54.0	-0.46

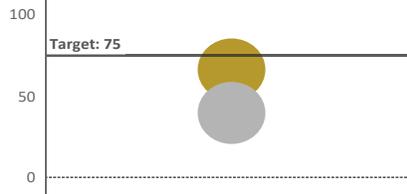
**Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.** The charter's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all students in grades 4-8 will be above target of 50 in **ELA**.



Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2023	45.5
2024	55.6

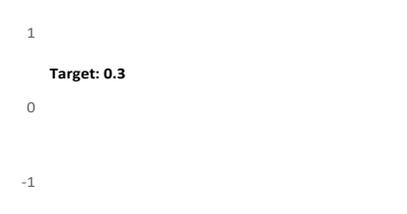
### MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

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



Test Year	Comp Grades	District %	Charter %
2024	7	40	67

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



Test Year	Test Grades	ED%	Effect Size
2023	6-7	57.9	0.49
2024	6-7	56.6	0.27

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



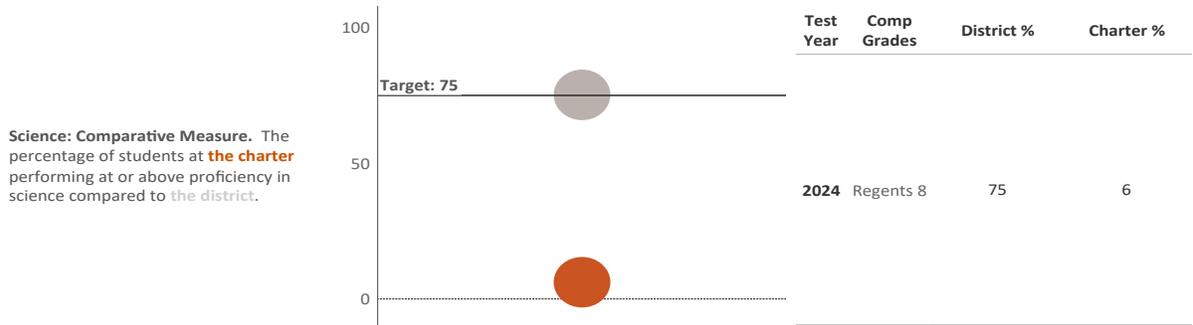
Test Year	Charter Mean Growth
2023	71.2
2024	69.4



# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## INTELLECTUS PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

### SCIENCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL



### TESTED PERCENTAGES

	2023		2024	
	ELA	Math	ELA	Math
School Tested Number	57	55	66	61
School Tested %	91.9%	88.7%	90.4%	83.6%
District Tested %	88.4%	88.3%	88.7%	88.9%

### SPECIAL POPULATIONS PERFORMANCE\*

	2023	2024
Students with Disabilities Tested on State Exam	N/A	N/A
Charter Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	N/A	N/A
District Percent Proficient	12.3	16.4
Tested on NYSESLAT Exam	N/A	N/A
Charter Percent 'Commanding' or Making Progress	N/A	N/A

\*Due to an error in data reporting, enrollment of English language learners and economically disadvantage students are unavailable for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years.

## BENCHMARK SUMMARY

### QUALITATIVE BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

The SUNY Renewal Benchmarks, grounded in the body of research from the Center for Urban Studies at Harvard University,<sup>1</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

Intellectus Prep is developing elements of an effective assessment system to improve student learning. The school regularly administers i-Ready, a nationally-normed computer-based assessment to monitor student learning for diagnostic and interim assessments. Some teachers consistently use curriculum-based unit assessments and exit tickets for formative assessments, but this practice is not consistent across the school. For Regents preparation, the school uses Castle learning tools for mock Regents exams in mathematics and science. Intellectus Prep teachers use assessment results to meet students' needs. Teachers and instructional leaders meet during weekly data analysis meetings to identify learning gaps within assessment outcomes and determine content for reteaching. Teachers use data to identify students for two standalone class periods focusing on foundational ELA and mathematics skills. Leaders have expectations for teachers to additionally use data to inform small group instruction and differentiation during core content instruction, but the Institute did not observe teachers consistently implementing these strategies.

#### CURRICULUM

Intellectus Prep offers curricula that assist teachers with instructional planning. The school is developing a curricular framework aligned to state standards. Intellectus Prep currently uses components from different curricular programs to build its curricula. The Institute observed inconsistent implementation of the curricular programs across the school. For any content areas with internally developed curricula, leaders review teachers' content to ensure alignment to state standards. Leaders provide supporting tools that provide a bridge between the curricular framework and lesson plans. During summer training sessions, leaders provide teachers with unit plans, scope and sequence documents, and pacing calendars. As a result of this work and these resources, teachers know what to teach and when. Leaders attempt to continue this work throughout the school year, but teachers report inconsistency with the level of unit unpacking during the school year.

Leaders do not yet support teachers with planning purposeful and focused lessons. The school provides teachers with a lesson plan template that includes elements such as experiential learning activities, student misconceptions, and higher order thinking questions. However, based on a review of lesson plans, these aspects of planning are not consistently completed or lack clarity about how teachers will implement specific elements. While teachers submit lesson plans weekly, feedback does not yield higher quality teaching and learning across Intellectus Prep.

1. 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

### PEDAGOGY

Intellectus Prep leaders are working to improve overall instructional quality across the school. Teachers do not yet deliver purposeful lessons with clear objectives. Leaders expect teachers to uphold the school's vision for high quality instruction, which includes engaging students in experiential learning activities, addressing student misconceptions, differentiating instruction, and promoting vocabulary development. However, teachers do not consistently deliver instruction with these aspects fully planned or executed to the highest quality. In addition, teachers do not fully utilize the school's lesson planning template to ensure they are prepared to deliver purposeful instruction that meets the school's expectations. As such, the quality of instruction varies significantly across classrooms. Though a stated objective for the school, few teachers engage students in experiential learning activities.

Teachers do not regularly use effective checks for student understanding. Most teachers rely on hands raised to respond to questions and do not effectively gauge understanding of the majority of students. In some classrooms, teachers did not address student misconceptions with effective strategies, and the Institute did not observe evidence of teachers anticipating student misconceptions or ways to respond in planning or execution of lessons. Teachers do not include opportunities to challenge students with higher order thinking activities or questions. Most teachers ask basic factual recall questions. While the school prioritizes increasing student voice during lessons, most classrooms do not engage students in activities that encourage the use of student voice. As a result, students have few opportunities for academic dialogue with peers. Teachers also miss opportunities to prompt students to explain or extend their thinking.

Since the Institute's previous visit, Intellectus Prep has improved teachers' classroom management and pacing skills. Teachers deliver lessons utilizing effective classroom management techniques and pacing strategies. Teachers quickly address minor behavioral issues and move on with the lesson to maximize learning time.

### INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Intellectus Prep is developing elements of strong instructional leadership systems. Instructional leaders recognize a need to ensure consistency in the program quality across all classrooms and to solidify the school's vision for high quality instruction. Leaders have not yet fully defined high expectations for teacher performance. Leaders provide teachers with multiple tools in an effort to define expectations for high quality instruction, but teachers do not fully utilize the tools to implement these expectations. Due to staffing shortages, Intellectus Prep's leadership has not demonstrated the capacity to support the development of the teaching staff. At the time of the visit, instructional leaders assumed multiple roles as coaches and classroom teachers within multiple subject areas as well as their typical leadership responsibilities. These capacity shortages reduce the team's ability to provide frequent and consistent support to teachers and to reinforce the school's priorities.

Instructional leaders have not yet been able to provide sustained and effective coaching that improves teachers' instructional effectiveness. While instructional leaders envision a clear system to provide teachers with regular meetings and feedback for improvement, their ability to implement those systems is restricted by the demands of multiple responsibilities. While leaders may conduct informal observations and provide real

## BENCHMARK SUMMARY

time coaching feedback, a review of coaching notes and feedback indicates that leaders do not consistently provide teachers with detailed, actionable feedback to hold teachers accountable. Instructional leaders provide time for teachers to plan curriculum and instruction through weekly collaborative planning sessions. Teachers engage in self-guided intellectual preparation routines with inconsistent support from instructional leaders. Based on classroom observations and teachers' reporting on school expectations, these preparation routines do not delve into a level of depth and meaningful work that translates into teachers proactively addressing student misconceptions and improving teaching and learning.

Leaders implement a professional development program that has effectively improved teachers' classroom management skills. However, professional development has not effectively addressed teachers' abilities to deliver high quality instruction aligned to the school's stated priorities. Instructional leaders have not built clear systems to hold teachers accountable for high quality instruction and student achievement.

### AT-RISK PROGRAM

Intellectus Prep does not yet meet the full educational needs of at-risk students. At the time of the site visit, the Institute did not find sufficient evidence of a compliant ELL program. The Institute will work with the school during the 2025-26 school year to ensure it makes any necessary changes to ELL services regarding compliance. At the time of the visit, the school assigned a foreign language teacher with English as a second language ("ESOL") certification to manage the ELL program. As a result, the school's ELL program was not yet developed or meeting the needs of ELL students. The newly hired ELL coordinator shared plans to create push in and pull out instructional supports, but did not yet have a clear plan for how the school will provide English language acquisition instruction with focused instruction for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The school had also not determined opportunities to provide teachers with adequate training or collaboration with the ELL coordinator to support instruction for ELLs.

The school has compliant procedures for identifying students with disabilities and uses a Response to Intervention ("RTI") system with procedures for teachers to identify students struggling academically. The school is working to more clearly define its programs to meet the needs of students struggling academically and students with disabilities. Through its RTI cycle, Intellectus Prep teachers identify students requiring additional support, and leaders work with teachers to design targeted interventions that include strategies with individualized tutoring and online adaptive software programming. While the school reports it offers integrated co-teaching ("ICT"), consultant teaching, resource room, and special education teacher support services ("SETSS") as part of its special education program, leadership and at-risk program staff members were unable to describe the SETSS model or its components. For related special education services, the school provides mandated counseling services, and the district provides other mandated related services. Given staffing shortages from the district providers, the school is planning to increase the frequency of services to provide compensatory services once the district identifies a service provider.

General education teachers do not yet utilize effective strategies to support at-risk students in the general education program. Teachers do not consistently and effectively provide differentiation during classroom instruction. While the Institute observed some effective strategies for differentiation in classes, the school does

## BENCHMARK SUMMARY

not implement small group instruction consistently. Teachers primarily rely on dedicated intervention periods to provide remedial instruction rather than providing consistently strong differentiated instruction through the entire school day. Leaders recognize a need to support teachers to more fully use the lesson planning template to plan for specific and targeted modifications during lessons.

The school is building its systems to monitor the progress of at-risk students, but these efforts do not yet yield consistent results. Leaders primarily refer to internal assessments, behavior logs, and i-Ready data to monitor at-risk student progress. However, teachers report inconsistent access to the tools, and leaders have not yet established clear systems for using these data to inform instruction. At the time of the visit, the school recently hired a new student services coordinator who had started to find ways to improve collaboration between general and special education teachers through weekly meetings. The school reports the new hire will be responsible for ensuring teachers are aware of students' progress toward meeting special education and RTI goals, as well as developing a professional development plan to improve teachers' strategies to support at-risk students through differentiation strategies.

### ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Intellectus Prep, in its third year of operation, faces many challenges within its organization that prevent it from supporting an effective delivery of the educational program. Many of its challenges stem from lower than expected enrollment. As the school has not maintained adequate student enrollment, its efforts in hiring and expanding the leadership team to fully support teachers have been stymied. At the time of the visit, the school enrolled fewer than 100 students, which is well below the school's chartered enrollment of 320 students. School leaders did not have a comprehensive recruitment strategy and relied primarily on canvassing and word of mouth referrals. Leaders recognize a need to strengthen partnerships within the community to support with potential recruitment pipelines with support from community based organizations.

Given challenges with enrollment, the school is not yet able to establish an administrative structure with staff members, systems, and procedures in place to support the academic program. At the time of the visit, Intellectus Prep had hired an operations manager to support with operational aspects of the school. However, the school did not have a comprehensive onboarding plan for the new operations manager to quickly build skills to improve the school's reporting timeliness. The school plans to have the new operations manager relieve instructional leaders of some operational responsibilities. However, at the time of the visit, the school's instructional leaders handled multiple responsibilities that hindered their ability to provide effective and consistent coaching and support to teachers. For example, both the middle and high school directors each had teaching responsibilities that limited time available to support teachers.

### BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

Intellectus Prep's board is developing its oversight and governance skills to work more effectively in achieving the school's Accountability Plan goals. Board members possess adequate skills in which to govern the school and recognize a need to recruit members with fundraising, legal, and real estate experience to address some of the school's current challenges. The board requests and receives necessary information to be well aware of successes and challenges at the school. School leaders provide the board with monthly dashboards including

## BENCHMARK SUMMARY

enrollment, financial, staffing, facilities, and student performance data. These dashboards give the board a clear picture to support the organization as needed. For example, after detecting errors in financial reporting, the board terminated its back office vendor and contracted with a new firm to provide financial information and support for the school. The board understands and recognizes immediate priorities in ensuring the school is sustainable. For example, it recognizes the need to improve finances at the school through increased enrollment in order to build an effective, comprehensive academic program. Where gaps exist, members will tap into personal networks to provide additional support to the school. For example, the board secured a donation of over 200 student laptops to provide a necessary tool for the school.

The board successfully retains key personnel and is working to provide them with sufficient resources to function effectively. Board members leveraged networking to provide leadership coaching for instructional leaders and teachers through a university partnership. The board is in the beginning stages of establishing an evaluation for its performance and uses a clear evaluation for the school's executive director. The evaluation outlines some specific goals and areas for the executive director to focus on, but it lacks concrete targets and specific goals in regard to student enrollment, compliance, and student performance.

Intellectus Prep

# Ax

APPENDICES

PAGES Ax 1-4

**SO**<sup>A</sup>  
SCHOOL  
OVERVIEW  
PAGE Ax 1

## INTELLECTUS PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES<sup>1</sup>

CHAIR	TRUSTEES
Crystal Dow	Calvin McCoy Jr.
VICE CHAIR	Mychael Williams
Terrence Turner	
TREASURER	
David Everett	

## CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT <sup>2</sup>	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2022-23	112	57	51%	6-7
2023-24	216	77	36%	6-8
2024-25	320	91	28%	6-9

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

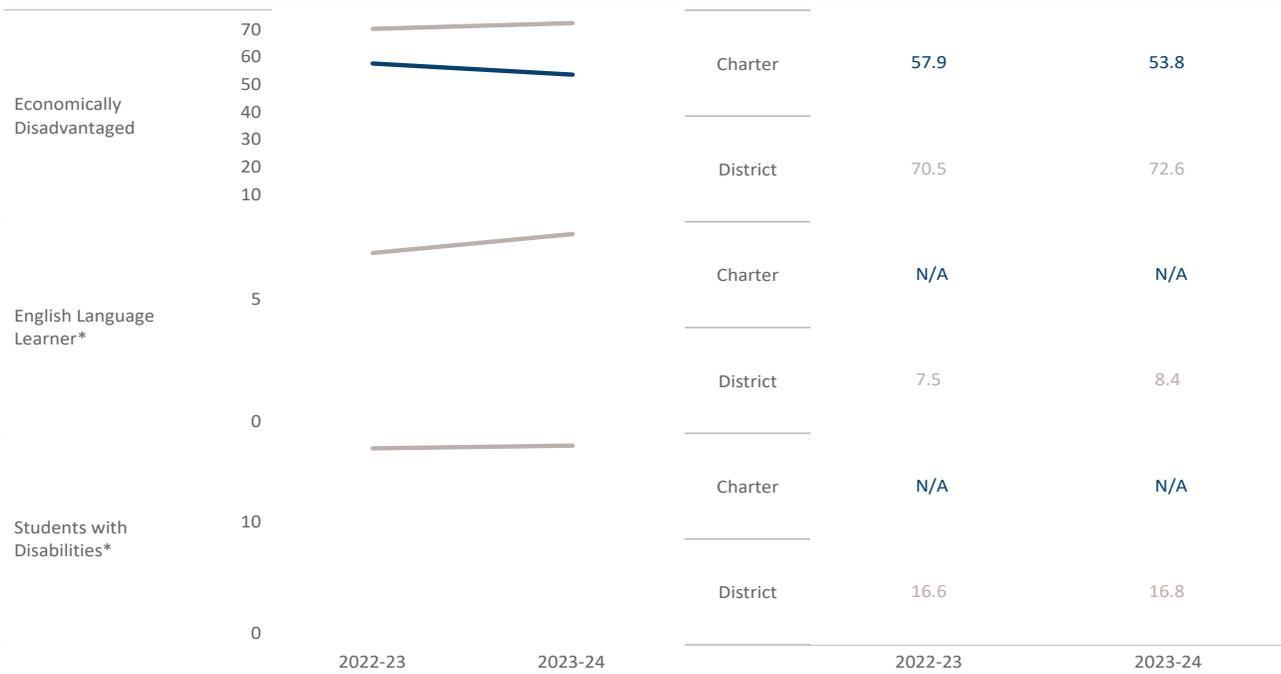
2. Source: Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)



Intellectus Preparatory Charter School

Mount Vernon City School District

**Student Demographics: Sub-populations**



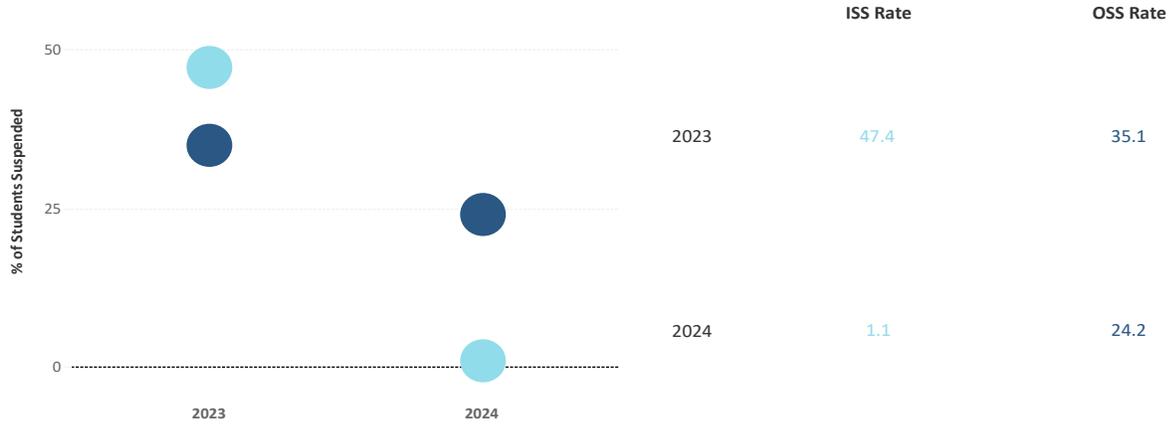
**Student Demographics: Race/Ethnicity**



\*Due to an error in data reporting, enrollment rates for English language learners and students with disabilities are unavailable for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. The school must work with its regional information center to ensure this data is available for future reporting.



**Intellectus Preparatory 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

	2023	2024
2023-24	66.7	0

**Intellectus Preparatory Charter School's Enrollment and Retention Status: 2023-24**

	Target	Charter
<b>enrollment</b>	economically disadvantaged	77.5
	English language learners*	10.4
	students with disabilities*	15.9
<b>retention</b>	economically disadvantaged	93.2
	English language learners*	94.6
	students with disabilities*	91.9

\*Due to an error in data reporting, enrollment rates for English language learners and students with disabilities are unavailable for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. The school must work with its regional information center to ensure this data is available for future reporting.



**CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY**

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2022-23	First Year Visit	May 18, 2023
2023-24	Evaluation Visit	November 1, 2023
2024-25	Evaluation Visit	May 20 – 21, 2025

**CONDUCT OF THE VISIT**

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
May 20 – 21, 2025	Ciani Jones	School Evaluator
	Dr. Kathleen Haywood	School Evaluator
	Shenita Johnson	External Consultant
	Daree Lewis	External Consultant

**CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT**

CHARTER TERM	YEAR IN TERM	ANTICIPATED RENEWAL VISIT
Initial	Year three of a five year term	Fall of 2026

