



Charter Schools Institute
The State University of New York

Renewal Recommendation Report

Excellence Girls Charter School

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This report is the primary means by which the SUNY Charter Schools Institute (the “Institute”) transmits to the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (the “SUNY Trustees”) its findings and recommendations regarding a school’s Application for Charter Renewal, and more broadly, details the merits of a school’s case for renewal. The Institute has created and issued this report pursuant to the *Policies for the Renewal of Not-For-Profit Charter School Education Corporations and Charter Schools Authorized by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York* (the “SUNY Renewal Policies”).¹

Additional information about the SUNY renewal process and an overview of the requirements for renewal under the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended) (the “Act”) are available on the Institute’s website at: www.newyorkcharters.org/schoolsRenewOverview.htm.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Opening Information

Date Initial Charter Approved by SUNY Trustees	September 9, 2008
School Opening Date	September 3, 2009

Location

School Year(s)	Address	District	Facility	Enrollment	Grades
2009-10 to present	794 Monroe St., Brooklyn, NY	NYC CSD 16	Co-Located	424	K-4
2013 - present	1600 Park Pl., Brooklyn, NY 11233	NYC CSD 17	Co-Located	81	5

Partner Organization

School Year(s)	Partner Name	Partner Type
2009-10 to Present	Uncommon Schools, Inc.	Charter Management Organization

¹ Revised September 4, 2013, and available at: <http://newyorkcharters.org/documents/SUNYRenewalPolicies.pdf>.

RENEWAL RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation

Initial Full-Term Renewal

The Institute recommends that the SUNY Trustees approve the Application for Charter Renewal of Excellence Girls Charter School and renew its charter for a period of five years with authority to provide instruction to students in Kindergarten through 10th grade in such configuration as set forth in its Application for Charter Renewal, with a projected total enrollment of 807 students.

To earn an Initial Full-Term Renewal, a school must demonstrate that it has either (a) compiled a strong and compelling record of meeting or coming close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, and has a generally effective educational program in place; or (b) made progress toward meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals and has a particularly strong and effective educational program in place.²

Over the Accountability Period,³ the school has compiled a strong and compelling record of coming close to meeting its academic Accountability Plan goals, and has in place an educational program that is generally effective. The school has consistently come close to meeting its Accountability Plan goals in English language arts (“ELA”) and mathematics and has an effective educational program based on a review using the SUNY Renewal Benchmarks.

Required Findings

In addition to making a recommendation based on a determination of whether the school has met the SUNY Trustees’ specific renewal criteria, the Institute must make the following findings required by the Act:

- the school, as described in the Application for Charter Renewal meets the requirements of the Act and all other applicable laws, rules and regulations;
- the school can demonstrate the ability to operate in an educationally and fiscally sound manner in the next charter term; and
- given the programs it will offer, its structure and its purpose, approving the school to operate for another five years is likely to improve student learning and achievement and materially further the purposes of the Act.⁴

As required by Education Law § 2851(4)(e), a school must include in its renewal application information regarding the means by which it will meet or exceed SUNY’s enrollment and retention targets for students with disabilities, English language learners (“ELLs”), and students who are

² SUNY Renewal Policies, page 10.

³ For the purpose of reporting student achievement results, the SUNY Renewal Policies define the Accountability Period as the time the Accountability Plan was in effect. In the case of an Initial Renewal, the Accountability Plan covers the first four years of the charter term under review.

⁴ See New York Education Law § 2852(2).

eligible applicants for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch (“FRPL”) program. SUNY⁵ and the Board of Regents finalized the methodology for setting targets in October 2012, and the Institute communicated specific targets for each school in July 2013. In accordance with the statute, the Institute, acting on behalf of the SUNY Trustees, considered the school’s plans for meeting its enrollment and retention targets prior to recommending the renewal application for approval.

CONSIDERATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMENTS

In accordance with the Act, the Institute notified the school district in which the charter school is located regarding the school’s Application for Charter Renewal. As of the date of this report, the Institute has received no district comments in response.

Report Format

The Institute makes the foregoing renewal recommendation based on the school’s Application for Charter Renewal, evaluation visits conducted and information gathered during the charter term and a renewal evaluation visit conducted near the end of the current charter term. Most importantly, the Institute analyzes the school’s record of academic performance determined and the extent to which it has met its academic Accountability Plan goals. This renewal recommendation report compiles the evidence is complied below using the State University of New York Charter Renewal Benchmarks (Version 5.0, the “SUNY Renewal Benchmarks”), which specify in detail what a successful school should be able to demonstrate at the time of the renewal review. The Institute uses the following four interconnected renewal questions for framing benchmark statements to determine if a school has made an adequate case for renewal:

1. Is the school an academic success?
2. Is the school an effective, viable organization?
3. Is the education corporation fiscally sound?
4. If the school’s charter is renewed, what are its plans for the next charter term and are they reasonable, feasible and achievable?

The report’s Appendix provides a School Overview, copies of any school district comments on the Application for Charter Renewal, the SUNY Fiscal Dashboard information for the school, additional evidence on student achievement contained in School Performance Summaries and the New York City Department of Education (“NYCDOE”) Progress Report results.

⁵ SUNY Trustees’ Charter Schools Committee resolution dated October 2, 2012.

IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

Excellence Girls Charter School (“Excellence Girls”) is an academic success based on its consistency in meeting its key Accountability Plan goals and evidence on its educational program compiled at the time of renewal.

Academic Attainment. At the beginning of the charter term, the school developed and adopted an Accountability Plan that set academic goals in the key subjects of ELA and math. The Accountability Plan also includes science and No Child Left Behind Act (“NCLB”) goals. For each goal in the Accountability Plan, specific outcome measures define the level of performance necessary to meet that goal.

Note: This year the Institute is not reporting results for the two absolute ELA and math measures. Because of the high standards in the new state testing program only a handful of schools statewide met the absolute proficiency target and the state has not yet recalibrated the absolute Annual Measurable Objective.

Throughout Excellence Girls’ four-year Accountability Period and the two years for which state assessment results are available,⁶ the school has met both its ELA and math goals. Excellence Girls met its targets in the two comparative measures and the growth measure in both key goals. Specifically, the school far outperformed its local school district in 2012-13 by 40 percentage points in both subjects. It performed much better than predicted in both ELA and math compared to similar schools statewide based on economically disadvantaged students, far surpassing its targets each year in both subjects. With respect to comparative growth, students showed greater year-to-year growth compared to statewide results in both ELA and math than students with the same scores in the previous year, placing the school in 2012-13 in the 69th percentile in ELA and the 79th percentile in math compared to other public schools statewide. During the Accountability Period, the school has also met its science goal and is in good standing under the state’s NCLB accountability system.

These results appear on the following page and in School Performance Summaries in the Appendix.

⁶While the Accountability Period covers the first four years of the charter term under review, the school only began administering state assessments to its 3rd graders when the school was in its third year of operation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

Excellence Girls Charter School

Comparative Measure: District Comparison.

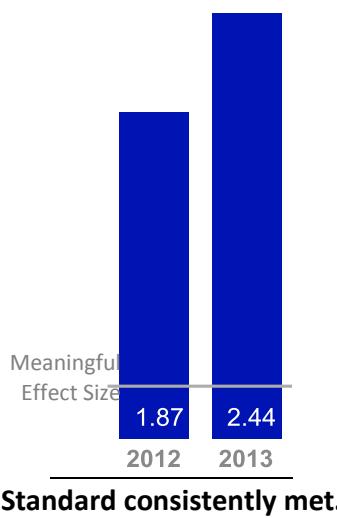
Each year, the percent of **students enrolled** in at least their second year performing at or above proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same tested grades in the local school district.

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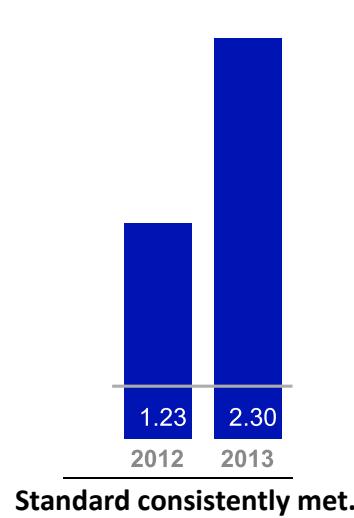
2013
Standard met.

Comparative Measure: Effect Size.

Each year, the school will exceed its predicted level of performance by an Effect Size of 0.3 or above according to a regression analysis controlling for economically disadvantaged students among all public schools in New York State.

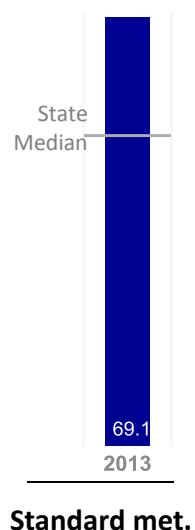


2013
Standard met.



Comparative Growth Measure: Mean Growth Percentile.

Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile for all tested students in grades 4-8 will be above the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.

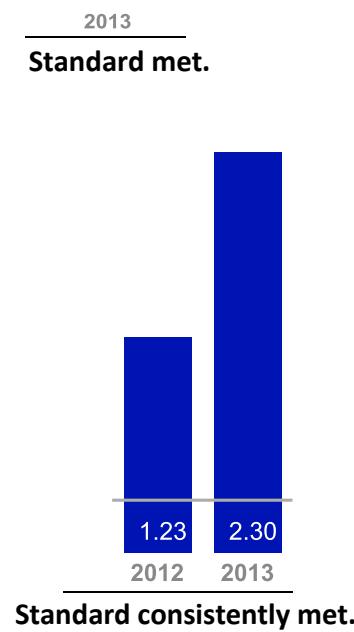


Standard met.

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MATHEMATICS ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN GOAL

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Standard met.

Instructional Leadership. The school has strong instructional leadership.

- School leaders have high expectations for teacher and student performance. Teachers are cognizant of the expectations, which include effective use of assessment data, adaptation of instruction to student needs, regular communication with families and the application of constructive feedback in daily practices. Instructional leaders provide teachers with intentional, sustained and targeted support to help them meet these high expectations.
- Under the supervision of the principals, designated instructional leaders (i.e., grade team leaders, department chairs and master teachers) act as teacher coaches in support of developing their colleagues' instructional skills.
- The leaders conduct weekly classroom observations with immediate feedback via email; they hold weekly meetings with teachers to review assessment results to develop specific instructional strategies; they regularly monitor lesson plans; and they provide differentiated professional development focused on teachers' strengths and weaknesses.
- Instructional leaders have established a clear and effective teacher evaluation system. These mid-year evaluations, which consist of a self-assessment and a written component followed by a formal meeting, target areas of strength and areas for continued improvement. Teachers report that reviews are fair and valuable, providing actionable feedback.
- The school's leaders evince high expectations for students in strictly carrying out the school's promotional policy, whereby a student must establish at least 75 percent proficiency on interim assessments to move to the next grade. The school also reflects high expectations in motivational messages throughout the schools' hallways, in the frequent discussion of college attendance in daily routines and lessons and in the use of the word "scholar" to address and refer to students.

NOTEWORTHY

As a member of the Uncommon network, Excellence Girls realizes the benefit of participating in a robust data analysis and norming system and sharing of best practices among other Uncommon schools. After each interim assessment, the school sends its data to the network team. The network team compiles data from across the network and analyzes it to determine which schools perform well on each standard. After a network-wide debrief about the results of the analysis, the principal encourages curriculum and instruction coaches to collaborate across schools to share and observe successful practices in order to improve their support for teachers.

Curriculum & Assessment. Excellence Girls has an assessment system to improve instructional effectiveness and student learning, as well as a curriculum that supports teachers in their instructional planning.

- Excellence Girls' curriculum framework is comprehensive with a set of student performance expectations as specified in the state's Common Core learning standards. Teachers have

adequate resources to supplement the curriculum framework, drawing on curriculum materials from the regional network of Uncommon Schools, Inc, the school's charter management organization. The school also uses commercial ELA and math resources to help teachers develop lesson plans. Based on these documents, teachers have a good sense of what to teach and when to teach it.

- The school has a clear and effective process for reviewing and refining its curriculum. Both teachers and school leaders use data from assessments to revise the curriculum throughout the school year. Grade-level teams work collectively to adjust the curriculum on an ongoing basis. The Uncommon regional network also conducts an extensive review of the curriculum over the summer.
- Excellence Girls administers a variety of assessments that align to both the school's curriculum and state standards. The school administers the Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress (STEP) literacy assessment regularly to determine student reading level. The school administers the Terra Nova norm-referenced test to incoming kindergarteners to establish baseline data and to all students at the end of the school year to mark progress. It uses Uncommon-developed interim assessments in reading and mathematics at regular intervals.
- The school is diligent about evaluating its writing program. It has a formal writing assessment twice a year, scored by an external vendor. For other writing assignments, teachers report regularly grading assignments jointly according to a writing rubric that the school recalibrates annually.
- Teachers use assessment results to plan instruction, to create in-class groupings, and to identify students in need of instructional intervention. Teachers have a common protocol that they use to analyze assessment results by item, class, standard, and question type. Teachers report results to school leaders, who in turn use the data to evaluate teacher effectiveness.
- Throughout the charter term, the school has had detailed report cards in place to inform parents about student progress and growth at the end of every trimester. In order to receive the report cards, the school requires that parents attend a conference with their child's teacher.

Pedagogy. High quality instruction is generally evident throughout the school.

- Teachers plan purposeful lessons that align to the school's curriculum and state standards. Lessons have clear objectives, and students in observed classes appear to know the purpose of each lesson. Teachers regularly check for student understanding through a variety of techniques including conferencing, cold-calling, exit tickets, and observational grids. They regularly challenged students with questions that promote the development of higher-order thinking skills, depth of understanding, and problem solving skills. Teachers maximize class time through the use of efficient classroom management techniques and differentiated instruction.
- The school's co-teaching model has become more effective over the course of the charter term. By the third year of the charter term, the school had adequately defined the lead teacher and co-teacher roles. Lead teachers provide whole class instruction, have

somewhat more planning responsibilities, and are responsible for creating a positive classroom culture, while co-teachers provide instruction individually or to students in small groups. The classroom instructional pairs have flexibility to change the subjects in which they lead based on individual experience and interests.

At-Risk Students. Excellence Girls addresses the needs of students with disabilities and students at-risk of academic failure.

- Excellence Girls has a clear, if informal, process for identifying and supporting the educational needs of at-risk students. The school uses assessment data to identify students who might benefit from additional targeted interventions.
- The learning support team -- which consists of all the teachers on a grade level, the co-director of curriculum and instruction, the dean of students and the learning support coordinator -- meets regularly to discuss students who are struggling and create appropriate plans of action. After initial intervention meetings, teachers interact informally with the learning support team.
- The school offer both push-in and pull-out services to students with disabilities. The learning support team closely monitors the progress of students struggling academically toward grade level proficiency, as well as the progress of students with disabilities toward meeting Individualized Education Program ("IEP") goals with assessments at five-week intervals.

Students with Disabilities

		2011- 12	2012- 13	2013- 14
Enrollment (N)		(23)	(29)	(37)
Results	Tested on State Exams (N)	(0)	(6)	(N/A)
	Percent Proficient on ELA Exam	--	S ⁷	N/A
	Percent Proficient Statewide	15.5	5	N/A

English Language Learners (ELLs)

		2011- 12	2012- 13	2013- 14
Enrollment (N)		(13)	(13)	(9)
Results	Tested on NYSESLAT ⁸ Exam (N)	(6)	(13)	(N/A)
	Percent Proficient or Making Progress on NYSESLAT	33	46	N/A

At the time of the renewal visit, the school had not established a coordinated program to support identified ELLs in developing their English language acquisition skills. As a result, the Institute

⁷ Due to the small size of this subgroup, actual numbers have been suppressed to protect privacy.

⁸ New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, a standardized state exam.

required the school to submit an educationally sound, legally compliant plan for serving ELL students. The school has submitted such a plan and the Institute finds it to be an acceptable design for serving ELL students in the next charter term.

IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

Excellence Girls is an effective and viable organization. The education corporation board carries out its oversight responsibilities with an unrelenting focus on student achievement and the network support structure. The school organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program. The board monitors regional network's plans to support the school in the delivery of the educational program. During the current charter term, the board with certain minor exceptions has been in general and substantial compliance with the terms of its charter, bylaws, applicable state and federal law, rules and regulations.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Board Oversight. Excellence Girls' education corporation board works effectively to achieve the school's Accountability Plan goals.

- Board members possess adequate skills, to include legal, education, philanthropy, and finance, and have put in place effective structures and procedures to govern the school and to oversee management of day-to-day operations. While the board has no immediate plans to add members, and no self-identified gaps in expertise to address, they were confident that they could fill any potential board openings from within their professional circles. The board has a parent representative, with full-voting responsibilities, to communicate parental concerns to the members.
- Through regular reports from school leaders and an Uncommon representative (two of whom are on the board), the school board competently oversees the school's future as an academically successful, financially viable, and legally compliant organization.
- The board provides rigorous oversight of the school's program and finances by receiving regular reports from both the school leaders and Uncommon representatives. It establishes clear priorities and long-range goals and deliberately tracks progress toward meeting the goals.
- The board, which also governs another school in the Excellence network, continues to hold its partner and school leaders accountable for the school's replication of the successful Uncommon model. The board has in place a comprehensive, formal, annual self-evaluation.
- The board communicates with the school community primarily through regular board meetings. However, as the community and parents generally see the school as successful, few attend the meetings. As such, the school has systems in place to ensure that parents remain knowledgeable about student progress, parent workshops, and other events maintained by the school.

Organizational Capacity. Excellence Girls' organization effectively supports the delivery of the educational program.

- The school has established a well-functioning organizational structure with staff, systems, and procedures that allow the school to carry out its academic program as set forth in its charter agreement.
- The school contracts with Uncommon Schools, Inc. ("Uncommon"), a not-for-profit corporation that employs network-based support staff. Excellence Girls contributes a per-pupil fee to Uncommon to provide executive leadership, academic and back-office operations support.
- Designated Uncommon staff manages and evaluates school leaders, who also report directly to the education corporation board. Uncommon has devised and implemented comprehensive staff review systems to gauge and improve the performance of school-based personnel. Despite the bifurcated review system, the priorities of the school's leadership clearly align to the school's mission, and school-based leaders are keenly aware of their roles and responsibilities. As such, the overall organizational structure supports clear and distinct lines of accountability.
- Excellence Girls has implemented a clear discipline policy that it applies consistently. Uncommon provides ample professional development on effective classroom management, and teachers are given both adequate support and significant autonomy in establishing school culture. The school rarely imposes out-of-school suspensions as a disciplinary tool. The school credits the limited number of suspensions to improved teacher support of classroom management and better student communications to convey behavioral expectations.
- Throughout the charter period, Excellence Girls has generally maintained full enrollment and the school reports a current waitlist of 2,345 students seeking entry. Due to the transient nature of the school population, the school has recently implemented a 5th grade lottery to address attrition and to ensure that its new middle school grows to scale on schedule.
- Given the school's location, its targeted outreach and monitoring efforts and its focus on providing a strong system of supports for at-risk students, the school is likely to meet or exceed the enrollment and retention targets set by the SUNY Trustees for English language learners, students with disabilities, and students eligible for the Federal free and/or reduced price lunch program. Uncommon has developed an exemplary approach to meeting the enrollment and retention targets, utilizing "heat maps" to highlight specific areas with non-English speaking families, and then targeting such areas with mailings and staff/parent neighborhood canvassing. The school has also implemented an annual review process to analyze the outcomes of their enrollment and retention efforts, meant to adjust its outreach efforts accordingly each year.

FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER & PARENT SATISFACTION

Current Key Design Elements⁹	Evident?
A school culture built on high academic and high behavioral expectations.	✓
Small class sizes.	✓
A strong focus on literacy and math.	✓
The involvement of parents and families.	✓
Extended day and year.	✓
A robust curriculum, including reading, math, science, social studies, writing, art and fitness.	✓
Recruitment of top teachers.	✓
Assigned homework and reading each night beginning in Kindergarten.	✓
Assessment early and often to drive instruction.	✓
Character development and teaching of creed values.	✓

Parent Satisfaction. Parents/guardians and students are satisfied with the school.¹⁰

2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Response Rate: 44%	Response Rate: 76%	Response Rate: 40%
Academic Expectations: 9.2	Academic Expectations: 9.2	Academic Expectations: 8.6
Communication: 9.2	Communication: 9.1	Communication: 9.1
Engagement: 8.7	Engagement: 8.9	Engagement: 8.8
Safety and Respect: 9.3	Safety and Respect: 9.4	Safety & Respect: 8.9

Persistence in Enrollment. The school provided the following statistical information in their renewal application materials.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Percent of Eligible Students Returning From Previous Year ¹¹	93	92.5	90.5

⁹ As part of their initial application and their Application for Charter renewal, schools identify the Key Design Elements that reflect their mission and distinguish the school.

¹⁰ Source: Application for Charter Renewal.

¹¹ Source: Application for Charter Renewal.

COMPLIANCE

Governance. The education corporation board of trustees implements, maintains and abides by appropriate policies, systems and processes. In material respects, the board has implemented adequate policies and procedures to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. The board demonstrates a thorough understanding of its role in holding both Uncommon and school leadership accountable for academic results and fiscal soundness.

- The Excellence Girls board of trustees has generally avoided creating conflicts of interest where possible, and where conflicts exist, such as when dealing with issues related specifically to Uncommon, the board has managed those conflicts in a clear and transparent manner through recusal.
- In material respects, the school board has implemented adequate policies and procedures to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. Due to the school board's common oversight of multiple charter schools, school and Uncommon staff meet regularly to share best practices and to collectively modify school policies and procedures. The school board demonstrates a thorough understanding of its role in holding both Uncommon and school leadership accountable for academic results and fiscal soundness.
- The board has implemented a clear and transparent complaint resolution process which is made readily available to parents and students. During the previous charter term, school leaders reported that they received one formal complaint about the availability of a particular donated book in the school's library, which was resolved in favor of the school.
- The Excellence Girls board has materially complied with the terms of its by-laws.

Legal Requirements. The education corporation substantially complies with applicable laws, rules and regulations and the provisions of its charter. The education corporation has been in general and substantial compliance with the terms of its charter, applicable state and federal law, rules and regulations, except for the following.

Open Meetings Law. Records indicate that school board committees had met without determining that a quorum was present. Otherwise, the full school board has conducted regular meetings in accordance with the Open Meetings Law, including the use of videoconferencing when appropriate.

IS THE EDUCATION CORPORATION FISCALLY SOUND?

Based on evidence collected through the renewal review, Excellence Girls Charter School is fiscally sound. The education corporation has successfully managed cash flow and has adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations. The SUNY Fiscal Dashboard, a multi-year financial data and analysis for SUNY authorized charter schools appears below in the Appendix. The education corporation engages in effective budgeting practices and routinely conducts monitoring of revenues and expenses, making appropriate adjustments when necessary.

Budgeting and Long-Range Planning. Throughout the charter term, Excellence Girls Charter helped maintain fiscal soundness by implementing effective budgeting practices and routine monitoring of revenues and expenses. Actual revenues have exceeded expenses in each school year.

- The education corporation development of annual budgets includes input and analysis from the school's leadership team and Director of Operations, key staff from Uncommon Schools including the managing director, the associate chief operating officer/chief operating officer, the director of finance, and the board of trustees' finance committee.
- The education corporation also develops and maintains a 10-year projected budget that is updated every year based on actual and forecasted enrollment, staffing, income and expenditures.
- Monthly financial reports are prepared that include a current balance sheet, a profit and loss statement, a budget-versus-actual expenditure report, and personnel expenditure projections. The director of operations reviews these reports with the Uncommon Schools' director of finance on a bi-monthly basis to ensure fiscal compliance and responsibility. These reports are subsequently reviewed and analyzed by the finance committee and school leaders prior to each Board meeting. Finally, at each meeting the financial reports are presented for consideration to the full board.

Internal Controls. The education corporation has established and maintained appropriate fiscal policies, procedures and controls. Written policies address key issues including financial reporting, revenues, procurement, expenditures, payroll, banking, capital assets, and record retention. Uncommon Schools has contractual responsibility for the following fiscal operations: assisting with budget development, preparing monthly financial statements, recording and tracking income and expenses related to all grants and contracts, recording all accounts payable invoices and cash receipts, preparing all vendor checks, reconciling checking accounts each month, providing and maintaining payroll services, processing all school 403 (b) filings, and interfacing with the school's independent external auditor.

- The education corporation has accurately recorded and appropriately documented transactions in accordance with established policies. These policies are comprehensive and updated as needed on an annual basis.
- The education corporation ensures that key staff members receive appropriate professional development in operations and financial management.

- The education corporation's most recent audit reports of internal controls related to financial reporting and compliance with laws, regulations and grants, disclosed no material weaknesses, or instances of non-compliance.
- The advisory comment letter issued by the independent auditors identified one non-recurring matter involving compliance with the school's dual signature policy for checks greater than \$5,000. The auditors did not consider the matter to be a significant deficiency or material weakness.

Financial Reporting. The education corporation has complied with financial reporting requirements by providing the SUNY Trustees and the State Education Department ("SED") with required financial reports that are on time, complete and follow generally accepted accounting principles.

- The education corporation's annual financial statements are presented in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the independent audits of those statements have received unqualified opinions.
- Key reports have been generally filed timely and accurately, including: audit reports, budgets, cash flow statements, un-audited reports of income, expenses, and enrollment, and grant expenditure reports.

Financial Condition. The education corporation maintains adequate financial resources to ensure stable operations.

- The education corporation has posted fiscally strong composite score ratings on the Institute's financial dashboard indicating a consistent level of fiscal stability over the charter contract term.¹²
- The education corporation maintains healthy cash flows and reserves to cover current bills and those coming due shortly.
- Contributions and fundraising activities have played an important, although declining role in financial health of the school. Contributions for the year ended June 30, 2013 were less than four percent of total revenues.

The Fiscal Dashboard, provided in the Appendix, presents color coded tables and charts indicating that Excellence Girls has demonstrated fiscal soundness over the course of its charter term.¹³

¹² The composite score assists in measuring the financial health of an education corporation using a blended score that measures the school's performances on key financial indicators. The blended score offsets financial strengths against areas where there may be financial weaknesses.

¹³ The U.S. Department of Education has established fiscal criteria for certain ratios or information with high – medium – low categories, represented in the table as green – gray – red. The categories generally correspond to levels of fiscal risk, but must be viewed in the context of each education corporation and the general type or category of school.

ARE THE SCHOOL'S PLANS FOR THE NEXT CHARTER TERM REASONABLE, FEASIBLE AND ACHIEVABLE?

To the extent that Excellence Girls has achieved its key academic goals, continues to implement an educational program that supports achieving those goals, operates an effective and viable organization, and is fiscally sound, its plans to continue to implement the educational program as proposed during the next charter period are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

Plans for the School's Structure. The school has provided all of the key structural elements for a charter renewal and those elements are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

MISSION FOR THE NEXT CHARTER TERM

The mission of Excellence Girls Charter School is to prepare its students to enter, succeed in, and graduate from, outstanding college preparatory high schools and colleges.

The school's Application for Charter Renewal contains all necessary elements as required by the Act. The proposed school calendar allots an appropriate amount of instructional time to meet or exceed instructional time requirements, and taken together with other academic and key design elements, should be sufficient to allow the school to meet its proposed Accountability Plan goals. The school has amended other key aspects of the renewal application -- including bylaws and code of ethics -- to comply with various provisions of the New York Education Law, Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, Public Officers Law and the General Municipal Law, as appropriate.

Plans for the Educational Program.

	Current Charter Term	End of Next Charter Term
Enrollment	505	807
Grade Span	K-5	K-10
Teaching Staff	44	62
Days of Instruction	185	185

Excellence Girls' elementary academy would maintain its current grade span, and the middle school academy would continue to grow through the 8th grade. In the last two years of the charter term, Excellence Girls students would attend grades 9-10. In December 2016, during the year prior to their first attending high school, Excellence Girls would submit an application for co-location requesting that its students begin attending a co-located high school, Uncommon Charter High School, with students from Williamsburg Collegiate, Kings Collegiate, and Excellence Boys Charter School. Students currently attending Uncommon Charter High School have a record of strong academic performance.

The same core elements of the instructional program that have enabled Excellence Girls to meet its Accountability Plan goals during the current charter term would be likely to allow the school to meet its goals in the future.

Plans for Board Oversight and Governance. Board members express an interest in continuing to serve on the Excellence Girls' board of trustees in the next charter term and may add additional members in the future.

Fiscal & Facility Plans. The education corporation has presented a reasonable and appropriate fiscal plan for the term of the next charter including budgets that are feasible and achievable. The education corporation has taken a conservative approach to budgeting and planning for the next charter term. The plan projects annual budget surpluses and assumes feasible philanthropic support. Uncommon Schools has a notable capacity for fundraising and will provide that support to help ensure the school meets its financial operating needs in each year. Ultimately the school aims to operate without philanthropic support once it reaches full enrollment. A large waitlist provides strong support for the enrollment assumptions in the plan.

The school has separate co-location agreements for its elementary and middle school academies. These two locations are NYCDOE facilities. The education corporation's strong fiscal condition leaves it prepared should unexpected fiscal issues arise regarding these facilities. The school will seek approval for its students to attend a co-located high school, Uncommon Charter High School, with students from three other charter schools: Excellence Boys, Williamsburg Collegiate and Kings Collegiate. Based on the foregoing fiscal information and the education corporation's track record of fiscal soundness, the Institute finds that the education corporation has demonstrated the ability to operate in a fiscally sound manner during the next charter term.

APPENDIX

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Current Mission Statement

The mission of Excellence Girls Charter School is to prepare its students to enter, succeed in, and graduate from outstanding college preparatory high schools and colleges.

School Characteristics

School Year	Proposed Enrollment	Actual Enrollment ¹⁴	Proposed Grades	Actual Grades
2009-10	145	111	K-1	K-1
2010-11	232	185	K-2	K-2
2011-12	313	272	K-3	K-3
2012-13	392	367	K-4	K-4
2013-14	494	499	K-5	K-5

Board of Trustees¹⁵

Board Member Name	Position
Tony Pasquariello	Chair
Joseph Wayland	Vice Chair
Laura Blankfein	Trustee
Cecily Carson	Trustee
Loren Compton-Williams	Trustee
Sabrina Dycus	Trustee
Shakima Jones	Trustee
Alison Mass	Trustee
David Saltzman	Trustee
Brett Peiser	Trustee
Rosa Pizzi	Trustee
Tokumbo Shobowale	Trustee
Chrystal Stokes Williams	Trustee
Julie Kennedy	Trustee

¹⁴ Source: SUNY Charter Schools Institute's Official Enrollment Binder. (Figures may differ slightly from New York State Report Cards, depending on date of data collection.)

¹⁵ Source: Institute Board Records.

Student Demographics

	2010-11		2011-12		2012-13	
	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 16 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment	Percent of NYC CSD 16 Enrollment	Percent of School Enrollment ¹⁶	Percent of NYC CSD 16 Enrollment
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	1	0	1	0	N/A
Black or African American	94	82	95	85	95	N/A
Hispanic	5	15	3	16	3	N/A
Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	1	1	2	1	2	N/A
White	0	1	0	1	0	N/A
Multiracial	0	0	0	0	0	N/A
Students with Disabilities¹⁷						
Students with Disabilities ¹⁷	14	--	12	16	13	N/A
English Language Learners	1	4	1	4	1	N/A
Eligible for Free Lunch						
Eligible for Reduced – Price Lunch	55	75	55	78	13	N/A
Economically Disadvantaged	16	5	17	5	12	N/A
Economically Disadvantaged	70	--	72	--	70	N/A

School Leader(s)

School Year(s)	School Leader(s) Name and Title
2008-09 to Present	Celestina De La Garza, Elementary Academy Principal
2013-14 to Present	Meredith Anderson, Middle Academy Principal

School Visit History

School Year	Visit Type	Evaluator (Institute/External)	Date
2009-10	First-Year Visit	Institute	April 22, 2010
2011-12	Evaluation Visit	Institute	May 14-15, 2012
2012-13	Initial Renewal Visit	Institute	May 27-29, 2013

¹⁶ The Institute derived the 2012-13 Students with Disabilities, ELL and Economically Disadvantaged statistics from the school's October 2012 student enrollment report to SED (2012-13 BEDS Report).

¹⁷ Students with Disabilities Enrollment data are not available for 2010-11. SED released these district data for the first time in spring 2012 as the state's Empirical Analysis of Enrollment Targets.

Conduct of the School Renewal Visit

Date(s) of Visit	Evaluation Team Members	Title
May 27-29, 2013	Ron Miller, PhD	Executive Deputy Director for Accountability
	Jeffrey Wasbes	Director of Performance and Systems Analysis
	Danielle Keen	Senior Analyst
	Tom Franta	Associate Counsel

FISCAL DASHBOARD



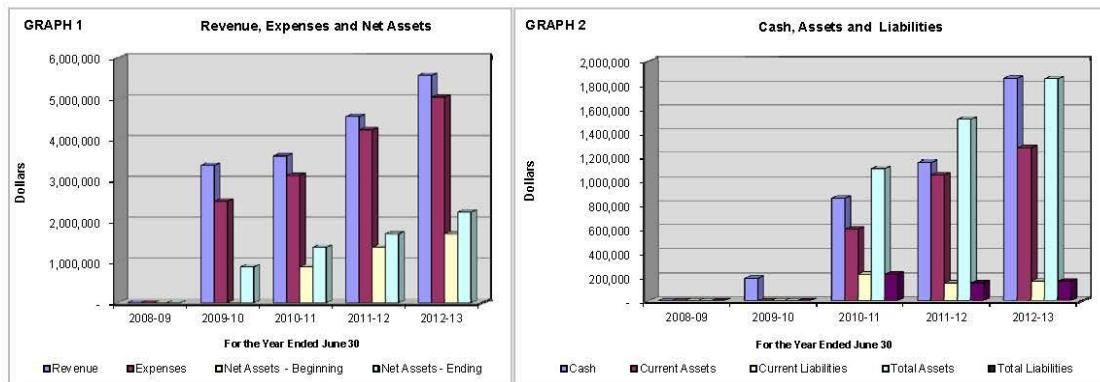
Excellence Girls

SCHOOL INFORMATION						
FINANCIAL POSITION	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Assets						
Current Assets						
Cash and Cash Equivalents - GRAPH 2	-	-	188,367	855,899	1,154,614	1,858,133
Grants and Contracts Receivable	-	-	403,059	137,881	90,878	57,048
Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prepaid Expenses	-	-	3,367	58,086	25,958	96,794
Contributions and Other Receivables	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Current Assets - GRAPH 2	-	-	594,793	1,051,866	1,271,450	2,011,975
Property, Building and Equipment, net	-	-	510,083	459,905	381,882	375,748
Other Assets	-	-	-	-	200,355	-
Total Assets - GRAPH 2	-	-	1,104,876	1,511,771	1,853,687	2,387,723
Liabilities and Net Assets						
Current Liabilities						
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	-	-	123,476	150,565	165,773	166,693
Accrued Payroll and Benefits	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deferred Revenue	-	-	100,000	-	-	-
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-	-
Short Term Debt - Bonds, Notes Payable	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Current Liabilities - GRAPH 2	-	-	223,476	150,565	165,773	166,693
L-T Debt and Notes Payable, net current maturities	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Liabilities - GRAPH 2	-	-	223,476	150,565	165,773	166,693
Net Assets						
Unrestricted	-	-	881,400	1,361,206	1,687,914	2,221,030
Temporarily restricted	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Net Assets	-	-	881,400	1,361,206	1,687,914	2,221,030
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	-	-	1,104,876	1,511,771	1,853,687	2,387,723
ACTIVITIES						
Operating Revenue						
Resident Student Enrollment	-	-	1,792,757	3,077,055	4,185,592	5,073,301
Students with Disabilities	-	-	23,118	74,548	54,236	60,002
Grants and Contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-
State and local	-	-	781,371	-	-	-
Federal - Title and IDEA	-	-	8,734	224,201	191,545	191,770
Federal - Other	-	-	149,295	-	-	42,737
Other	-	-	-	96	504	-
Food Service/Child Nutrition Program	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operating Revenue	-	-	2,755,305	3,375,900	4,431,877	5,367,810
Expenses						
Regular Education	-	-	2,029,545	2,746,832	3,750,932	4,591,270
SPED	-	-	65,608	-	-	-
Regular Education & SPED (combined)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Program Services	-	-	2,095,153	2,746,832	3,750,932	4,591,270
Management and General	-	-	392,672	372,017	483,387	448,387
Fundraising	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses - GRAPH 1 / GRAPH 4	-	-	2,487,826	3,118,849	4,234,319	5,039,657
Surplus / (Deficit) From School Operations	-	-	267,479	257,051	197,558	328,153
Support and Other Revenue						
Contributions	-	-	613,883	-	-	178,575
Fundraising	-	-	-	222,755	129,150	-
Miscellaneous Income	-	-	38	-	-	26,388
Net assets released from restriction	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Support and Other Revenue	-	-	613,921	222,755	129,150	204,963
Total Unrestricted Revenue	-	-	3,369,226	3,598,655	4,561,027	5,572,773
Total Temporarily Restricted Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Revenue - GRAPH 1	-	-	3,369,226	3,598,655	4,561,027	5,572,773
Change in Net Assets	-	-	881,400	479,806	326,708	533,116
Net Assets - Beginning of Year - GRAPH 1	-	-	-	881,400	1,361,206	1,687,914
Prior Year Adjustment(s)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Net Assets - End of Year - GRAPH 1	-	-	881,400	1,361,206	1,687,914	2,221,030
Functional Expense Breakdown						
Personnel Service	-	-	606,611	1,678,809	167,554	138,102
Administrative Staff Personnel	-	-	696,891	-	2,256,121	2,917,090
Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Instructional Personnel	-	-	-	-	-	-
Personnel Services (Combined)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Salaries and Staff	-	-	1,303,502	1,678,809	2,425,675	3,056,192
Fringe Benefits & Payroll Taxes	-	-	238,245	293,592	391,383	468,910
Retirement	-	-	7,857	-	-	-
Management Company Fees	-	-	195,405	327,307	436,681	505,882
Building and Land Rent / Lease	-	-	-	-	-	-
Staff Development	-	-	145,449	152,316	164,916	184,413
Professional Fees, Consultant & Purchased Services	-	-	18,890	15,948	18,268	16,179
Marketing / Recruitment	-	-	-	-	-	-
Student Supplies, Materials & Services	-	-	218,645	270,757	299,760	354,710
Depreciation	-	-	78,761	126,717	151,719	137,816
Other	-	-	281,082	253,403	345,917	316,555
Total Expenses	-	-	2,487,826	3,118,849	4,234,319	5,039,657
ENROLLMENT						
Chartered Enroll	-	-	116	171	223	392
Revised Enroll	-	-	145	232	-	-
Actual Enroll - GRAPH 4	-	-	145	232	311	378
Chartered Grades	-	-	K-1	K-2	K-3	K-4
Revised Grades	-	-	K-1	K-2	K-3	-

Excellence Girls

SCHOOL ANALYSIS

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	
Primary School District						
Per Pupil Funding	NYC	11,023	12,443	12,443	13,527	13,527
Increase over prior year		8.1%	12.9%	0.0%	8.7%	0.0%
PER STUDENT BREAKDOWN						
Revenue	-	-	19,002	14,551	14,250	14,201
Operating						
Other Revenue and Support						
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	-		17,157	13,443	13,615	13,337
Expenses	-					
Program Services						
Management and General, Func.						
TOTAL - GRAPH 3	-		84.2%	88.1%	88.6%	91.1%
% of Program Services	0.0%	0.0%				
% of Management and Other	0.0%	0.0%	15.8%	11.9%	11.4%	8.9%
% of Revenue Exceeding Expenses - GRAPH 5	0.0%	0.0%	35.4%	15.4%	7.7%	10.8%
Student to Faculty Ratio				21.1	16.4	19.9
Faculty to Admin Ratio				1.8	2.7	2.7
Financial Responsibility Composite Scores - GRAPH 6						2.7
Score	-	-	-	2.4	3.0	3.0
Fiscally Strong 1.5 - 3.0 / Fiscally Adequate 1.0 - 1.4 /						
Fiscally Needs Monitoring -1.0 - 0.9	N/A	N/A	N/A	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong	Fiscally Strong
Working Capital - GRAPH 7						792,765
Net Working Capital			371,317	901,301	1,105,677	1,845,282
As % of Unrestricted Revenue	0.0%	0.0%	11.0%	25.0%	24.2%	33.1%
Working Capital (Current) Ratio Score	-	-	2.7	7.0	7.7	12.1
Risk (Low > 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.9 / High < 1.4)	N/A	N/A	MEDIUM	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent > 3.0 / Good 1.0 - 2.9 / Poor < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Quick (Acid Test) Ratio				2.6	6.6	7.5
Score	-	-	-	2.6	6.6	7.5
Risk (Low > 2.5 / Medium 1.0 - 2.4 / High < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent > 2.5 / Good 1.0 - 2.4 / Poor < 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Debt to Asset Ratio - GRAPH 7				0.2	0.1	0.1
Score	-	-	-	0.2	0.1	0.1
Risk (Low < 0.50 / Medium 0.51 - .95 / High > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	LOW	LOW	LOW	LOW
Rating (Excellent < 0.50 / Good 0.51 - .95 / Poor > 1.0)	N/A	N/A	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Months of Cash - GRAPH 8				0.9	3.3	3.3
Score	-	-	-	0.9	3.3	3.3
Risk (Low > 6 mo. / Medium 3 - 6 mo. / High < 3 mo.)	N/A	N/A	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
Rating (Excellent > 6 mo. / Good 3 - 6 mo. / Poor < 3	N/A	N/A	Poor	Good	Good	Good



This chart illustrates total revenue and expenses each year and the relationship those subsets have on the increase/decrease of net assets on a year to year basis. Ideally subset 1, revenue, will be taller than subset 2, expenses, and as a result subset 3, net assets - beginning, will increase each year building a more fiscally viable school.

This chart illustrates the relationship between assets and liabilities and to what extent cash reserves makes up current assets. Ideally for each subset, subsets 2 thru 4, (i.e. current assets vs. current liabilities), the column on the left is taller than the immediate column on the right; and, generally speaking, the bigger that gap, the better.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: English Language Arts
Excellence Girls Charter School



	2010-11 Grades Served:			MET	2011-12 Grades Served: K-3			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: K-4			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)				
	3	0	0		3	76.0 (50)	0		3	55.8 (77)	55.3 (76)				
ABSOLUTE MEASURES	4	0	0		4	(0)	0		4	56.1 (41)	56.1 (41)				
1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	5	0	0		5	(0)	0		5	(0)	(0)				
	6	0	0		6	(0)	0		6	(0)	(0)				
	7	0	0		7	(0)	0		7	(0)	(0)				
	8	0	0		8	(0)	0		8	(0)	(0)				
	All	0	0		All	76.0 (50)	0		All	55.9 (118)	55.6 (117)	NO			
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level 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	PLI	AMO				
					3	174	135	YES	3-4	149					
COMPARATIVE MEASURES	Comparison: Grades School District			NA	Comparison: Brooklyn District 16 Grades School District			NA	Comparison: Brooklyn District 16 Grades School District			YES			
3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.															
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the state exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	% FL Actual Predicted Effect Size				% FL Actual Predicted Effect Size				% ED Actual Predicted Effect Size						
	62.1	76.0	47.7	1.87	YES	73.6	55.9	23.6	2.44	YES					
GROWTH MEASURE	Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State				
5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	4				4				4	69.1					
	5				5				5	0.0					
	6				6				6	0.0					
	7				7				7	0.0					
	8				8				8	0.0					
	All				All				All	69.1	50.0	YES			

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SUMMARY: Mathematics

Excellence Girls Charter School



	2010-11 Grades Served:			MET	2011-12 Grades Served: K-3			MET	2012-13 Grades Served: K-4			MET	
	All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		All Students % (N)		2+ Years Students % (N)		
	Grades	Grades	Grades		Grades	Grades	Grades		All	All	All		
ABSOLUTE MEASURES	3	0	0		3	76.0 (50)	0		3	64.9 (77)	64.5 (76)		
1. Each year 75 percent of students who are enrolled in at least their second year will perform at proficiency on the New York State exam.	4	0	0		4	(0)	0		4	73.2 (41)	73.2 (41)		
	5	0	0		5	(0)	0		5	(0)	(0)		
	6	0	0		6	(0)	0		6	(0)	(0)		
	7	0	0		7	(0)	0		7	(0)	(0)		
	8	0	0		8	(0)	0		8	(0)	(0)		
	All	0	0		All	76.0 (50)	0		All	67.8 (118)	67.5 (117)	NO	
2. Each year the school's aggregate Performance Level 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	PLI	AMO		
					3	176	148	YES	3-4	164			
COMPARATIVE MEASURES	Comparison: Grades School District				Comparison: Brooklyn District 16 Grades School District				Comparison: Brooklyn District 16 Grades School District				
3. Each year the percent of students enrolled in at least their second year and performing at proficiency will be greater than that of students in the same grades in the local district.				NA	NA			NA	NA			YES	
4. Each year the school will exceed its predicted percent of students at proficiency on the State exam by at least a small Effect Size (at least 0.3) based on its percentage of Economically Disadvantaged students.	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% FL	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	% ED	Actual	Predicted	Effect Size	
					62.1	76.0	54.3	1.23	YES	73.6	67.8	27.8	YES
GROWTH MEASURE	Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		Grades	School	State		
5. Each year, the school's unadjusted mean growth percentile will meet or exceed the state's unadjusted median growth percentile.	4				4				4				
	5				5				5				
	6				6				6				
	7				7				7				
	8				8				8				
	All				All				All				YES

NYC DOE PROGRESS REPORT RESULTS

Excellence Girls received a letter grade of “A” on its 2012-13 NYC DOE Progress Report. The NYCDOE bases the overall grade on school performance in three categories: School Environment, Student Performance and Student Progress, with the greatest emphasis placed on Student Progress. To raise the bar for schools and increase stability in the letter grades, the city reports that it set overall cut scores for 2012-13 based on a pre-determined scoring distribution. For elementary and middle schools, the distribution is: 26 percent A, 35 percent B, 31 percent C, six percent D, and two percent E. For high schools, the distribution is: 33 percent A, 36 percent B, 21 percent C, 6 percent D, and five percent E.

Excellence Girls received the “A” based on the composite score of the three categories. The school received an “A” in School Environment, which measures factors other than student achievement. The NYCDOE bases this category largely on parent and teacher satisfaction surveys, which measure the conditions necessary for learning. In the Student Performance category, the school received an “A”, indicating that the school’s absolute performance was better on the whole than its peer schools in New York City. As a result of Excellence Girls’ significant year-to-year growth in math in comparison to its peer schools, it received an “A” in Student Progress.

These results are consistent with the Institute’s analysis above.