



Brownsville Collegiate Charter School

School Evaluation Report 2011-2012

Visit Date: March 14 -15, 2012

Report Issued: August 16, 2012

Charter Schools Institute
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INTRODUCTION

This School Evaluation Report includes four components. The first section, titled School Overview, provides descriptive information about the school, including enrollment and demographic data, as well as historical information regarding the life of the school. The second section provides background information on the conduct of the evaluation visit, including the date of the visit and information about the evaluation team and puts the visit in the context of the school's current charter cycle. The third section provides the school's 2010-11 Performance Review and Summaries, which gives an analysis of the attainment of the key academic goals in the school's Accountability Plan. Finally, a fourth section entitled School Evaluation Visit presents overall benchmark conclusions (in italics) based on the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks (a component of the Renewal Benchmarks) and an analysis of evidence collected for each of the respective benchmarks. Following these sections, the report includes an appendix containing the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks used during the visit.

The Qualitative Educational Benchmarks address the academic success of the school, focusing on teaching and learning (i.e., curriculum, instruction, and assessment), and the effectiveness and viability of the school organization, including board oversight and organizational capacity. The Institute uses the established criteria on a regular and ongoing basis to provide schools with a consistent set of expectations leading up to renewal.

The report below provides more detailed conclusions, and evidence to support these conclusions, for some benchmarks in order to highlight areas of concern and provide additional feedback. In contrast to the format of reports issued in previous years and in an effort to issue reports in a timelier manner, the Institute now approaches the presentation as an exception report and deliberately emphasizes areas of concern. As such, limited detail and evidence about positive aspects of the program are not an indication that the Institute does not fully recognize evidence of program effectiveness.

Because of the inherent complexity of a school organization, this School Evaluation Report does not contain a single rating or comprehensive indicator that would specify at a glance the school's prospects for renewal. It does, however, summarize the various strengths of the school and note areas in need of improvement based on the Qualitative Educational Benchmarks.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

School Name

	Name	Date
Chartered Name	Flatbush Collegiate Charter School	September, 2009
Revised Name	Brownsville Collegiate Charter School	February, 2010

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	September 9, 2008
Date Initial Charter Approved by Operation of Law	February 23, 2009
School Opening Date	August 31, 2009

Location

School Year(s)	Location(s)	Grades At this Location	District
2009-10 to Present	364 Sackman Street, Brooklyn, NY	All	New York City CSD 23

Partner Organizations

	Partner Name	Partner Type	Dates of Service
Current Partner	Uncommon Schools, Inc.	Charter Management Organization	2009 to Present

Current Mission Statement

The mission of Brownsville Collegiate Charter School is to prepare each student for college.
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Current Key Design Elements

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A longer school day and year; • Double periods of English and math daily, as well as an hour each of science and history for all students; • Tutoring and Saturday school; • Emphasis on college, including meetings with a college advisor and frequent college visits; • Calm, composed and disciplined environment, including a strictly enforced dress code, and merit/demerit and rubric systems; • Explicit instruction in literacy skills; • Targeted curriculum focused on basic skills; • Frequent school-wide assessments; and • Strong family involvement.

School Characteristics

School Year	Original Chartered Enrollment	Revised Charter Enrollment	Actual Enrollment ¹	Original Chartered Grades	Actual Grades
2009-10	78	112	103	5	5-6
2010-11	148	185	152	5-6	5-7
2011-12	208	240	219	5-7	5-8

Student Demographics

	2009-10 ²			
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 23 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 23 Enrollment
Race/Ethnicity				
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0	0
Black or African American	84	81	85	80
Hispanic	15	17	13	18
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	1	1	1	1
White	0	1	1	1
Multiracial	0	0	0	0
Special Populations				
Students with Disabilities ³	19	N/A	15	N/A
Limited English Proficient	9	4	5	4
Free/Reduced Lunch				
Eligible for Free Lunch	77	80	74	79
Eligible for Reduced-Price Lunch	11	5	13	5

¹ Source: SUNY Charter School Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

² Source New York State Report Cards, New York State Department of Education.

³ New York State Education Department does not report special education data; statistics given are provided by the school.

Current Board of Trustees⁴

Board Member Name	Position/Committees
Reemah Sen	Trustee
Eileen Shy	Trustee
Maurice Holmes	Trustee
Linton Mann III	Chair
Clint Peterson	Trustee
John Greenstein	Treasurer
Bob Howitt	Trustee
Brett Peiser	Secretary

School Leader(s)

School Year	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2009-10 to Present	Jessica Simmons, Principal and Jeannemarie Hendershot-Kim, Director of Operations

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2009-10	First Year	Institute	April 8, 2010
2011-12	Third Year	Institute	March 14-15, 2012

⁴ Source: Institute Board Records

CONDUCT OF THE SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT

Specifications

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
March 14-15, 2012	Lori Clement	Senior Analyst
	Danielle Keen	Analyst for School Evaluation
	Jenn David-Lang	External Consultant

Context of the Visit

Charter Cycle	
Charter Period	3 rd Year of First Charter Term
Accountability Period ⁵	3 rd Year of Four-Year Accountability Period
Impending Renewal Visit	Fall 2013

⁵ Because the Institute makes a renewal decision in the last year of a Charter Period, the Accountability Period ends in the next to last year of the Charter Period. For initial renewals, the Accountability Period is the first four years of the Charter Period. For subsequent renewals, the Accountability Period includes the last year of the previous Charter Period through the next to last year of the current Charter Period.

2011 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Performance Summary

In 2010-11, the second year of Brownsville Collegiate Charter School's four-year Accountability Period, the school is meeting its mathematics goal but is not meeting its English language arts goals. This performance is consistent with the previous year, though not all ten measures were applicable in 2009-10. The school does not yet have results in science and has met its NCLB goal.

English Language Arts

Based on results of the five measures in its Accountability Plan, Brownsville Collegiate did not meet its English language arts goal in 2010-11, the first year that all five measures are applicable. The school met the absolute target of 75 percent and outperformed the local community school district but did not meet the Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) set by the state. In comparison to demographically similar schools, the school did not meet its target, performing worse than expected. The school did not meet its cohort growth target and none of the cohorts met their individual growth targets.

Mathematics

Based on results of the five measures in its Accountability Plan, Brownsville Collegiate met its mathematics goal. All students achieved proficiency far exceeding the 75 percent absolute target. The school exceeded the state's AMO and outperformed the local community school district by more than 55 percentage points. In comparison to demographically similar schools, the school met its target, performing better than expected to a large degree. The school met its cohort growth target demonstrating overall year-to-year growth.

Science

Brownsville Collegiate does not yet have testing grades for science.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts

Brownsville Collegiate Charter School



	2008-09			MET	2009-10			MET	2010-11			MET					
	Grades Served:				Grades Served: 5-6				Grades Served: 5-7								
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)						
<u>ABSOLUTE MEASURES</u>																	
1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.(§)	3	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)						
	4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)						
	5	(0)	(0)		5	71.4 (70)	(0)		5	55.8 (77)	58.3 (12)						
	6	(0)	(0)		6	48.3 (29)	(0)		6	85.2 (54)	85.4 (48)						
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	70.0 (20)	68.4 (19)						
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)						
	All	(0)	(0)	--	All	64.7 (99)	(0)	--	All	68.2 (151)	77.2 (79)	YES					
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.(§)	Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO						
				--	5-6	165	155	YES	5-7	121	122	NO					
<u>COMPARATIVE MEASURES</u>																	
3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Comparison: Brooklyn District 23				Comparison: Brooklyn District 23				Comparison: Brooklyn District 23								
	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District						
				--		(37.4)	29.7	--	6-7	42.5	30.8	YES					
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at or above Level 3 on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size		% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size		% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size			
					--	76.7	37.4	35.8	0.10	NO	74.1	33.1	37.9	-0.26	NO		
<u>GROWTH MEASURE</u>																	
5. Each grade level cohort will reduce by one half the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates cohort met target.(§)	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result		Gr	N	Base	Target	Result		Gr	N	Base	Target	Result
	4					--	4					--	4				
	5						5	12	0.0	37.5	16.7		5	12	0.0	37.5	16.7
	6						6	47	53.2	64.1	51.1		6	47	53.2	64.1	51.1
	7						7	19	47.4	61.2	42.1		7	19	47.4	61.2	42.1
	8						8						8				
	All						All	78	43.6		43.6		All	78	43.6		43.6

(§) SED's "time adjusted cut scores" are used in the 2009-10 and 2010-11 results for #1 and in the 2009-10 results for #2 and #5. SED's publicly reported cut scores are used for the other results. Data Sources: New York State data; school-submitted workbooks; and the Institute's student performance database.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Brownsville Collegiate Charter School



	2008-09 Grades Served:			MET	2009-10 Grades Served: 5-6			MET	2010-11 Grades Served: 5-7			MET					
	Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)		Grades	All Students % (N)	2+ Years Students % (N)						
ABSOLUTE MEASURES																	
1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at or above a Level 3 on the New York State exam.(§)	3	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)		3	(0)	(0)						
	4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)		4	(0)	(0)						
	5	(0)	(0)		5	91.5 (71)	(0)		5	96.1 (77)	100.0 (12)						
	6	(0)	(0)		6	82.8 (29)	(0)		6	100.0 (54)	100.0 (48)						
	7	(0)	(0)		7	(0)	(0)		7	100.0 (20)	100.0 (19)						
	8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)		8	(0)	(0)						
	All	(0)	(0)	--	All	89.0 (100)	(0)	--	All	98.0 (151)	100.0 (79)	YES					
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Index on the State exam will meet the Annual Measurable Objective set forth in the State's NCLB accountability system.(§)	Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO		Grades	PI	AMO						
				--	5-6	188	125	YES	5-7	186	137	YES					
COMPARATIVE MEASURES	Comparison: Brooklyn District 23				Comparison: Brooklyn District 23				Comparison: Brooklyn District 23								
3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at or above Level 3 will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.	Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District		Grades	School	District						
				--		(65.0)	38.5	--	6-7	96.2	40.2	YES					
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted level of students at or above Level 3 on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its Free Lunch (FL) rate.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size					
					--	76.7	65.0	48.3	0.87	YES	74.1	87.4	50.5	1.80	YES		
GROWTH MEASURE	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result	Gr	N	Base	Target	Result		
5. Each grade level cohort will reduce by one half the difference between the previous year's baseline and 75 percent performing at or above Level 3 on the New York State exam. An asterisk indicates cohort met target.(§)	3					3					3						
	4					4					4						
	5					5					5	12	0.0	37.5	83.3	*	
	6					6					6	48	81.3	81.4	100.0	*	
	7					7					7	19	89.5	89.6	94.7	*	
	8					8					8						
	All					All					All	79	70.9		96.2		YES

(§) SED's "time adjusted cut scores" are used in the 2009-10 and 2010-11 results for #1 and in the 2009-10 results for #2 and #5. SED's publicly reported cut scores are used for the other results. Data Sources: New York State data; school-submitted workbooks; and the Institute's student performance database.

SCHOOL EVALUATION VISIT

Benchmark Conclusions and Evidence

1. B Use of Assessment

Brownsville Collegiate Charter School (“Brownsville Collegiate”) has a system to gather assessment and evaluation data and uses it to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning.

The school regularly uses standardized and other assessments that align to the school’s curriculum framework and state performance standards and uses the data from these assessments to plan strategically and target lessons to meet the needs of individual students. The school regularly administers leveled reading assessments and interim assessments (IAs) created by Uncommon Schools, Inc. (“Uncommon”), the school’s charter management organization. Teachers also create and administer unit tests, quizzes and daily exit tickets in order to gauge student learning between IA administrations.

The IAs align closely to Uncommon-wide scope and sequences and the New York State standards. As Uncommon creates the IAs, they provide a valid assessment of how the school is performing relative to other schools in the Uncommon network; however, last year’s IAs were not predictive of student performance on the state English language arts (ELA) exam, as student success on them did not translate to success on the state exam. Uncommon has recently made significant changes to its IAs including increasing their rigor by using higher level texts and incorporating cut scores similar to the state exam, so that teachers can more accurately assess which students will attain proficiency.

Teachers score and analyze the IAs, creating student and classroom-level item analyses. The school shares this data with Uncommon, who compares the school’s performance with that of other schools in the network. The school has a structured time for teachers to analyze these data reports and create data action plans that help them identify which objectives should be re-taught, which individual students need extra instruction, whether previous interventions were effective and where the department as a whole can make improvements; each teacher then discusses this action plan with his or her instructional leader.

The school has a robust system for assessing student writing. Teachers use the same rubric network-wide for assessing these writing IAs. Teachers report that they analyze each component of the rubric and note specific pieces of evidence that lead to a given score. In addition, teachers grade student papers in small groups and norm the grading process by looking at several papers together in order to identify anchor papers for each level.

The school’s principal uses assessment data to make changes to the program as a whole. For example, based on last year’s low scores on the English language arts test, she instituted a system by which every student receives a period of leveled guided reading. She also instituted a focus on short-response writing, after determining that students did not perform well on that section of the state test.

1. C Curriculum

Brownsville Collegiate has a clearly defined curriculum and uses it to prepare students to meet state performance standards.

Teachers at Brownsville Collegiate know very clearly what to teach and when to teach it. The school has a well-defined curriculum framework for each grade and core academic subject, which includes the knowledge and skills that the school expects students to achieve as specified by New York State standards. With the input of teachers, Uncommon creates scope and sequences in all subjects that detail the standards which teachers must teach by the time that the school administers each of its IAs. School leaders approve the scope and sequences, which they present to teachers during August professional development. Teachers spend a large part of the summer professional development time analyzing the curriculum and planning units to determine when and in which order they will teach the standards.

The curriculum, as implemented, is coherent and organized. Both Uncommon and the school team, itself, have analyzed the curriculum for vertical alignment. There is also strong evidence of horizontal alignment, with teachers weaving cross-curricular content into lessons. For example, science and math teachers incorporate vocabulary and open responses into their lessons and writing teachers use passages on the Haitian revolution, concurrently taught in history, to guide students in crafting extended responses.

The school, in conjunction with Uncommon, constantly analyzes the curriculum and supporting materials and makes changes when appropriate. Teachers report that the school and representatives from Uncommon provide occasions for teachers to give feedback on the curriculum and make adjustments based on this feedback. For example, an analysis of last year's curriculum and interval assessment results yielded gaps in comprehension and the speed with which students made progress in phonics. Based on this analysis the school has begun using the Boost curriculum; it is too early to assess the program's effectiveness. Similarly in mathematics, the curriculum in use last year did not adequately address number sense. In response, the school is developing a mathematics curriculum that aims to more effectively address the basic math skill needs of incoming students.

1. D Pedagogy

Quality instruction is evident throughout the school.

Teachers implement thoughtfully planned lessons that align to the school's curriculum and state standards. Teachers submit weekly lesson plans for review and receive substantive feedback. While teachers clearly have objectives in mind for each lesson, they often phrase these objectives as activities, "SWBAT to review common IA errors." They also do not include the level at which they expect students to demonstrate mastery.

Teachers provide rigorous lessons, given the frequency of higher-order thinking questions they pose to students and the open-ended and expansive tasks they assign students. For example, in one class students studying the Dred Scott case used critical thinking skills to take on different roles to prepare for a mock trial. Teachers require students to answer in complete sentences and

substantiate their comments with evidence. Teachers hold students accountable for answering every question even if they need more time. Teachers give students extensive time for independent practice to maximize student work and minimize teacher talk.

Classrooms have high levels of student engagement; teachers maximize teaching time and minimize disruptions. While teachers maintain a quick pace to make every minute of class time count, the emphasis on urgency occasionally leads teachers to miss opportunities to allow students to engage deeply with material in order to enable students to develop well thought-out responses.

1. E Instructional Leadership

Brownsville Collegiate has strong instructional leadership.

School leaders instill high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance. The school's instructional leaders convey these high expectations by regularly observing teachers and noting specific weaknesses in their pedagogical skills. Leaders then work with teachers to devise strategies for improvement and hold teachers accountable for implementing said strategies before the following week's observation. Leaders also hold students to high expectations by insisting that lesson plans are rigorous and ensuring that all students are held to the same academic standards, even if they need additional time and support.

Teachers report that the structured and consistent feedback they receive from instructional leaders supports them in improving their practice, with several teachers reporting that instructional support is the school's greatest strength. Instructional leaders observe teachers twice weekly and meet with them once weekly to provide action-oriented feedback on the week's observations. Instructional leaders review lessons plans regularly and return them to teachers in sufficient time for them to make improvements to the lessons. Teachers also report receiving feedback from Uncommon network representatives who observe their classes several times per month.

Instructional leaders regularly evaluate teachers by using a set of Uncommon performance standards. Teachers receive these performance standards during summer orientation and complete a self-reflection on their level of competence in the three performance areas – planning and preparing curriculum and instruction, ensuring student mastery, and building school and staff culture. Instructional leaders discuss individual performance with teachers and determine an action plan for improvement along with specific follow-up activities. Instructional leaders discuss these action plans informally in weekly one-on-one meetings and formally at mid-year evaluations when they provide feedback to the teachers on each area.

1. F At-Risk Students

Brownsville Collegiate devotes sufficient resources to helping students who are struggling academically and those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs); however, the school does not have a formal program for serving English language learners (ELLs).

Brownsville Collegiate employs a special education coordinator, two special education teachers and a social worker, as well as external service providers as needed, e.g. occupational therapy and

speech. This special education team, with the aid of general education teachers, provides tutoring before, during and after school, as well as push-in and pull-out support to students with IEPs and those identified as at-risk. In addition, all students school-wide, no matter their level, also receive one period of guided reading per day with appropriately leveled texts to increase fluency and reading comprehension.

The school has a process for identifying at-risk students and providing them with the appropriate interventions. The school assesses incoming students in the 4th grade, prior to enrolling at the school. Leaders use the results to group students based on ability level into their 5th grade class assignments. The school then uses benchmark assessment data to pinpoint students that should receive academic interventions services before and after school and groups these students by level to receive services. The school regularly assesses all students throughout the school year in order to regroup students and to provide services to students whose academic performance declines mid-year. The school adequately monitors the progress and success of at-risk students. The school leader, special education coordinator, social worker and dean of students meet regularly to discuss their performance of interval and other assessments.

At the time of the visit, the school enrolled 32 students with IEPs, roughly 15 percent of the total student population. All general education teachers demonstrate a working knowledge of students' IEPs and strategies to meet the goals set forth in them. The school's three special education teachers meet weekly and also collaborate with general education teachers both formally and informally throughout the week to develop and evaluate strategies for supporting students with IEPs. The school's principal reports that teachers receive information on the school's special education program during the summer; however, teachers are not provided with professional development strategies for serving students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

The school enrolls five English language learners (ELLs) for whom they provide testing accommodations and push-in services for mathematics and guided reading. Though these students scored "Advanced" on last year's New York State English-as-a-Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) exam, the services do not constitute a comprehensive English language acquisition program designed to address their needs.

1. G Student Order and Discipline

Brownsville Collegiate promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.

The school is safe and orderly. The teaching staff closely monitors transitions between classes; the transitions are efficient. The school focuses on order and structure and adheres strictly to the time limitations of scheduled activities. Teaching staff provide clear and explicit guidance and direction to students for routines and procedures in and out of the classroom. Students readily comply with these expectations.

Teachers establish classroom management techniques and school-wide routines and a culture in which learning is valued and clearly evident. The school holds community meetings weekly to reward student academic achievement.

All teachers adhere to the Uncommon network's discipline taxonomy which encompasses a merit and demerit system to account for student behavior. Teachers use merits as positive incentives to recognize good student behavior including class preparedness, posture and paying attention. Teachers give students verbal warnings to correct low-level misbehavior; however, if misbehavior persists teachers issue demerits. Brownsville Collegiate has a school-wide goal of students' earning seven merits for every one demerit received and for 85 percent of students to maintain an average of less than three demerits each week. School-wide culture activities such as merit auctions and social events have lowered the incidences of misbehavior.

1. H Professional Development

Brownsville Collegiate's professional development program addresses the school's needs by quickly correcting identified shortcomings in teachers' pedagogical skills and content knowledge.

Brownsville Collegiate has a comprehensive professional development program developed by school leaders in collaboration with network staff at Uncommon. At the beginning of the school year, leaders choose professional development topics that address what they believe to be the current needs of the school, based on teacher observations and student performance data from the previous school year. School leaders develop weekly, school-specific sessions that target identified teachers deficiencies. Across the network, all teachers also receive three weeks in August and four days per school year of Uncommon professional development.

Many of the topics that school leaders identify as current professional development priorities are manifest in the classrooms, implementing literacy strategies in all subject areas and minimizing teacher talk. Despite the observable impact of professional development in classrooms, the school does not have a formal approach to evaluating its effectiveness.

2. C Organizational Capacity

Brownsville Collegiate has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.

The school demonstrates effective management of day-to-day operations. The principal and director of operations work as a partnership to ensure that they meet the academic and operational needs of the school. The roles and responsibilities of the school's leadership and staff members are clearly defined. The leadership team's structure provides clear lines for accountability. Teachers report knowing how to access resources throughout the school and within the Uncommon network.

The school's principal has made communication a priority and updates the staff three times a week through email on progress toward meeting school goals, upcoming events and recognition of the positive contributions staff members make. In addition, the entire school meets together weekly to discuss concerns and problem solve as a group. The transparent and frequent communication practices extend to the entire community including the board, students and parents/guardians.

The school maintains adequate enrollment and has effective procedures for recruiting new students to the school. The school's management has successfully recruited, hired and retained key personnel and removed ineffective personnel when necessary. Teacher turnover is extremely low

with only one teacher choosing to leave the school since the school opened. School leaders regularly track teacher satisfaction and reflect often on ways to maintain high levels of teacher engagement and enjoyment in their work.

School leaders have established clear priorities and objectives for achieving the school's mission and link many of these initiatives to attaining Accountability Plan goals. The strategic objectives for the current academic year, based on the leadership team's analysis of the prior year's academic program, include closing the gap between student's English language arts and mathematics performance, facilitating high levels of teacher satisfaction, increasing family communication and attendance, increasing student engagement and ensuring that the school prepares 8th grade students to make the transition to high school.

Despite the many positive aspects of the academic program and the school's strong performance in mathematics, Brownsville Collegiate is not meeting its Accountability Plan goal in English language arts. The school's principal has attributed this to a previous lack of focus on literacy skills across the subject areas. In order to close the English language arts gap the school has begun implementing Uncommon's reading taxonomy, which includes interactive reading, and has made refinements to the evidence-based questioning practices already in use at the school. The principal has also allocated significant resources to creating a guided reading block for every student and has increased the amount of reading instruction students receive to 90 minutes per day. It remains to be seen whether these adjustments to the program will yield the desired results on the New York State English language arts test.

The school is co-located with PS 150, a K-5 school, and school leaders report a positive relationship with the current principal, with whom they work to equitably split time in the gym, cafeteria and science lab.

2. D Board Oversight

The Brownsville Collegiate board has worked effectively to achieve the school's mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.

The Brownsville Collegiate school board has adequate skills, structures and procedures to govern the school. The board meets five times a year, with its three standing committees-executive, accountability and finance- meeting more frequently. Since the last visit, the board has added an additional member with experience in finance and education reform. The board continues to seek additional members, as well as a parent representative, to increase the diversity of perspectives on the board.

The school board understands that the core business of the school is student achievement. At each board meeting it receives reports from Uncommon and the school leaders on school progress and reviews a school dashboard which includes data on student performance, as well as attendance, discipline, financial and staff performance to provide effective oversight. Board members report recently transferring much of the board's detail-oriented work to its committees, enabling the full board focus on broad school concerns.

The school board conducts regular evaluations of the school's educational program, leaders, Uncommon and itself. Board members report that the evaluations have identified ways to better support the school leader, groups of students in need of additional services and areas of improvement for the board. For example, they have highlighted English language arts student performance as an area of concern for the school. In response, Uncommon has created and implemented a middle school reading taxonomy which has improved recent 5th grade student performance on this year's IAs.

APPENDIX A: RENEWAL BENCHMARKS USED DURING THE VISIT

An excerpt of the State University Charter Renewal Benchmarks follows. Visit the Institute’s website at <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/documents/renewalBenchmarks.doc> to see the complete listing of Benchmarks.

Benchmarks 1B – 1H, and Benchmarks 2A – 2E were using in conducting this evaluation visit.

Renewal Question 1 Is the School an Academic Success?	
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>State University Renewal Benchmarks</u>
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1B</p> <p>Use of Assessment Data</p>	<p>The school has a system to gather assessment and evaluation data and uses it to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school regularly uses standardized and other assessments that are aligned to the school’s curriculum framework and state performance standards; • the school systematically collects and analyzes data from diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments, and makes it accessible to teachers, school leaders and the school board; • the school uses protocols, procedures and rubrics that ensure that the scoring of assessments and evaluation of student work is reliable and trustworthy; • the school uses assessment data to predict whether the school’s Accountability Plan goals are being achieved; • the school’s leaders use assessment data to monitor, change and improve the school’s academic program, including curriculum and instruction, professional development, staffing and intervention services; • the school’s teachers use assessment data to adjust and improve instruction to meet the identified needs of students; • a common understanding exists between and among teachers and administrators of the meaning and consequences of assessment results, e.g., changes to the instructional program, access to remediation, promotion to the next grade; • the school regularly communicates each student’s progress and growth to his or her parents/guardians; and • the school regularly communicates to the school community overall academic performance as well as the school’s progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1C</p> <p>Curriculum</p>	<p>The school has a clearly defined curriculum and uses it to prepare students to meet state performance standards.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school has a well-defined curriculum framework for each grade and core academic subject, which includes the knowledge and skills that all students are expected to achieve as specified by New York State standards and performance indicators; • the school has carefully analyzed all curriculum resources (including commercial materials) currently in use in relation to the school’s curriculum framework, identified areas of deficiency and/or misalignment, and addressed them in the instructional program;

<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1D</p> <p>Pedagogy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the curriculum <i>as implemented</i> is organized, cohesive, and aligned from grade to grade; • teachers are fully aware of the curricula that they are responsible to teach and have access to curricular documents such as scope and sequence documents, pacing charts, and/or curriculum maps that guide the development of their lesson plans; • teachers develop and use lesson plans with objectives that are in alignment with the school’s curriculum; • the school has defined a procedure, allocated time and resources, and included teachers in ongoing review and revision of the curriculum; and • the curriculum supports the school’s stated mission. <p>High quality instruction is evident in all classes throughout the school.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers demonstrate subject-matter and grade-level competency in the subjects and grades they teach; • instruction is rigorous and focused on learning objectives that specify clear expectations for what students must know and be able to do in each lesson; • lesson plans and instruction are aligned to the school’s curriculum framework and New York State standards and performance indicators; • instruction is differentiated to meet the range of learning needs represented in the school’s student population, e.g. flexible student grouping, differentiated materials, pedagogical techniques, and/or assessments; • all students are cognitively engaged in focused, purposeful learning activities during instructional time; • learning time is maximized (e.g., appropriate pacing, high on-task student behavior, clear lesson focus and clear directions to students), transitions are efficient, and there is day-to-day instructional continuity; and • teachers challenge students with questions and assignments that promote academic rigor, depth of understanding, and development of higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1E</p> <p>Instructional Leadership</p>	<p>The school has strong instructional leadership.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school’s leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for student achievement; • the school’s leadership establishes an environment of high expectations for teacher performance (in content knowledge, pedagogical skills and student achievement); • the school’s instructional leaders have in place a comprehensive and on-going system for evaluating teacher quality and effectiveness; • the school’s instructional leaders, based on classroom visits and other available data, provide direct ongoing support, such as critical feedback, coaching and/or modeling, to teachers in their classrooms; • the school’s leadership provides structured opportunities, resources and guidance for teachers to plan the delivery of the instructional program within and across grade levels as well as within disciplines or content areas; • the school’s instructional leaders organize a coherent and sustained professional development program that meets the needs of both the school and individual

<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1F</p> <p>At-Risk Students</p>	<p>teachers;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school’s leadership ensures that the school is responding to the needs of at-risk students and maximizing their achievement to the greatest extent possible in the regular education program using in-class resources and/or pull-out services and programs where necessary ; and the school’s leadership conducts regular reviews and evaluations of the school’s academic program and makes necessary changes to ensure that the school is effectively working to achieve academic standards defined by the State University Renewal Benchmarks in the areas of assessment, curriculum, pedagogy, student order and discipline, and professional development. <p>The school is demonstrably effective in helping students who are struggling academically.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school deploys sufficient resources to provide academic interventions that address the range of students’ needs; all regular education teachers, as well as specialists, utilize effective strategies to support students within the regular education program; the school provides sufficient training, resources, and support to all teachers and specialists with regard to meeting the needs of at-risk students; the school has clearly defined screening procedures for identifying at-risk students and providing them with the appropriate interventions, and a common understanding among all teachers of these procedures; all regular education teachers demonstrate a working knowledge of students’ Individualized Education Program goals and instructional strategies for meeting those goals; the school provides sufficient time and support for on-going coordination between regular and special education teachers, as well as other program specialists and service providers; and the school monitors the performance of student participation in support services using well-defined school-wide criteria, and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its intervention programs.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1G</p> <p>Student Order & Discipline</p>	<p>The school promotes a culture of learning and scholarship.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school has a documented discipline policy that is consistently applied; classroom management techniques and daily routines have established a culture in which learning is valued and clearly evident; low-level misbehavior is not being tolerated, e.g., students are not being allowed to disrupt or opt-out of learning during class time; and throughout the school, a safe and orderly environment has been established.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 1H</p> <p>Professional Development</p>	<p>The school’s professional development program assists teachers in meeting student academic needs and school goals by addressing identified shortcomings in teachers’ pedagogical skills and content knowledge.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school provides sufficient time, personnel, materials and funding to support a comprehensive and sustained professional development program;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the content of the professional development program dovetails with the school’s mission, curriculum, and instructional programs; annual professional development plans derive from a data-driven needs-assessment and staff interests; professional development places a high priority on achieving the State University Renewal Benchmarks and the school’s Accountability Plan goals; teachers are involved in setting short-term and long-term goals for their own professional development activities; the school provides effective, ongoing support and training tailored to teachers’ varying levels of expertise and instructional responsibilities; the school provides training to assist all teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities, English language learners and other students at-risk of academic failure; and the professional development program is systematically evaluated to determine its effectiveness at meeting stated goals.
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Renewal Question 2 Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?	
<u>Evidence Category</u>	<u>State University Renewal Benchmarks</u>
State University Renewal Benchmark 2A Mission & Key Design Elements	<p>The school is faithful to its mission and has implemented the key design elements included in its charter.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stakeholders are aware of the mission; the school has implemented its key design elements in pursuit of its mission; and the school meets or comes close to meeting any non-academic goals contained in its Accountability Plan.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2B Parents & Students	<p>Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the school has a process and procedures for evaluation of parent satisfaction with the school; the great majority of parents with students enrolled at the school have strong positive attitudes about it; few parents pursue grievances at the school board level or outside the school; a large number of parents seek entrance to the school; parents with students enrolled keep their children enrolled year-to-year; and the school maintains a high rate of daily student attendance.
State University Renewal Benchmark 2C Organizational	<p>The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p>

<p>Capacity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school demonstrates effective management of day-to-day operations; • staff scheduling is internally consistent and supportive of the school’s mission; • the school has established clear priorities, objectives and benchmarks for achieving its mission and Accountability Plan goals, and a process for their regular review and revision; • the school has allocated sufficient resources in support of achieving its goals; • the roles and responsibilities of the school’s leadership and staff members are clearly defined; • the school has an organizational structure that provides clear lines for accountability; • the school’s management has successfully recruited, hired and retained key personnel, and made appropriate decisions about removing ineffective staff members when warranted; • the school maintains an adequate student enrollment and has effective procedures for recruiting new students to the school; and • the school’s management and board have demonstrated effective communication practices with the school community including school staff, parents/guardians and students.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2D</p> <p>Board Oversight</p>	<p>The school board has worked effectively to achieve the school’s mission and provide oversight to the total educational program.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school board has adequate skills and expertise, as well as adequate meeting time to provide rigorous oversight of the school; • the school board (or a committee thereof) understands the core business of the school—student achievement—in sufficient depth to permit the board to provide effective oversight; • the school board has set clear long-term and short-term goals and expectations for meeting those goals, and communicates them to the school’s management and leaders; • the school board has received regular written reports from the school leadership on academic performance and progress, financial stability and organizational capacity; • the school board has conducted regular evaluations of the school’s management (including school leaders who report to the board, supervisors from management organization(s), and/or partner organizations that provide services to the school), and has acted on the results where such evaluations demonstrated shortcomings in performance; • where there have been demonstrable deficiencies in the school’s academic, organizational or fiscal performance, the school board has taken effective action to correct those deficiencies and put in place benchmarks for determining if the deficiencies are being corrected in a timely fashion; • the school board has not made financial or organizational decisions that have materially impeded the school in fulfilling its mission; and • the school board conducts on-going assessment and evaluation of its own effectiveness in providing adequate school oversight, and pursues opportunities for further governance training and development.

<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2E</p> <p>Governance</p>	<p>The board has implemented and maintained appropriate policies, systems and processes, and has abided by them.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school board has established a set of priorities that are in line with the school’s goals and mission and has effectively worked to design and implement a system to achieve those priorities; • the school board has in place a process for recruiting and selecting new members in order to maintain adequate skill sets and expertise for effective governance and structural continuity; • the school board has implemented a comprehensive and strict conflict of interest policy (and/or code of ethics)—consistent with those set forth in the charter—and consistently abided by them through the term of the charter; • the school board has generally avoided creating conflicts of interest where possible; where not possible, the school has managed those conflicts of interest in a clear and transparent manner; • the school board has instituted a process for dealing with complaints (and such policy is consistent with that set forth in the charter), has made that policy clear to all stakeholders, and has followed that policy including acting in a timely fashion on any such complaints; • the school board has abided by its by-laws including, but not limited to, provisions regarding trustee elections, removals and filling of vacancies; • the school board and its committees hold meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law, and minutes are recorded for all meetings including executive sessions and, as appropriate, committee meetings; and • the school board has in place a set of board and school policies that are reviewed regularly and updated as needed.
<p>State University Renewal Benchmark 2F</p> <p>Legal Requirements</p>	<p>The school has substantially complied with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter.</p> <p>Elements that are generally present include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • during its charter period, the school has compiled a record of substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations including, but not limited to, submitting items to the Institute in a timely manner, and meeting teacher certification (including NCLB highly qualified status) and background check requirements, FOIL, and Open Meetings Law; • at the time of renewal, the school is in substantial compliance with the terms of its charter and applicable laws, rules and regulations; • over the charter period, the school has abided by the terms of its monitoring plan; • the school has designed and put in place effective systems and controls to ensure that legal and charter requirements were and are met; and • the school has an active and ongoing relationship with in-house or independent legal counsel that reviews relevant policies, documents, transactions and incidents and makes recommendations and handles other legal matters as needed.