

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

*FIRST YEAR SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT
HAVEN CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL*

VISIT DATE: MAY 5, 2026

REPORT DATE: AUGUST 10, 2026

SUNY Charter Schools Institute

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The State University of New York

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the SUNY Charter Schools Institute's (the "Institute's") observations and findings from its May 5, 2026 first year school evaluation visit to Haven Charter High School ("Haven").

REPORT FORMAT

Throughout the charter term the Institute may conduct a number of formal evaluative visits including in the first year of operation. Each formal evaluative visit produces a written report based on data gathered during these visits. These reports form the foundation of qualitative data on the school's effectiveness.

At the conclusion of the charter term, the Institute provides the State University of New York Board of Trustees (the "SUNY Trustees") a renewal recommendation based on its evaluation of the academic, organizational, legal, and fiscal aspects of the school's program using the [SUNY Renewal Benchmarks](#), which incorporates the school's attainment of its Accountability Plan goals and evidence of the quality of the school's educational program gathered in its formal evaluative visits. For first year evaluation visits, the Institute focuses on specific qualitative benchmarks that provide a fixed standard for determining the quality of the academic program as the school progresses toward renewal.





SCHOOL BACKGROUND

HAVEN CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

1529 Williamsbridge Road, Bronx, NY | Grades: 9 | Bronx Community School District ("CSD") 11

MISSION

Haven Charter High School empowers students through hands-on learning in the health sciences, fostering critical thinking, civic responsibility, and the confidence to succeed in college, careers, and beyond.

CURRENT CHARTER

Serves: 9th
Chartered Enrollment: 100
Charter Expiration: July 31, 2030

ANTICIPATED 2029-30

Grades Served: 9th – 12th
Chartered Enrollment: 356

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Pathways to college and career	+	Professional learning community	+
STEM focus	+	Parent engagement and support	+
Work readiness opportunities	+	Community-based organizational partnership with East Side House Settlement	+
Critical thinking pedagogy	+		
Performance-based grading	+		
Social and emotional support through a primary person model	+		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In its first year of operation, Haven is developing a rigorous Career and Technical Education (“CTE”) program focused on health sciences. The school provides its students a well-rounded educational program that is predicated upon the goal of supporting students in engaging in careers in medicine and ultimately earning a professional certification in the medical field. As part of the school’s mission, and through individualized planning and attention, students who attend Haven will engage in core content classes, as well as CTE and career readiness courses, in order to develop the skills necessary to be successful in college and career.

The executive director communicates a clear vision for an effective academic program that emphasizes social emotional learning opportunities for students. Haven currently offers advisory classes twice weekly during which students engage in social emotional learning activities and set individualized academic goals. Leaders plan to expand advisories in the 2026-27 school year with the intention of facilitating the development of a schoolwide culture that is comprehensively aligned to the school’s vision and mission.

The school has established clear priorities for its initial term. The executive director works collaboratively with the leadership team, board members, and external partners to ensure Haven’s current systems strategically evolve to meet the needs of students as the school grows to serve subsequent grade levels. The executive director focuses on developing and maintaining external partnerships to ensure students have the opportunity to enter the health sciences field. The board and leadership team prioritize improving academic rigor across the program, establishing consistent processes for analyzing data, and developing instructional practices that reflect high expectations for student outcomes.

Pursuant to the Institute’s Prior Actions inspection of Haven on August 15, 2025, (and documentation provided to or inspected by the Institute at that visit and prior/post thereto), the Institute determined that Haven (the “education corporation”) had completed substantially all of the Prior Actions required of it as defined in the Charter Agreement between the education corporation and the SUNY Trustees (the “Charter Agreement”). Therefore, the Institute permitted the school to open for instruction in accordance with the plan provided in the Charter Agreement.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

QUALITATIVE BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

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

For first year visits, the Institute focuses on academic program benchmarks to establish a baseline measure of the quality of the school's systems and procedures, which heavily affect the progress that a school is able to demonstrate in meeting its Accountability Plan goals during the charter term. The Institute expects a school to have moved from the beginning of implementation and the promise of future growth to full and effective implementation of a quality program by the time the school comes to renewal.

ASSESSMENT

Haven has an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning. The school regularly administers standardized and informal assessments in order to gather student data and identify performance trends. The school administers the NWEA MAP ("MAP") three times annually as well as mock Regents exams to prepare for the end-of-year, content specific Regents tests.

Haven is beginning to develop the systems to score and analyze assessment results necessary to effectively adjust daily instruction. Teachers review student data in content teams and collaborate with the curriculum coach and instructional leader to make groupings and adjust lesson plans. The instructional leader models methods of interpreting student data and differentiating lessons to close performance gaps. Haven is still developing these practices and building data-driven mindsets with teachers. Leaders recognize the school's assessment systems and practices are in the nascent stages.

The school makes assessment results accessible to relevant stakeholders including teachers, school leaders, the board, parents, and students. Students reflect on their academic performance during advisory blocks and teachers share updates on student assessment results with parents in a timely manner.

CURRICULUM

Haven is developing its curricular programs to support teachers in their instructional planning and delivery. Teachers use Fishtank Learning for English language arts ("ELA") and Illustrative Math for mathematics. Teachers also use the New Visions biology curriculum. Across all content areas, teachers use a common lesson planning guide and follow the same structure for each lesson, starting with an opening ritual and concluding with a self-assessment. School leadership developed these common lesson frameworks to be used in all subject areas to ensure that teaching practices are consistent and facilitate student discussion.

Teachers at Haven know what lessons to teach and when to teach them on a weekly cadence. Teachers use a schoolwide curriculum tracker that houses all unit plans, lessons, and pacing guidelines. Teachers submit lesson plans into the curriculum hub weekly and receive feedback on the quality of their preparation from the

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

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

curriculum coach and instructional leader. In weekly content area meetings, the curriculum coach, teachers, and special education integrated co-teaching (“ICT”) teachers work collaboratively to practice execution of lessons and provide feedback to each other. Prior to lesson delivery, Haven teachers refine their plans for lesson execution and make other necessary adjustments.

PEDAGOGY

In its first year, Haven demonstrates some aspects of high quality instruction across classrooms. Teachers structure lessons around a common architecture that includes an opening ritual, knowledge building, and opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding. The Institute observed this structure present across most classrooms. The school has developed a teacher rubric grounded in the Danielson Framework to communicate instructional expectations. Teachers demonstrate familiarity with school’s pedagogical priorities including critical thinking, teacher modeling, and establishing clear criteria for success.

Teachers do not consistently use techniques to check for student understanding and make effective adjustments to their instruction. Although checks for understanding are present in teachers’ preparation and planning, teachers do not consistently adjust instruction in real time based on checks. When higher-order questions are asked, teachers often do not allow sufficient time for students to respond, frequently supplying answers or scaffolding responses in ways that reduce the cognitive demand placed on students. As a result, teacher voice heavily outweighs student voice, and students do not consistently take on the amount of cognitive load that the school’s instructional vision intends.

Teachers establish orderly classrooms with clear routines in place, allowing them to minimize behavior disruptions and maintain student focus on academics. However, instruction does not yet consistently reflect the level of rigor the school has articulated as its standard. The school’s instructional coaching system is developing teachers’ capacity to ask higher-order questions, allow adequate wait time for student responses, and use checks for understanding to drive real-time instructional decisions.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Haven is developing strong instructional leadership and demonstrates early evidence of the systems necessary to support teacher development. Instructional leaders observe all teachers at least once per week, deliver feedback grounded in the Haven teacher rubric, and conduct weekly or biweekly coaching conversations. Leaders hold content meetings twice weekly and maintain a regular monthly professional development schedule. The executive director manages the majority of teacher coaching and support. The school is still working to define a clear delegation of coaching responsibilities for the leadership team.

Instructional leaders are developing a comprehensive professional development program that develops the competencies and skills of all teachers. Leaders hold professional development sessions and meetings where teachers engage in mission-aligned activities and pedagogical skill building sessions. However, leaders recognize professional development as a continued area of focus for the school. Although professional

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

development activities are grounded in the school's mission and culture, leaders are working to develop structures to build teacher capacity to independently analyze and respond to student data from core content classes and CTE courses.

AT-RISK PROGRAM

Haven has put foundational structures in place to identify and support students who are at risk academically. The school uses MAP results alongside progress report and report card data to identify students for tiered intervention, and has established learning lab, an after school program held twice weekly where teachers deliver tier 2 support through IXL and tier 3 support through targeted small group and one-on-one instruction. Learning lab lacks the clarity of purpose, behavioral expectations, and defined teacher roles necessary to function consistently as an effective intervention space, and general education and specialist staff coordinate largely informally in practice. The school partners with Toolkit Tutors to provide small group algebra tutoring and tailored supports for English language learners ("ELLs"). Haven provides special education services including ICT, Special Education Teacher Support Services ("SETSS"), and mandated counseling. The school partners with the district to provide related services including speech therapy and occupational therapy.

The school currently serves 10 students with Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs") and three ELLs. Leaders and teachers monitor student progress through weekly data review and teacher check-ins across tiers. While programming meets the needs of the current population, the existing structures are not yet built to scale. Although the school's current ELL enrollment is small, Haven does not yet have a codified strategy to increase its language acquisition supports for ELLs as enrollment grows. The school does not yet have an effective, systematic intervention structure in place with clear protocols, defined staffing models, and consistent progress monitoring across all tiers.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

Haven is developing the necessary systems to effectively deliver the educational program. The school has established consistent daily and weekly routines including huddles, content area meetings, and a structured schedule that provides teachers shared planning time. Staff members describe a strong adult culture grounded in a shared mission and mutual respect, and leaders have been intentional about establishing an environment that is safe, values-driven, and focused on student wellbeing. The school enrolled 64 students in its inaugural ninth grade cohort with strong prospective interest for the following year. The CTE program, while still in its early stages of development, reflects a clear vision and demonstrable progress toward a purposeful medical pathway.

The school's organizational systems are in the early stages of codification and development. Administrative roles and responsibilities within the leadership team are still being formalized, and the school currently functions in ways that depend heavily on the executive director's individual capacity. At the time of the visit, the school was still in the beginning stages of establishing the CTE program's scope, sequence, and specific expectations for student outcomes. Haven has the opportunity to establish more clear program components and measurable milestones in order to deliver on the school's core promise to students and families and to meet the standards a credentialed CTE pathway requires.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

BOARD OVERSIGHT & GOVERNANCE

The Haven board is developing its capacity to provide effective oversight of the educational program and demonstrates strong investment in meeting the school's Accountability Plan goals. In partnership with the executive director, board members review assessment results, enrollment numbers, and operational initiatives. Board members receive detailed updates regarding academic outcomes, areas where students are meeting or not meeting expectations, and efforts to increase academic rigor. The board also receives information on student programs and initiatives. As the school grows, board members prioritize improving academic rigor and increasing CTE program offerings. Board members are deeply reflective regarding possibilities for student learning experiences outside of the school and in medical fields.

The board has established committee structures intended to support governance and oversight, including finance, academic, and executive committees. While some committees meet on an ad hoc basis, board members discussed plans to further distribute governance responsibilities across committees. Board members expressed satisfaction with the school's partnerships with community-based organizations to support student and family needs and noted successful community outreach and recruitment efforts that helped establish trust with families prior to the school opening.

The board has started to formalize evaluation processes for school leadership and the executive committee is developing a formal biannual evaluation process. The board's current evaluation priorities include school culture, recruitment success, and leadership decision-making during challenging situations. While the board has identified criteria for evaluating leadership performance, the process is still being formalized.

Haven

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A: CHARTER SCHOOL OVERVIEW



HAVEN CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES¹

CHAIR	TRUSTEES
Daniel Diaz	Nereida Barbour Caitlin Dooley Angel Hernandez Robert Pondiscio Bruce Rivera Jannett Santana Alejandro Vasquez Elyse Zlotnikov

CHARTER CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ²	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2025-26	100	64	64%	9

CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2025-26	First Year	May 5, 2026

CONDUCT OF THE VISIT

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
May 5, 2026	Desree Cabrall-Njenga	School Evaluator
	Ali Foglia	School Evaluator

CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT

CHARTER TERM	YEAR IN TERM	ANTICIPATED RENEWAL VISIT
Initial	First Year of its Five Year Charter Term	Fall 2029

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

