

THE SUNY CHARTER SCHOOLS INSTITUTE

FIRST YEAR SCHOOL EVALUATION REPORT
**ZETA CHARTER SCHOOLS – NEW YORK
CITY:**

**ZETA CHARTER SCHOOL –
QUEENS ELMHURST**

**ZETA CHARTER SCHOOL –
QUEENS FLUSHING**

**ZETA CHARTER SCHOOL –
QUEENS JAMAICA**

VISIT DATE: MAY 4, 2026

REPORT DATE: AUGUST 14, 2026

SUNY Charter Schools Institute

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Charter Schools Institute
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 4, 2026, first year school evaluation visits to Zeta Charter School – Queens Elmhurst ("Zeta Elmhurst"), Zeta Charter School – Flushing ("Zeta Flushing"), and Zeta Charter School – Queens Jamaica ("Zeta Jamaica").

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 charter'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 charter'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 charter'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 charter progresses toward renewal.





EDUCATION CORPORATION BACKGROUND

ZETA CHARTER SCHOOLS – NEW YORK CITY



MISSION

Zeta is on a mission to ensure that every child in America has access to the highest-quality, free education, from pre-Kindergarten to 12th grade. Zeta offers a next-generation schooling model that delivers on rigorous academics and whole-child education, with a focus on social-emotional learning. At Zeta, we believe that every child can achieve grade-level mastery, no matter their starting point. We welcome and serve students from all walks of life, including economically disadvantaged students, English language learners, and students with disabilities/in-queue for services.

CURRENT EDUCATION CORPORATION SNAPSHOT

First School Opened:
2018

Total Number of Charters:
7

Number of Students Served:
3,881

EDUCATION CORPORATION BACKGROUND

Zeta Charter Schools – New York City (“Zeta Schools NYC” or the “education corporation”) is a not-for-profit education corporation with seven open and operating schools. Three of which, Zeta Elmhurst, Zeta Flushing (originally chartered as Zeta Charter School – Queens 2), and Zeta Jamaica, opened in the 2025-26 school year. For the purposes of this report, the Institute refers to the three schools in the education corporation located within Queens as “Zeta Queens.” Zeta Elmhurst and Zeta Flushing incubated in the same space for the 2025-26 school year, and Zeta Flushing will move to its new facility in Flushing, Queens, for the 2026-27 school year.

The education corporation contracts with the charter management organization (“CMO”) Zeta Charter Schools, Inc. (“Zeta” or the “network”), a Delaware-based not-for-profit corporation, which provides Zeta Schools NYC with support in the areas of curriculum design, professional development, operations, finance, and legal oversight. The CMO uses its experienced network leadership to closely manage schools, facilitating the realization of the education corporation’s key design elements through rigorous academic program implementation.

EDUCATION CORPORATION BACKGROUND

Zeta Charter School – Queens Elmhurst



Opening Year: 2025-26
Current Enrollment/Grades: 180 | K-1
Charter Expiration: July 31, 2030
Zeta Queens Elmhurst Elementary School | 55-30 Junction Boulevard, Elmhurst NY 11373 | CSD 24

Zeta Charter School – Queens Flushing



Opening Year: 2025-26
Current Enrollment/Grades: 30 | K
Charter Expiration: July 31, 2030
Zeta Flushing Elementary School | 55-30 Junction Boulevard, Elmhurst NY 11373 | CSD 24

Zeta Charter School – Queens Jamaica



Opening Year: 2025-26
Current Enrollment/Grades: 180 | K-1
Charter Expiration: July 31, 2030
Zeta Queens Jamaica Elementary School | 159-26 Jamaica Avenue, Queens NY 11432 | CSD 28

KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS

Rigorous, hands-on academics



Mind, body, and soul cultivation



Innovation culture



Wow through family service by developing close family partnerships



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the opening of three new schools, Zeta Schools NYC expanded into the Queens community. As Zeta Schools NYC made the expansion into a new borough in New York City, network leaders worked to ensure that the schools would have a strong start by strategically hiring experienced staff members from its currently operating schools to support in the establishment of the three new schools. Ahead of each school opening, the CMO worked with each school leader to develop pre-opening plans including opportunities for teachers and leaders to review best practices at established programs across Zeta Schools NYC. Zeta Queens schools opened after the four existing Zeta Schools NYC schools to allow teachers to observe instruction at the established schools. Further, each school opened on staggered schedules to ensure additional network staff members were able to support each school on the first day of school.

In their first year of operation, Zeta Queens schools successfully and effectively replicated the Zeta Schools NYC program model's success. Zeta Schools NYC prioritizes instilling a love of learning in its students through intentional academic and social emotional systems. Along with aligned systems, the Zeta Queens campuses also integrate curricular and exploratory learning with offerings like Taekwondo to support whole child development. Zeta Flushing incubated with Zeta Elmhurst in the first year of operation. Although both schools enrolled fewer students than anticipated due to space constraints at the incubation site, all available classrooms operated at full capacity through the school year. The Zeta Queens schools establish a foundation to continue building their academic programs in alignment to the other schools in Zeta Schools NYC.

Pursuant to the Institute's Prior Actions inspection of Zeta Elmhurst, Zeta Flushing, and Zeta Jamaica on August 14, 2025, and documentation provided to and or inspected by the Institute at that visit and prior/post thereto, the Institute determined that Zeta Schools NYC had completed substantially all of the Prior Actions of it as defined in the Charter Agreement between the education corporation and the SUNY trustees (the "Charter Agreement"). Therefore, the Institute permitted the schools 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

Zeta Queens schools have an assessment system that improves instructional effectiveness and student learning. At each school, teachers regularly administer assessments to measure students' proficiency and growth. Teachers and leadership meet regularly to monitor all students' progress and respond accordingly to emerging needs. The Zeta Queens schools use phonics-based assessments to establish early reading group placements. The Success for All curriculum's built-in assessment system provides teachers with ongoing data on student reading development and supports consistent monitoring of literacy progress. For mathematics, the schools use curricular unit assessments, counting jar, and mathematics facts assessments as diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments for Kindergarten and 1st grade.

Teachers have access to student performance data through shared network platforms and are developing routines for using assessment results to adjust instruction. School and network leaders review data across classrooms to inform professional development priorities and evaluate instructional progress. The schools make assessment results accessible to relevant stakeholders, consistent with network-wide practice. In their opening year, Zeta Queens schools establish the foundational assessment structures necessary to support a data-informed instructional program.

CURRICULUM

Zeta Schools NYC curricular programs effectively support teachers with instructional planning. For English language arts ("ELA") instruction in Kindergarten and 1st grade, the schools prioritize the Success for All curriculum with Stepping Stones phonics as a supplement. With the Success for All curriculum, network leaders support school leaders to ensure alignment with program goals. Success for All sends consultants to support teachers with program execution. In mathematics, Zeta's Open Up Resources ("OUR") is a student-centered, problem solving based curriculum designed to foster mathematical growth through clear learning progressions and collaborative classroom communities.

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

Zeta Schools NYC has a process for selecting, developing, and reviewing its curricular documents and its resources for delivering the curriculum across the education corporation. At the Zeta Queens schools, teachers, principals, and network leaders review curricular materials at the beginning of the year during summer pre-service training. During the summer, teachers engage in unit launches and review scripted lesson plans and scope and sequence documents. Throughout the year, the network provides teachers with detailed instructions for analyzing and preparing instructional units and lessons. By providing these resources, Zeta Schools NYC sets high expectations for teacher preparation routines and ensures they develop the procedural and content knowledge necessary to deliver high quality, effective instruction. Teachers adapt content as needed, and leaders make broader curricular shifts in response to student performance data from the previous school year.

PEDAGOGY

High quality instruction is evident across Zeta Queens classrooms, and teachers deliver lessons that foster high student engagement in both small and whole group settings. The curricular materials support teachers in delivering purposeful lessons with clear objectives across content areas. Teachers use effective techniques to gauge student understanding including facilitating turn and talks, circulating the room, and using cold call strategies. Teachers consistently and thoughtfully address student misconceptions during instruction.

In most classrooms, teachers challenge students with questions and activities that develop students' depth of understanding and higher order thinking skills. Teachers have clear and strategic roles during instruction, which includes encouraging students to consistently engage in academic material. Most teachers use effective techniques to keep students engaged in instruction and on task.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Each Zeta Queens school has strong instructional leadership. The instructional leaders launched the year with strong systems that promote a culture of learning and high expectations. Leaders at each school hired existing Zeta Schools NYC teachers to help establish strong foundations. Leaders normed staff members to schoolwide expectations that support the academic programs. Zeta Queens leaders establish an environment of high expectations for teacher performance in which teachers believe all students can succeed. Most Zeta Queens leaders bring prior experience at established schools within the education corporation, and this provides an effective foundation to support the development of teachers and community building in the schools' first years.

Zeta Queens instructional leaders provide opportunities and guidance to help teachers plan curriculum and instruction within and across grade levels. The small size of the schools allows teachers to collaborate both formally and informally. Leaders schedule time for teams to collaborate. Network leaders support the three school leaders with collaboration and leadership development. Leaders provide teachers with regular support at all three schools, and teachers reported they feel supported by these systems. Teachers collaborate with school leaders weekly to discuss team goals and instructional priorities. Teachers adjust instruction based on these meetings, and leaders tailor coaching supports based on teacher need.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

The schools' instructional leaders provide sustained, systemic, and effective coaching and supervision that improves teachers' instructional effectiveness. Instructional leaders conduct classroom observations and provide teachers with feedback grounded in the network's shared instructional framework. The schools employ a two-teacher classroom model, pairing a lead teacher with an assistant teacher, that allows teachers to provide students with increased coaching and differentiation. The schools provide structured and intentional professional development, beginning with a summer leadership university for school leaders and a standardized onboarding program for teachers grounded in the education corporation's mission, vision, and values. The network's decision to delay the opening of the school year so that incoming teachers could observe established Zeta Schools NYC sites reflects a sustained commitment to adult learning as the foundation of instructional quality. Leaders conduct teacher evaluations grounded in clear criteria aligned to the network's instructional rubric. Leaders provide teachers with a clear rubric during summer pre-service and receive frequent observations and coaching to support their development.

AT-RISK PROGRAM

Zeta Queens schools meet the educational needs of at-risk students. The schools use compliant procedures to identify students with disabilities and ELLs. Zeta Queens schools implement a data driven Response to Intervention ("RTI") program with robust supports. The schools employ evidence-based strategies, leverage technology and co-teachers in every classroom, and provide targeted professional development to ensure effective interventions for students with diverse learning needs. Zeta Schools NYC uses interim assessments and teacher observations to identify students requiring additional support. The RTI team, with data gathered by each site's student achievement manager, develops individualized intervention plans and monitors their effectiveness. Regular RTI meetings, held at least quarterly, ensure progress monitoring and may be held as often as biweekly to fast-track necessary adjustments. Instructional leaders and teachers access student performance data through Schoolrunner, which leverages precise, disaggregated analytics to provide insights into student strengths, challenges, and corresponding academic plans. These dashboards allow leaders to view disaggregated data for various student groups including students with disabilities, ELLs, and students struggling academically.

Zeta Queens schools implement effective ELL programs. At Zeta Elmhurst and Zeta Flushing, the schools enrolled a high number of ELL students. Both schools adapted their programs to specifically meet the needs of this population of students. Leaders provide teachers with multiple opportunities to track students' language proficiency and progress toward proficiency with listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Zeta Queens implements effective special education programs to meet the needs of students with disabilities. The schools provide integrated co-teaching ("ICT") classrooms to provide a structural foundation for delivering academic support in the general education setting, enabling more targeted attention to students who require additional assistance. The schools partner with the district to provide related services. The schools are in the early stages of developing coordination structures among general education, at-risk program, and co-curricular staff members to support a growing student population, and have made a thoughtful start toward building an at-risk program aligned with meeting students' needs.

BENCHMARK SUMMARY

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The schools' organizations, with support from Zeta, work to effectively deliver the academic program. The schools establish an administrative structure with staff members, operational systems, policies, and procedures that allow the schools to carry out their academic programming. Network leaders work closely with school-based operations team members to ensure each new school establishes clear systems and routines that allow academic leaders to focus primarily on the academic program.

The CMO has a clear structure in place to support its schools' operations. Resident operational teams work closely with the network to replicate strong operational systems in existence at other schools across Zeta Schools NYC. In their first year of operation, network leaders work closely with academic and operational leaders to monitor and evaluate the schools' programs and make adjustments where necessary. Through regular walkthroughs and quarterly data reviews, CMO leaders support school leaders with a clear data analysis cycle to make adjustments to the school program.

Zeta Schools NYC

Ax

APPENDICES

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ZETA CHARTER SCHOOLS - NEW YORK CITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES¹

CHAIR	TRUSTEES
Keri Hoyt	Tyrone Davis III Michele Caracappa Kenneth M. McClure Shinian Ye

ZETA CHARTER SCHOOL - QUEENS ELMHURST – SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ²	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2025-26	180	42	23%	K-1

ZETA CHARTER SCHOOL - QUEENS FLUSHING – SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ²	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2025-26	30	26	87%	K

ZETA CHARTER SCHOOL - QUEENS JAMAICA – SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

SCHOOL YEAR	CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT ²	ACTUAL AS A PERCENTAGE OF CHARTERED ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2025-26	180	112	62%	K-1

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.)

CHARTER SCHOOL VISIT HISTORY

SCHOOL YEAR	VISIT TYPE	DATE
2025-26	First Year – Zeta Elmhurst First Year – Zeta Flushing First Year – Zeta Jamaica	May 4, 2026

CONDUCT OF THE VISIT

DATE(S) OF REVIEW	EVALUATION TEAM MEMBERS	TITLE
May 4, 2026	Desree Cabrall-Njenga	School Evaluator
	Bryan Stroud	School Evaluator

ZETA CHARTER SCHOOL - QUEENS ELMHURST– CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT

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

ZETA CHARTER SCHOOL - QUEENS 2 – CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT

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

ZETA CHARTER SCHOOL - QUEENS JAMAICA– CHARTER CYCLE CONTEXT

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

